Digital Approaches to Historical Inquiries
Block III and IV

Angus A. A. Mol
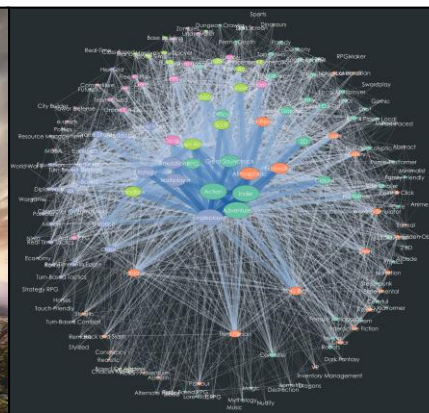
A little about me

Current	Digital Strategist at the Prince Claus Fund (PCF)
2017	Coordinator of the Cultural Emergency Response programme, PCF
2015-2017	Post-doctoral Researcher Department of Anthropology, Stanford University
2013-2015	Post-doctoral Researcher NEXUS1492 project, Faculty of Archaeology Leiden University
2013-2015	Visiting Researcher Algorithmics group, Konstanz University, Germany
2007	Started PhD in Caribbean Archaeology
2004	First "Digital Course"

Current projects

PCF	website development; databases; Open Data (IATI)
RomeinCraft	Outreach Project with crowd-reconstructions of the Dutch Limes Germanicus
HoTC in 100	Podcast with Alice Samson

Arcowology in Jamaica ;-)

Prince Claus Awards 2017 (Nationaal Paleis)

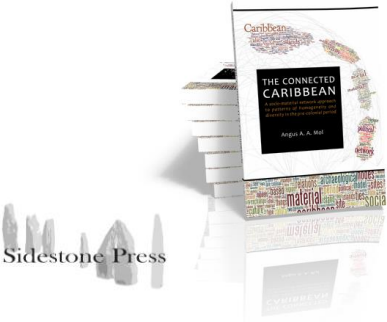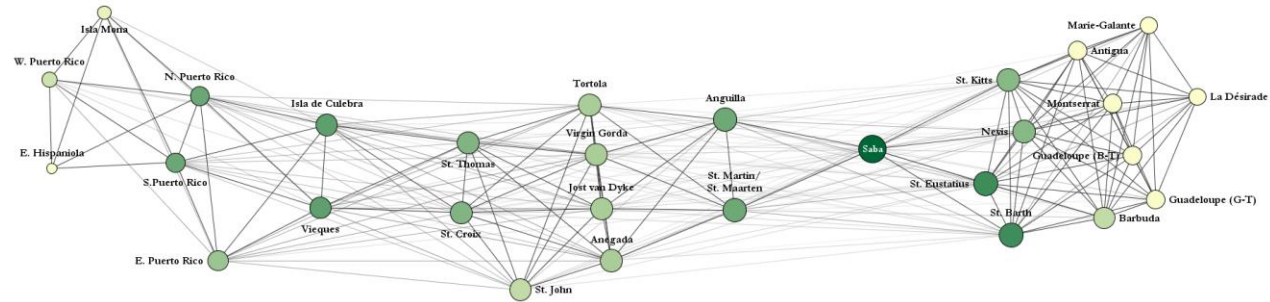A history of the CARIBBEAN in 100 objects

In this great future, you can't forget your past! (Bob Marley)

