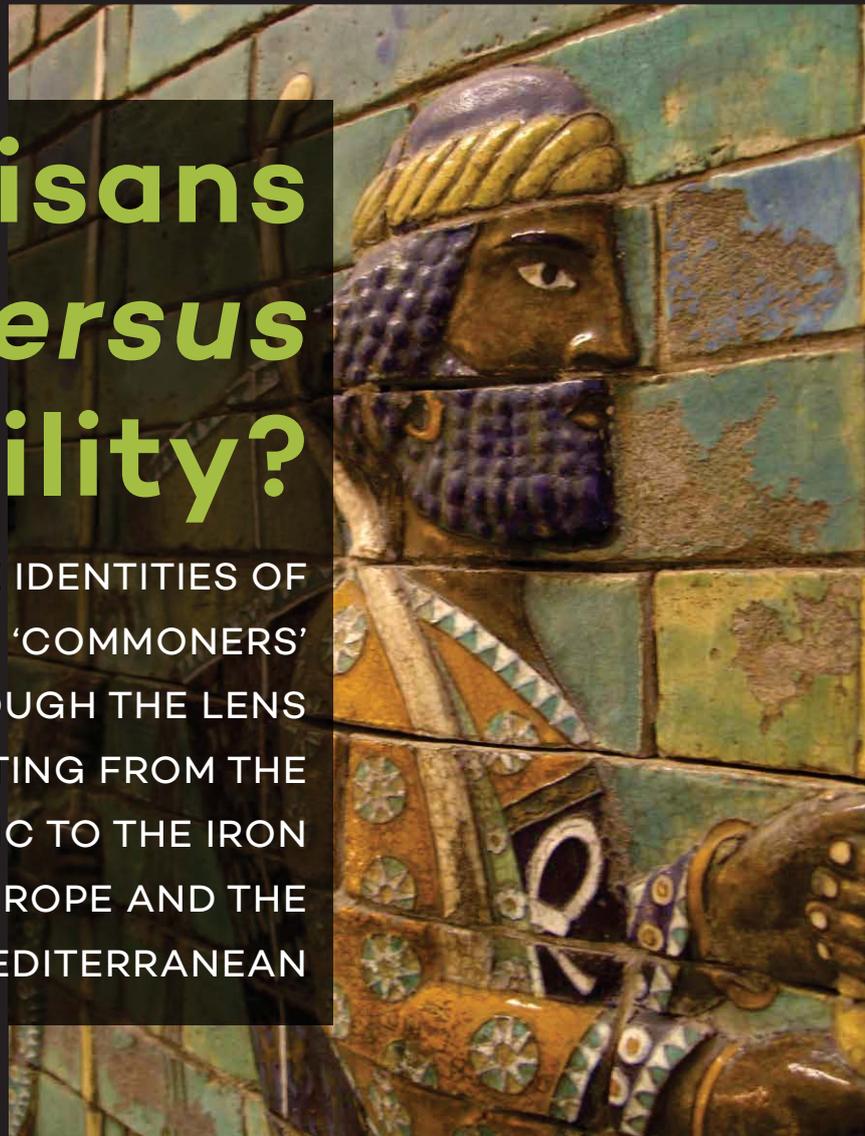


# Artisans *versus* nobility?

MULTIPLE IDENTITIES OF  
ELITES AND 'COMMONERS'  
VIEWED THROUGH THE LENS  
OF CRAFTING FROM THE  
CHALCOLITHIC TO THE IRON  
AGES IN EUROPE AND THE  
MEDITERRANEAN



edited by  
**Ann Brysbaert & Alexis Gorgues**

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Sidestone Press

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# Artisans *versus* nobility?

## Crafting in context: introduction

*Ann Brysbaert*

### Introduction<sup>1</sup>

In prehistoric Europe and the Mediterranean regions, hierarchical societies arose and developed technological systems and processes in the sphere of production of both quotidian objects and items of religious and symbolic character emulating prestige and luxury, while it may not always be easy to distinguish between the two types. This collection of papers deals with questions of how artisans and other social groups involved in these productive processes and social practices reacted to and interacted with specific demands connected with elites' identity formation, affirmation and reconfirmation practices, while these artisans also formed their own multiple identities while crafting. Key issues of this volume include innovations, creativity, crafting, communities of practice, and the development of new technologies designed to satisfy the needs of ostentatious behaviour and achieve prestige through specific societal layers. For example, how can we identify such processes and their consequences, how can we define the role(s) that the craftspeople played in such contexts, and are these always as clear-cut as usually portrayed? This book's common aim across all its papers, therefore, is to investigate the economic, socio-political and technological contexts and backgrounds of the makeup of material culture and technologies in the periods highlighted by the individual case studies. We examine which role(s) artisans may have played in status- and identity-formation processes – their own and those of others with whom they interacted, on the one hand, and in rituals and in symbolic performances, on the other. In other words, we disentangle artisans' multiple roles in each aspect of life and death of selected Chalcolithic, Bronze and Iron Age populations in Europe and the Mediterranean. Many aspects of social interaction patterns between the different groups of people in those periods have not been adequately discussed and investigated, especially the artisans' important role(s). This volume aims to redress these imbalances by investigating how social groups interacted with each other, and how we may recognize such interactions in the material remains. Investigating these remains brings us in touch with a wide range of objects and features of varied values and qualities that we cannot not always easily distinguish from each other,

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<sup>1</sup> A part of the introduction section of this paper is based on two EAA abstracts that were co-written with Alexis Gorgues.

as values and qualities are very much based on personal notions often defined by cultural surroundings and backgrounds (see below). In particular, the strong contextual discussions within the individual papers aid in how people in the past might have ascribed value to their objects and materials, as well as to the processes and social contexts in which these were produced.

Before an overview of the contributions is presented, some thought is given to questions that arise from considerations of crafting, creating, and ascribing value, especially what roles people in the past had in all these activities and practices, and how we can understand identity formation, confirmation and negotiation through archaeological studies of past workshop remains.

### **Crafting as making, thinking and being (together)**

In our contemporary industrial and digital world, the term ‘crafting’ often evokes a messy DIY shed visited on weekends by ‘the guys’ while ‘the girls’ get together in knitting and book clubs, thus engendering activities that seem to construct and affirm classical masculine and feminine identities (Adamson 2010: 10; see also Sterling 2011: 67). It also places craft activities in the sphere of free time, and, depending on the specific context, some of these activities may be considered more useful than others. These rather stereotypical notions of crafting and gender, especially those linked to machines and male bonding through performing bodies (Mellström 2004: 369, 371), have triggered strong reactions in the last few decades, for better or for worse. For example, the ‘Do It Together’, or DIT movement emphasizes the inherent social character of crafting; in doing so, it breaks through at least some of the gender codes. Members of this movement believe that everybody can reverse-engineer – that is, carefully going backwards through a production process is potentially the only way to find out how something is made (Carpenter 2011: 50). Other such movements are the Fab Labs and Fab Academies, which link people (of all ages and backgrounds from all over the world) with common interests in producing things and turning their ideas into material realities (see Gershenfeld and Charny 2011). Additionally, the Transition Movement ([www.transitionnetwork.org](http://www.transitionnetwork.org)) has at its root principles very similar to those of DIT, but it deals with broader issues such as ecological, economic and socio-political issues. Their main aim is, together within a community-organised context, to make a difference in the current difficult times where resources seem to run out and where our natural environment can no longer be saved quickly enough. Members of these movements, who have established more liveable places called Transition Towns, do not wait for governmental agreement, but instead decide to work on the problems they face together; in their view, this is where their strength lies. Their activities strongly resemble crafting activities, not in the sense of how handicrafts such as carpentering or knitting are understood, or as the lesser little brother of art, but more as Richard Sennett describes it. For him, a craftsperson is both a maker and a thinker, and both aspects are part of a unifying process in which crafting is a process of exploration, of problem-finding and -solving, and it is a social process. As such, crafting becomes the process of making personal self-identity and citizenship (Sennett 2009: 7-12), whether the craftsperson is an architect, a seamstress, a web designer, a nurse or a gardener.

Adamson (2010: 2-3) writes: ‘One advantage of defining craft in a simple but open-ended manner – let us say, as the application...small-scale production – is that it allows us to draw connections across a much wider range of activities than the so-called ‘crafts’ themselves’. He thus sees craft as ...‘a set of concerns that is implicated across many types of cultural production’, ‘a pervasive, ‘everyday’ activity, implicated in the contingent flux of [...] life’ (Adamson 2010: 4) and contends that it ‘entails irregularity, tacit knowledge, inefficiency, handwork, vernacular building, functional objects and mysticism’ and is associated with ‘gendered, ethnic and local identities’ (Adamson 2010: 5). This resonates the idea expressed that crafts, their material outcomes and aligned social practices, in the past or present, do not stand on their own, but that they are interlinked (cross-craft interaction, Brysbaert 2007, 2008) at any given stage, through material acquisition, any part of their production lines, their consumption, their reuse and recycling and final discard (Brysbaert 2011b). At each and every moment where people and materials converge, craft activities are at hand somewhere and sometime. While everyone crafts their own understanding of crafting, this wide notion of what crafting entails resonates in several contributions to this book.

Crafting, or making, is a thoroughly embodied social practice that should not only be understood as artisans being there with each part of their being. They may also work on a body of raw materials and form these into newly created bodies/entities that are, at that point perhaps, finished products. This is beautifully described by Sturt (1993 [1923]: 19, 95-100), who worked together with and observed a village wheelwright’s activities, and who expressed each part of the vehicle he produced as body parts (body, face, shoulders, foot, belly, back). Crafting is thus about making, about thinking, about ‘being’: ‘The action of making and the outcome of a crafted object connect cultures, communities and generations. Handmade objects have a story to tell. They have been touched, manipulated, hammered, thrown, blown and carved by human hands. They connect us to our past and to our familial and cultural histories.’ (Greenlees 2011: 5).

In a book on artisans and crafting, a short note on materiality and materials is fitting. More than a decade ago, Meskell (2005: 1) pointed out that archaeology was slow in working with theories of materiality, even though we are placed squarely in studying material culture. Traditionally, studying material culture embraced the empirical collection and analyses of data, such as objects’ and features’ measurements, materials and technologies, and it contextualized these assemblages. Such past research did not always engage in the study of social relations (e.g. Petrie 1926, 2-4, especially p. 2, where he openly criticizes the theorizing of the topic). However, studying material culture in terms of social relationships has come a long way since Petrie’s time, with the recent emphasis on materials’ qualities and culture as central to their use and meaning. It seems that we need to see materiality as a quality of relationships instead of a quality of things (Jones 2004: 330; Jones 2007: 36).

That said, all papers in this volume still conduct the more traditional line of work *as well* because archaeologists cannot move forward towards discussing social relationships, independent of the theoretical approach taken, without having firmly studied the data themselves. This book (and previous papers, see esp. Brysbaert and Vettors 2010, 2013) shows that objects and features belong to both the empirical study domain of material culture and to the sphere of social practices,

relationships and networks, and each complements the other. For example, the deeply contextualized approach of all types of materials, some of which may be production waste, half-finished items or recycled materials, indicate to a greater or lesser degree how models of workshop and activity areas (well-known in the Aegean context is Tournavitou 1988) need to be flexible and adaptable to each individual context (see Brysbaert 2014), rather than dictating how workshops should be recognized following criteria of a model. If one applies a model to a data set, one may not look beyond the data that fits and may either regard other ‘remains’ as rubbish/of less importance, or plainly ignore them altogether. While studying the minute details of each tiny item may well be much more of a challenge, it does provide a far more realistic picture of what took place in specific contexts, even if this does not fit any model. Precisely this type of realization turns archaeological work into something much more interesting and comprehensive, and opens up further options for interpretation (beyond those suggested by models). Such studies are necessarily socially inclined and illustrate a larger compatibility with the complexity of people’s existence and how they operate with each other and their material world. In both past and present, material items are integral parts of multiple socio-political, economic and cultural networks that involve many other material items, animals, people, ancestors, ritual phenomena and belief systems, through their interactions and activities.