The Connected Caribbean

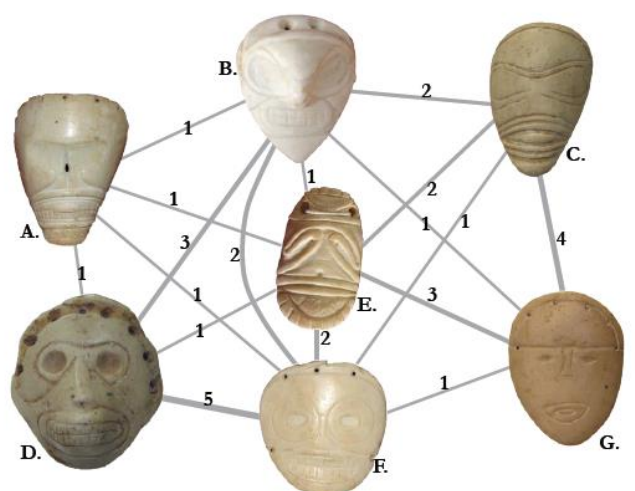*How can network science help us understand the pre-colonial NE Caribbean, a place that is unified in diversity?*
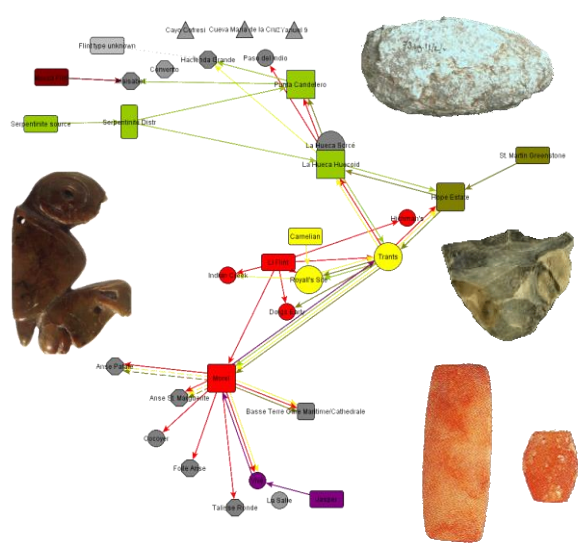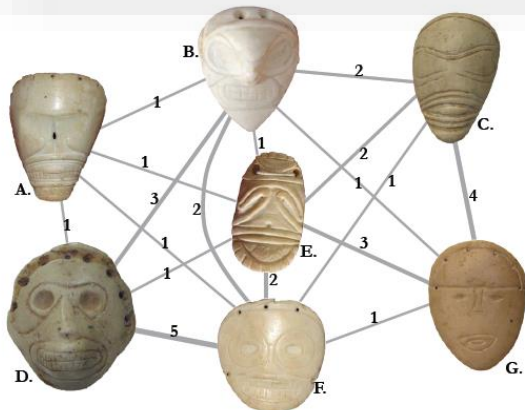
Islandscapes

Sidestone Press
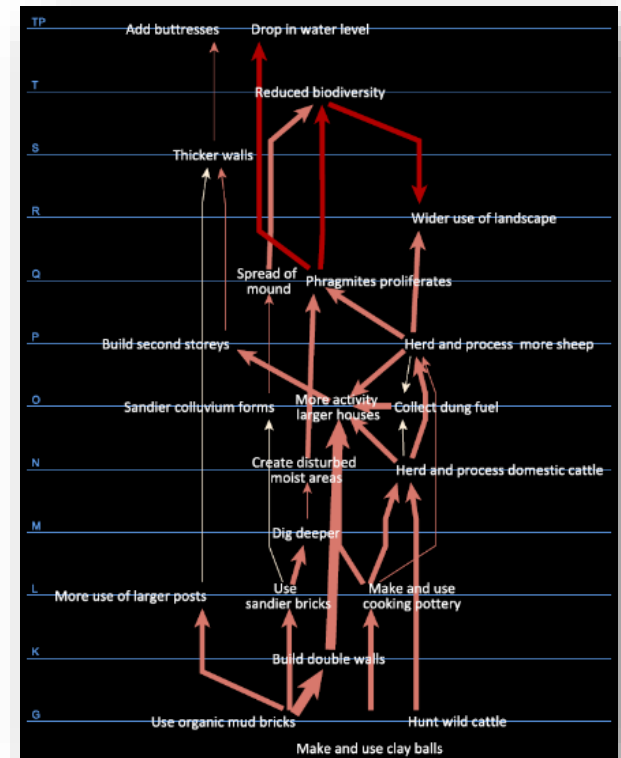
Trade networks

Networked Styles and Gift exchange

Ties that Matter, Matter that Ties

- How are social and material systems interdependent?
- Data-driven models and visualizations

Subsection of a stylistic similarity network of indigenous Caribbean gifts (Mol 2014)

Entanglements at the "Dawn of Civilization": the 8000 year-old site of Catalhoyük with Ian Hodder (Stanford University)

# Prince Claus Fund:
First Aid to Heritage Networks

- How can we make our community/network more robust?
- Survey among 102 FAC-course alumni
- Which 5 FAC-alumni do you communicate with most?

Crowd-building in Minecraft

- How can we leverage the imagination of the crowd for heritage reconstruction?

- How can we make learning about the past fun?

- Projects:
  - Re-constructing Palmyra (a.)
  - RomeinCraft (b.)
  - Nineveh's Heritage under Threat (c.)