Technological activities and practices result in, and result from, networks of people and things/objects and practices that, depending on the conditions, bond to a greater or lesser degree. People or actors, materials, objects and contexts are all linked, not as isolated entities by themselves, but *combined with* a certain type of ‘glue’ – i.e. the artisans’ knowledge, experience and skills to act and transform, and, simultaneously, the world (of symbols, ancestors and other beings) in which these all interact. As such, people and/or materials alike are interwoven in extensive networks of activities, social relationships and social practices. I stress ‘combined with’ because if a glassmaker had all the knowledge and skills to be an excellent glass bead maker but was asked to make a sword, he would potentially not make much of it. Therefore, the ‘glue’ on its own, i.e. artisans’ knowledge and skills, is not the sole success factor, but *combining/linking up* materials, objects, actors, spaces, time frames, and technical and social work processes (be that thinking, organizing, skilled performing, using, transforming, etc.), will successfully create bonds and thus networks (from the molecular to the monumental level). As such, through objects and feature studies, from both an empirical and social perspective, we may weld technologies, meanings, practices and histories together (after Meskell 2005: 2) into meaningful and contextualized narratives about people’s past lives where spatial and temporal aspects are allowed to play their interlinked role as well. The link between making and connecting is further expounded on in D. Gauntlett’s *Making is Connecting. The Social Meaning of Creativity, from DIY and Knitting to YouTube and Web 2.0*. He (2011: 2, 25) points out that making is connecting because:

1. several materials or ideas or both need to be put together when making something (e.g. a knife with metal blade and wooden handle), so engagement with ideas, learning and knowledge sits *within* the practice of making (contra

Gauntlett 2011: 25: this engagement with ideas, knowledge and learning *also* comes before and after the practice of making because artisans may reflect about what they made and teach about it, and they may develop ideas as a result of this thinking, before they start again and implement them in the next round of making something)

2. making usually involves a social dimension at some point, and it thus connects us to other people (e.g. a metal smith needs to 'buy' his supplies from someone else)
3. through making and sharing things, we connect and engage more frequently with our social and physical environments in general; it gives a sense of being alive within the process.

Through his contemporary examples (but these are equally applicable to the past), and emphasising that making is being creative on a day-to-day scale versus the high-impact creativity of Nobel Prize winners, Gauntlett (2011: 14-17) also refers to other forms of connecting: When doing/making something, one often obtains an audience. Participating in a productive social environment implicates audiences, interaction, connection and interactivity. For him, making something is part of a process that involves thinking and reflecting about what to make and how to make it, followed by transforming these thoughts and feelings into something manifest or tangible, while continuing to reflect while doing. This way of thinking about crafting resonates Richard Sennett's (2009: 7) strong emphasis on understanding thinking and making as part of the same unifying process (see also Ingold 2013: 6-7) in which routine actions, such as sawing a plank, still need constant physical adjustments as the work goes on (Ingold 2011: 17-18, 56). Gauntlett illustrates that a discovery or something innovative, i.e. being creative, does not seem to be there from the start but is rather '*...a process of discovery and having ideas through the process of making*' (original emphasis, Gauntlett 2011: 4). Finally, his understanding of making, being creative and thus sharing and collaborating is so thoroughly social that he comprehends social capital as 'the community glue made up of friendly connections with others' in a system where value is embedded in having social connections and collaborative projects in everyday life (Gauntlett 2011: 21). Very similar thoughts are reflected in Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of 'communities of practice' (see also Wenger 1998; Wendrich 2012). Social capital, furthermore, emphasizes the satisfaction one has in making something useful and beautiful. Again, this satisfaction is not purely personal but stands in relation to the audience, be that potential clients, kin or friends, colleagues, or apprentices.

### **Crafting as creating**

Crafting may entail doing something useful, something that serves many purposes, including serving others in their daily tasks. When a client relies on an artisan to make something useful, that client expects or hopes that what s/he will pay for is the artisan's best possible work. This is just as important for the artisan. Doing good

work after (often) long-term training, along with following the standards set by generations of artisans (the ancestors and memories that refer to them) to achieve this, were the hallmark of an artisan's identity and are social and relational acts. These social and relational acts are dynamic, and in some ways, doing good work can be seen both as a stable and as a risky business: stable because one follows the rules laid out, but risky because doing good work means 'to be curious about, to investigate, and to learn from ambiguity' (Sennett 2009: 48 for medical contexts). It thus risks rejection by the audience, whether this reflects the community, potential clients or other nearby actors. Such attitudes may lead to innovative approaches to technical problems, but with the inherent risk of experimenting, it may also result in failure instead of improvement. However, techniques develop and skills may improve by repeated practice or routine actions and by learning to do something the correct way – thus following standard rules – in tandem with being willing to experiment through error. For Sennett (2009: 160), these two sides cannot be separated, and it is at this intersection of being willing to follow a cultural suit and being willing to take risks that one can place the creativity of artisans. In addition, Birgerstam (2000: 96) sees creativity as a combination of intuition (risk-taking) and rational thinking (rule-following), where both are complementary to each other.

Questioning whether crafting is a creative process, how we may recognize creativity in past crafting, and whether we can at all talk about creativity when referring to past craft processes and practices are important themes in this book. While most contemporary thinking about creativity is often immediately connected to the 'arts' (traditionally understood here), enough evidence exists, both in past and contemporary contexts, that 'crafting' is creative too, and even on a day-to-day basis (Gauntlett 2011). One could still argue that art for art's sake is a big part of the process, in which creativity plays a major role in producing an end result that has no immediate utilitarian function in our day-to-day lives: a painting, a digital installation, a modern dance performance – but this statement is deeply entangled with how we define 'utilitarian'. Does 'utilitarian' describe the knife one uses to cut bread with; does it describe the small niche in the wall towards which people pray to each day five times; or does it describe the multi-million-euro painting donated to a museum, to be displayed in its newly built and named-after gallery? Margetts (2011: 39-43) argues that the role of making in the creative process is to create new ways of thinking, through engagement with materials, techniques and ideas; this largely echoes Gauntlett's ideas as discussed earlier. In moving away from the Cartesian split between body and mind, and thus in following a phenomenological approach, Margetts (2011: 39) sees making as '...a process whereby mind, body and imagination are integrated in the practice of thought through action', thus both active and reflective modes of being, fused in making or crafting. Materials, techniques and ideas can thus be viewed as catalysts to creative processes. As such, there is no real differentiation to be made between the arts and the crafts, as both spheres consist of materials, techniques and ideas. While opinions may differ about the meaning and definition of 'utilitarian' even in artistic contexts, the nature and presence of creativity is investigated in the context of past technologies by reviewing a series of materials that were the outcome, final or not, of several acts that can be considered 'creative' or were part of creative practices.

Studying creativity allows us to study the nodes of humans and materials in tightly interwoven networks and relationships and between both past and contemporary contexts (e.g. the CinBA project by R. Brockhurt and J. Sofaer 2015).

One could argue that creativity may be closely linked to the concept of an 'original creation' in craft production, especially if creativity results in an end product without specific utilitarian function, as artwork is often perceived (see above). However, in a discussion on copying and imitation, Jiménez (2010: 46, 49, 57) argues that emulation, as a form of imitation, cannot be seen as 'copying' but should rather be seen as reinterpreting and transforming the meaning of the appropriated idea. If this reinterpretation and appropriation of ideas becomes widely spread, it helps to understand the desire for a sense of unity (see Rowlands 2010: 238) rather than uniqueness (also implied in artistic creations). Furthermore, Rowlands (2010: 239) also noted that mimesis may not be the emulation of physical appearances of things and practices, but may be more to do with ritual powers through cult imposition, especially since it is closely connected to aspects of ritual activities such as libations, sacrifice and commensality. In the context of crafting where ritualized behaviour has been observed before (for Tiryns: Brysbaert and Veters 2013), it would be possible to extend these concepts of mimesis and emulation to the sphere of crafting. What is meant here is that emulation, mimicry of specific objects, whether producing them or using them in crafting locales, may have specific ritual powers in their own right, exactly because they were being crafted in specific workshops. Asking the question of what was the 'pure original' may thus not be useful, as it may not have been understood or known by the artisans as such, or it may not have been preserved for us to recognize. What is more relevant is to ask ourselves why mimicry was carried out, and from this, finding out what this act represented. It is thus possible that the artisans belonging to one given workshop may link themselves to specific potent ritual activities present in other workshops known to them, by carrying out acts of imitating or mimicking certain material culture aspects specific to these other workshops, in order to associate themselves to these ritual activities, but, simultaneously, trying to preserve enough of their 'own personality' in doing so. This making of objects in slightly different ways – as with the choice (conscious or not) to make, for example, the Tiryns local wall brackets similar but not identical to the Cypriot ones (see especially Rahmstorf 2008) – reflects human identities and intentions (see also Margetts 2011: 42). As such, the act of mimesis is a total social act and forges relationships, and is possibly best illustrated by the apprentice mimicking the master, who encourages this activity, in the apprenticeship period. In the case of the Cypriot wall bracket phenomenon, these were part of an object network of wall brackets known in the east Mediterranean (Schlippach 2001); as such, the purity of this 'original' to Tiryns is in no way guaranteed.

I mentioned earlier that not only people but also objects are entangled in networks of contacts and influences, and the phenomenon of mimicry with a local touch is a clear example of that. Both human beings and artefacts pass through time and space, exchange affiliations and are linked to specific places; as such, people and things are all interwoven in complex webs of relationships (see Brysbaert 2008), and it follows that people and objects each contribute to the

identity formation/creation of the other. The stubborn medieval apprentice mason may try again and again to carve the stone until 'it gives in' (Follett 2008: 573). As such, the stone's own and natural resistance to being carved easily (scientifically explained, for example, by its place on the Mohs scale) renders the apprentice stubborn. Similarly, the wall brackets in Tiryns do not even need to be linked to Cyprus, but can be fitted into the wider regional network where such wall brackets are used (Schlippak 2001). However, other material culture items in the same context where the Tiryns wall brackets were found dictate a strong Cypriot link in this specific case. Contextual analysis is crucial here.

As we are specifically interested in the social aspects of past people's lives, it may be equally fruitful to study the networks or relationships from within which we can extract the meaning of objects, in addition to looking at each category of object/find individually, to find the social relationships between them (after Thomas 1996: 16). It seems that the double approach may be the most rewarding.