- Landscape and buildings based on environmental, archaeological, and historical data

- The Past as Playground, guided by professionals

- VR: Immersion is understanding

- www.valueproject.nl / www.value-foundation.org

a.

b.

c.
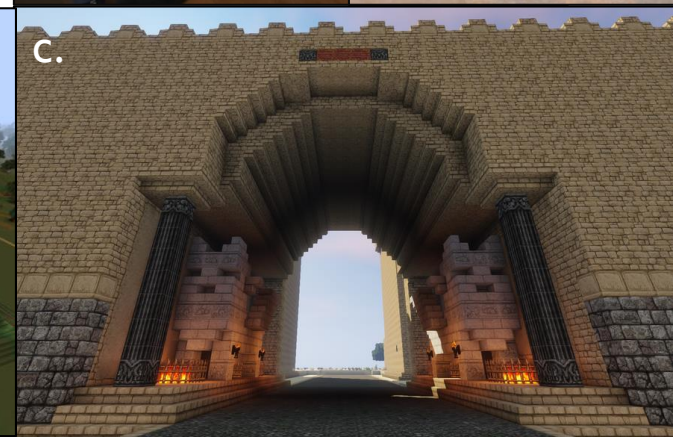
Digital Approaches to Historical Inquiries

- All inquiry-driven! Increasingly computational.
- For me, history is not about discipline, source material, or time period, but about perspective.
- Transitive knowledge and skills
- Curiosity and outreach
- Embedded and scalable
- Tools to think with
- Theories to play with
- Data-driven Stories
  - Clear
  - Engaging
  - Impactful

"IS THIS A GOOD TIME TO TELL YOU I
DON'T KNOW WHAT 'BIG DATA' MEANS?"

Course Objectives

- By the end of this course, you will be able to:
  - Understand how digital approaches can power a variety of historical inquiries and be able to communicate their potential and pitfalls to peers.
  - Link digital approaches with a historical perspective of (digital) culture and society.
  - Know where to find some of the inspiring media, projects, and thinkers in this field.
  - Plan and run an outward-facing digital historical project.
  - Have a working knowledge of a variety of tools from the kit of a digital historian.
  - Critically reflect on the use of historical data or the reflection of past actors, events, and places in digital forms.
  - Provide feedback on the ideas and projects of peers and incorporate peer feedback.
  - Share research results in a way that is accessible for a wider audience.

The Science of Discworld

- Pratchett, Stewart and Cohen

- Discworld wizards saving Roundworld's humanity from a lack of creativity

- Historical inquiry powered by Hex, a highly intelligent computer

- Without extelligence, humanity is lost:
  - "The wizards are now beginning to understand, while you can eliminate evil by eliminating extelligence, the result can be about as interesting as watching daytime television."
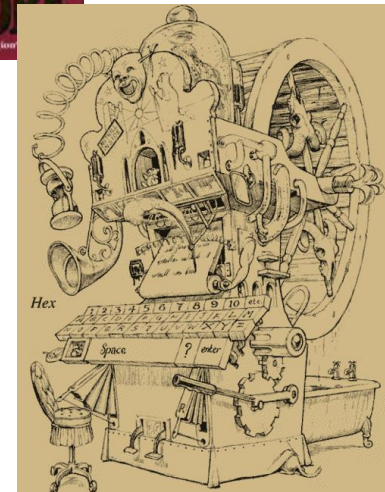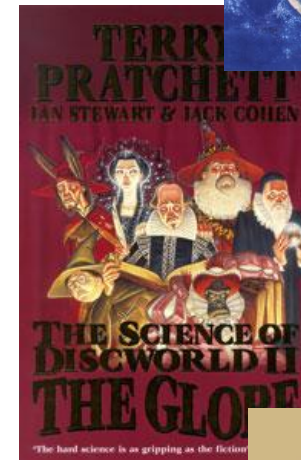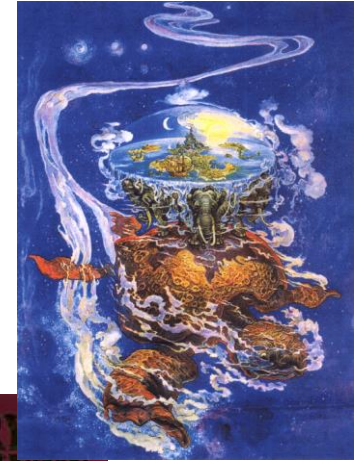
Enough about me, let's focus on you!

- Please go to **https://tinyurl.com/dighistentry** and complete the survey.

- 10 minutes

- When done start reading the syllabus at www.shoresoftime.com/dighist

A word on tools

Digital History Toolkit

Assignment 1 Google Ngram as a tool.

- Explore and then create a tool overview of Google Ngram Viewer: https://books.google.com/ngrams

- Template can be found at https://tinyurl.com/dighist-ngram

- 50-200 words/section

- Post to Slack dighist_ngram channel

- If you have meta-commentary on the this assignment/form, reply to your uploaded file in Slack.

Google Ngram Viewer

Guideline: 50-200 words/section. Use footnotes to show references.

General Principle
[your text here]

Description
[your text here]

Critique
[your text here]

How to Use It
[your text here]

How to Analyze the Results
[your text here]

Useful texts, videos, or other material
[links and references here]

See you next week!