In most investigations of materials and items from a range of different craft activities and practices, placed in the Late Bronze Age Aegean, it becomes evident that artisans were not just executing upon elites' demands; they were creative at every step of their production line, and, in some cases, they were also able to conceal it. The Aegean Bronze Age sees the development of new and pre-existing technologies such as bronze and iron-working. New ways of working with these materials, accompanied by the growth of technical skill, produced complex forms, often the result of cross-craft interaction (e.g. Egyptian blue from bronze). In order to better understand the concept of creativity as part of past practices, it is necessary to investigate the processes that lie behind creative expressions. But first, such creative expressions need to be recognized, and it can be argued that creativity is involved in each step of the crafting process and, from a social perspective, in finding ways to coordinate workforces smoothly with each other so that the task at hand can be done successfully. Sennett (2009: 195) sees both the all-purpose and the fit-for-purpose tool as things that ... 'can expand our skills if only our imagination rises to the occasion'. I believe that imagination beyond the expected use of a specific tool leads to creativity embedded in new uses, options and techniques now exerted with that tool, possibly also utilized on different materials, in a different stage of the process or handled by a differently skilled hand. As all agents, whether a tool, a person/hand, or a material, are interconnecting nodes of a crafting/making – thus expanding and contracting – network, each change in this network will automatically bring about further changes, in some sense comparable to a crystalline lattice structure that underwent a change. This can for instance be illustrated by the employment of ad hoc tools, items that happened to be in the right time at the right place to be used as function X but were not/never produced to work as function X – for example, a beach pebble used as a hammer stone to put up a tent (because the camper forgot the hammer at home or did not want to carry it along on the trip). When the camper finds the ideal beach pebble for the job (not too big, lies comfortably in the hand and is not too heavy) s/he may decide to appropriate the pebble as hammer for the entire journey and even take it back home as a souvenir of past journeys, reminding him/her of all locations in which s/he camped. The beach pebble may even replace the original hammer

from then onwards, thus changing, first temporarily and then permanently, the original hammer agent in the network. This technical act may have further social implications between campers when word of mouth has it that beach pebbles are far better than commercially obtained hammers: they fit the hand better, they are readily available (and thus cheaper), one does not need to carry them around, and they may form a nice souvenir. Through the social interaction of campers on several occasions (camping sites, camping fairs, friendly gatherings), the commercially produced hammer may not be in demand anymore, may not be produced anymore, and may disappear from the camping scene altogether, thus leading to different technological usage and choice in favour of the beach pebble. Ad hoc tools can play a positive and potentially an important role in change by inviting creativity to overcome the initial lack of knowledge about its potential usage. As such, these items become tools as the result of the artisans' imagination and creativity in anticipating what their function could potentially become. Such creativity shows the pure competence of the artisan, who intuitively but also intellectually and practically, understands enough of the material characteristics of the item in front of him/her, and enough of the complexities of the job to be done, that s/he can join them both in an interactive display and set of gestures with his/her hand as the connector, and possibly also implicate the hands of collaborators if success demands this. It is these connecting activities that expand the existing networks and that change their previous configurations. As such, creativity can sit in the organizing processes, resulting in the connecting efforts between tool, material and actors. It is not just ad hoc tools that illustrate these points of creative usage by artisans; this can also be achieved by using existing, well-defined tools for a different job to be done, or by employing the same tool or technique for a different material, or involving different materials in any part of a well-known existing process. Again, it is the thorough knowledge of the artisan, or his/her willingness to take risks, that may lead to a change in process resulting from creatively using this tool, that material or such technique.

Creativity further lies in artisans' willingness and decisions to share – knowledge, materials, techniques, tools and equipment, human forces – and this can be risky in itself. In investigating objects and features through the lens of cross-craft interaction (e.g. Vickers and Gill 1994; Brysbaert 2007, 2008; Thomas 2012), nodes of such technical sharing are uncovered and explored, and social practices are revealed. Moreover, the additional value that emerges from crossing over between crafts lies in many converging situations of technological transfer. As such, the sum of the involved factors always adds up to more than their total, even though more learning and adapting will be required for the agents in the crossover to work as efficiently as before it was introduced, as each technical change implies a learning curve.

Creativity has its limits too, one being its own cultural surroundings, which may accept or reject the resulting innovation, this new way of doing things, producing different items that result in differently organized processes, possibly involving different human configurations. Another limit sits in the level of foreignness of the change: if people do not recognise the innovation because it is so foreign to their own cultural context, it may not be understood, recognised or integrated. At least an anchoring in existing materials, technologies or social practices seems

to be a prerequisite for the acceptance of subsequent changes. Materials may also limit creativity, as was already clear from the mason apprentice in Follet's book (2008). In the same vein, Anni Albers (1965) wove the activity of designing with making as inextricably connected. Early on, she argued that someone who designs an object, tool or feature should pay careful attention to the inherent qualities of the materials acquired for the task and, in addition, that the artisan should work along the affordances of the tools and processes with these materials. A stone cannot be cut with a pair of scissors, as the children's game shows us, so each artisan, before even conceptualising a finished outcome, should know intimately the materials and tools or equipment s/he will work with and their limitations, in order to achieve the best outcome. Accepting limitations as a framework in which the artisan can be active rather than seeing them as a hindrance indicates a productive and possibly an innovative mind. Only after having accepted the limitations (of materials, of tools or personal ones) can the artisan start thinking of how to overcome them to reach his/her goal, or divert to reach another, maybe unexpected, goal. It is precisely this relative position of the artisan who acts upon limitations or interacts with all elements involved (after Hodder 2012: 50) that manifests itself on a day-to-day basis and thus leads towards making as creating, as Gauntlett proposes, both at the level of producing everyday-use items and at the level of creating, as needed and ordered, in order to make objects to elites' tastes.

Active resistance to changes can be detected, history-wide, for example in religious practices, a sphere of life with potentially one of the most tradition-bound set of rituals and activities. A similar trend can be observed in the carpenter and mason's tool sets. When comparing an Egyptian pharaonic carpenter tool set with a pre-industrial carpenter's, only the composition of the metal part of each tool is now different than in the past (copper, bronze, iron to steel). Each shape and handle has remained as it was, and straightforward logic tells us that there is no desire to change things if no advantage – speed, easier handling, higher accuracy – is to be gained from this change. Such resistance to change is further reinforced by the likelihood that, if the tool's properties are altered, this will require a renewed training process in order to learn the different interaction between tool and material. A steel gauge may be sharper than an iron one, but for the carpenter to achieve the same effect on the same type of knotted wood as before, more self-control of the hand, pressure and angle may be needed, and this takes time to achieve. If s/he does not pay attention to these changes, s/he may destroy valuable pieces of wood in the process, thus in effect slowing down the work by having to do the task again and losing valuable resources in the process. Such technical changes also have implications for his/her capabilities as trainer for apprentices. Without 'mastering' these novelties him/herself first, s/he cannot pass them on to the apprentices without losing face if things go wrong. This also leaves its stamp on identity formation, maintenance and negotiation. And even if the artisan remains positive about changes along his/her way, further forms of resistance can abridge creative progress. These may lie in the materials themselves that do not allow the new tool or technique to be employed in this way, or in the capabilities of the artisans who do not possess the necessary skill to successfully connect tool and material in the desired way.

## Crafting values and valuables

Crafting is as technical as much as a social series of acts and tends to create social distinction. Someone who, through training and life-long practicing, becomes very skilled in what s/he does for a living develops differently than someone who does not follow that life path; technical and social distinctions are logical consequences of such activities and processes, and are linked to value attributions at various levels. These may involve the level of social status within the person's household and her/his community, and among people within and beyond this community who carry out the same type of tasks based on the same or similar sets of skills and knowledge. One could call this latter group of people/professionals with similar skills and knowledge a 'community of practice'. One person may be more valued for her/his skills than someone else within and beyond a community or peer group, and this value attribution may be linked to specific skills and knowledge, but also to other characteristics within her/his personhood. Someone's reputation, for example, may be valued (or not) in relation to people's physical and emotional approachability, to their eagerness and sensibility to help or facilitate beyond the usual, to their character, to their kin-based relationships, to the size and makeup of their peer groups and to their own embeddedness within these. The concept of value is, therefore, a social construct defined by the cultural context in which it is created and 'lies at the interface between individual and collective tastes, desires, sentiments and attitudes that inform the ways people select or give priority to one thing over another' (Papadopoulos and Urton 2012: 1-2). Value ascription may differ according to social groups and may be both inclusive and exclusive. For example, the acquisition of exotic goods charged with high intrinsic and symbolic meaning and value may only be possible for a specific elite class, and this class may want to attach beauty, rarity, distance, ritual connotations (after Helms 1993), technological virtuosity and labour intensity, or any combination of these factors (one certainly would not suffice) as exclusively requested value 'constructors' to the items they acquire. Yet other factors that may construct an object's value are its age and the trajectory it has travelled in time and space (i.e. an object's rich biography) before it ends up being valued as a new possession (discussion on curated objects, section 6 below). These items may also be linked to socio-cosmological ideas and ideals, which again might only be shared among that peer group. In this context, J.-P. Crielaard (1998: 194) uses the term 'virtual community' for the group of people who has access to this same sort of information and share these same ideas and values, without even needing to be physically close. A modern comparison would be the worldwide royal courts and the luxuries they employ (and manipulate) to be *and remain* an exclusive peer group among themselves.

Not all communities, however, have to be 'virtual' to share ideas and values, knowledge, materials, and perhaps also tools and workspaces. Instead, they can be much more local or regional: artisans and their 'communities of practice' in which the (informal) transfer of knowledge may occur by means of passing it on from one generation to another in a context where learning is essentially social in nature and co-participatory in absorbing new knowledge and change (see also Lave and Wenger 1991; Wenger 1998; Wendrich 2012: 2-5). In '*The Construction of Value in the Ancient World*' (Papadopoulos and Urton 2012) 26 papers discuss

non-static and interrelated aspects of value that often overlap and collapse together but are grouped in four (somewhat artificial) categories in order to structure the book: place value, body value, object value and number value. If these four categories are brought in contact with artisans' 'communities of practice', the obvious overlaps and collapses between them become clear immediately, and these also manifest, in various combinations, in the different contributions of this volume. Running through the conceptions of each of these categories of value, Papadopoulos and Urton state (2012: 3), are issues of memory, nostalgia, identity, biography, ideology, style, symbolism and exchange. Of these, I pick out memory and perhaps nostalgia, as these two issues may again overlap. I illustrate this with the example of the two chronologically separated workshops in Late Bronze Age Tiryns (Case Study III in Brysbaert and Veters 2010, 2013), where artisans, after a maximum of two generations and quite a drastic socio-political change-over in the Mycenaean world of that time (*c.* 1200 BC) returned to the same spot to set up a 'new' workshop (Late Helladic IIIC Developed) on top of the previous one (Late Helladic IIIB Final). We argued (Brysbaert and Veters 2010; Brysbaert 2014) that, for the later artisans to return to that exact spot, the returning artisans must have given sufficient value not only to the place itself as being suitable for a workshop, but also likely to the reputation of the previous artisans.

Value can be economic (amount, exchange value), social and cultural (its effectiveness in performing, its capacity to change people's or object's social ranking order in society), ritual and symbolic (after Papadopoulos and Urton 2012: 3), and also political and religious (the potential to hold and/or exert power, or to empower); most often, it is a combination of many of these. 'Bodies, places and things are all active agents in the construction of value, as are the range of terms and semiotic constructions that take shape in the language of numbers and quantification within each society' (Papadopoulos and Urton 2012: 3).

Perhaps the most useful to point out in the context of crafting are the values embedded in both producing *and* using something, and in exchanging something for something else as the potential connections between producer and consumer, the latter two only separated – on occasion – by gender, class, ethnicity and other potential societal stratifiers. As a connector between producer and consumer and also very much embedded in making and in the interaction between thing and maker, values are both processes and sets of properties; they grow or decline, and can be(come) lost. That value is linked with aspects of exchange is well known, especially through the work of M. Mauss (1925), and needs no repetition here. His and other anthropological approaches to the theme of exchange make it obvious that value goes far beyond the economic, and that rare, transformed, live, or inanimate items of high value were crucial in marking high status and maintaining it. Such special items, especially if they came from afar and were produced by highly skilled people who knew to manipulate rare and difficult raw materials, embodied these far distant (unknown, dangerous, unstable) places and linked their characteristics to the heroic and mythical picture with which elite persons wanted to portray themselves. When such items arrived as gifts, they were never free but, in Maussian terms, created obligations by the giver to those who, after having received the gift, were now indebted to the giver to give at least the same or more in

return (in number or in mutually understood values). This resonates in the notion that gift economy personifies the object: The given objects take on the qualities of the people involved and, as mentioned, may increase or at least change the objects' value, whereas the commodity economy establishes an equivalence of value between objects (Weber 2007: 26-28; also Papadopoulos and Urton 2012: 15).

Given this, how useful is it for the interpretation of archaeological assemblages and workshop contents and contexts to ponder artisans' thoughts and feelings about their work and practices, how they valued their work and how it was valued by others? One may object that such aspects are not tangible, and thus are not recoverable. However, reasoning artisans may leave more behind in their materials than we can observe at first. In this case, the question – how can we find out which physical qualities of materials were valued by people in the past – leads us back to a contextual approach, especially if no textual evidence can help us further. Small differences visible in typologically or functionally classifiable series of objects may first point towards artisans who, for any given reason, decided to divert from the standard type of object as *we* see them (on the meanings of standardization in pottery, e.g. Berg 2004). Perhaps they had less time available, less in the way of raw materials present to finish something in the same way, or perhaps they were accommodating different wishes expressed by the client, they were correcting mistakes from a less skilled apprentice, several (groups of) artisans were producing the same type of object, or some items in a batch were made for a different projected use than the others. The latter possibility in particular is notoriously difficult for us to disentangle. Typological and functional studies of archaeological objects are therefore essential (see already van Gijn 2007) to order the data *and* our thoughts about these. It is equally crucial, through this approach, to observe the minute differences, to explain them as well as possible, and to try to make sense of these tiny differences by allowing the artisans to be responsible for the produced batches of similar objects in the first place. Each individual item or object, irrespective of its similarity to others, likely carries an intrinsic value and must have been valued by at least two people embedded in its biography: its maker and its consumer (assuming they were not one and the same).

### **People and things through crafting: forming multiple identities**

The context of crafting, where virtually no one works in total isolation from other humans and materials, is an ideal arena to zoom in on how the multiple and dynamic identities of artisans and other social groups are woven into several ever-changing overlaying networks, which are geographically and chronologically influenced. People's connections to and ruptures of such networks in both time and space, and their 'places' in several overlaying networks, constitute their multiple identities. As such, every change in any of these networks – temporal, spatial or otherwise – will change their multiple identities. That individuals and/or groups engaged with the materials they worked on simultaneously engaged with each other is evident from many examples and is clearly illustrated through cross-craft interaction studies and in all contributions to this book. Since cross-craft interaction has been adequately discussed elsewhere (term coined by McGovern

1989; in Aegean context see Brysbaert 2007, 2008; Veters 2011; Thomas 2012) it forms an underlying and well-understood concept for most people investigating craft activities in any sort of past context.

It is part of human nature to create and make, and the nature of making is empowering, as it is a form of communicating. Making or crafting serve many purposes: to *make* a living; to learn something new (as part of a hobby or professional training); to worship, mourn, celebrate and demonstrate; to participate in society; to define personal identities (after Charny 2011: 7); and to create alliances with others, in the workspace and beyond (Ανθρωποι και Εργαλεία 2008 on the importance of owning a tool set in AD 19<sup>th</sup> century wedding negotiations in rural Greece). There is no better way to describe the effect of making or crafting on people than V. Gordon Childe's (1936) book title 'Man Makes Himself' and Sennett's (2009: 1) prologue subtitle: 'Man as His own Maker', to be read as 'person as his/her own maker' – in other words, 'material culture provides in sum a picture of what human beings are capable of making' (Sennett 2009: 15). In the same vein, Miller (2011: 22-23) states: ...'for seeing one's own capacity in the evidence of the things we have ourselves created.' This is echoed in expressions such as 'I made it' (after Miller 2011: 18), referring to both the act of having produced something, but also to having made an achievement, which could stem from a person crafting something and succeeding in that endeavour. These two main strands of (thinking about) making underlie the contributions in this book: individuals, or groups of people, who make things, on the one hand, and these people who thus 'make themselves' as the result of making things (for a similar thought, see Meskell 2005: 3).

Crafting seems thus linked to aspects of identity and, in extension, the creation, maintenance and negotiation of social distinction. As mentioned previously (Brysbaert and Veters 2015), questions about individual identities may not be entirely relevant to Aegean Late Bronze Age contexts even though *ethnikons* (Hiller/Panagl 1976, 113, 114, 323-324; Bartoněk 2003, 400, 427-428) were known from the Linear B tablets for foreigners in the Pylos workforces, as well as individual names of potters, fullers and other workers (Shelmerdine 2007: 44-45). While a focus on ethnicity in archaeological research has led to oversimplified interpretations of complex multiple internal and external contacts that people may have had at the end of the Late Bronze Age East Mediterranean, we can nevertheless not ignore these personal markers and notations. Suffice it to state that ethnicity (as just one potential part of identity) has traditionally been a concept formed on the basis of intangible shared ideologies and beliefs of 'kinship, self-esteem and primordial bonds, and grounded in a shared history, genealogy, territory, language and material culture' (discussed in Janes 2010: 130), while Knapp and van Dommelen (2010: 4) are advocates for the non-primordial nature of self-ascribed identities in much the same way that Rowlands (2010: 241) does not see ethnicity as a fixed and purified concept and as particularly helpful in understanding communities in the later prehistory. Ethnicity (Jones 1997: 84: 'ethnic categories are reproduced and transformed in the ongoing processes of social life.') can thus better be understood as a dynamic concept and a matter of personal perception (for instance in the *ethnikon* given to specific workers at Pylos)

and can only be partly represented by material culture (for instance, the Cypriot wall bracket found at Tiryns, which can never represent someone's ethnicity). Inasmuch as people's identities are dynamic and ever-changing, so too is this concept. As Janes (2010: 130) correctly sums up that ethnicity in the prehistoric mortuary record is largely intangible, it is understood here that this also extends to other spheres of the prehistoric archaeological record, including the artisanal and workshop sphere. Thus, there are at present limited chances to associate any personal identity markers to specific craft outcomes, although an assemblage of specific tools buried with a single deceased Mycenaean in the Athenian Agora has been understood as an indicator for the deceased's profession, being one aspect of her/his identity (Immerwahr 1971). At the same time, fingerprints, nowadays seen as one of our most individual markers, were left on many malleable materials such as pottery, tablets, figurines, mudbricks and other clay- and plaster-based objects and features. Very personal traces of rather anonymous workers are thus left behind, while these marks can represent rough gender and age groups (Hruby 2011: 94-95) and the organizational structure of specific craft groups (Sjöquist and Åström 1985 for pottery production at Pylos; for plaster working: Brysbaert 2008). As such, the formation of multiple identities needs to be recognized, and this can only be done when considered in the context of how people, as individuals and groups, interact with each other and the material world around them.

### **Crafting identities in context**

Earlier in this chapter, I deemed crafting crucial to the construction of identity and, in extension, to the creation, maintenance and negotiation of social distinction. Thus, identity construction seems to be fundamentally embedded in relational networks, not just between people and things, but also with regard to places and time. People's biographies are, in essence, the narratives of one's identity evolving over time and in space, and the same can be said for objects' biographies. Identities change over time and from place to place; a change in these contextual networks results in a change of identities, and these changes are interlinked (see the earlier made metaphor of a crystalline lattice structure undergoing a change that, in turn, changes the rest of the lattice structure). Moreover, social distinction can also be reached in other ways equally linked to identity formation and, in some sense, in an exaggerated form of crafting, that of pursuing excellence. Master artisans can take pride in doing so well in what they do, in the skills they master, that they distinguish themselves socially – but also possibly isolate themselves – from others: thus, both the social and the antisocial expert exist. One can isolate oneself from others in a manipulative way, using it as a tool for claiming specific status or superiority. This may also be linked in certain contexts to being different, even ethnically (Sennett 2009: 244-5). An expert craftsman, unlike an apprentice, can see the entire picture of the production process, even ahead of it taking place, and is skilled at making and repairing. The social expert is skilled at explaining, at mentoring (the apprentices) and giving advice to clients (Sennett 2009: 248). The asocial expert may create isolation or work in isolation, but not necessarily that of a geographical nature, although spatial closeness and thus distance also reside in familiarity with a location, even if the geographical distance is enormous.

As Thomas (1996: 18) states, ‘inhabiting places and using tools may create a more profound connectedness between people and their world.’ To him, space is bodily experienced and, as a consequence, the significance of places is created through acts and performances played out in specific locations. The workshop as a crucial place to the formation, negotiation and maintenance of identities thus warrants in-depth exploration, all the more since Thomas (1996: 18) sees these places as themselves having identities that are constantly in flux, as much as human identities are, because humans will test their potential over time. An ideal illustration of this concept was captured in the reuse of the same location at Tiryns by the Late Helladic IIIC Developed artisans of the earlier Building XI workshop location (Brysaert and Veters 2010; Brysaert 2014).

So far, the artisan’s networks of crafting, passing on knowledge and forming and maintaining identities have been ‘local’ ones, a bottom-up approach; so far we have referred only fleetingly to other temporal dimensions (e.g. multi-generational, ancestral). It is, however, apposite to focus on both deeper temporal and wider geographical frameworks that, combined, are important for investigating the varied contexts in which the present contributions are situated. For example, the evidence from the LBA Tiryns workshop studies indicated early on that present materials, representing social practices of people with potential hybrid identities, more than once crossed ‘borders’ into different geographical and temporal realms (Brysaert and Veters 2010, 2013, 2015; Brysaert 2014). The encountered Cypriot-like materials and associated hybrid practices and identities from case studies I, III and IV are illustrative of deeper temporal and wider geographical significance of these practices and identities. So too are the obvious imports found throughout all our case studies and how people may have dealt with such materials at different stages while being crafted in multiple locational and temporal frameworks (e.g. Brysaert 2013). In this sense, Thomas (1996: 19) is useful in his assessment that detailed and context-sensitive studies should be allowed to affect larger-scale narratives. It is the tacking back and forth between the ‘local and now’, on the one hand, and the ‘regional/global and deep time’, on the other, that contextualises both types of scales, especially if each scale is contributing to larger dynamic networks with cross-over nodes via people and things.

As previously stated, people’s identities are dynamic and ever-changing, but so are things, objects and materials, and not only when they are handled by people (here and now). In addition, technical interventions to materials affect the state of preservation and the changing nature of objects and materials. This means that human manipulation can influence the altering of materials long after this took place. But things also change by themselves (over time and space): they erode, rot, collapse, expand and contract, change colour, texture and smell (see e.g. also Brysaert 2011 and references within). As such, the biography of an object, even the part of it after it has been excavated, which I see as an integral part of the *chaîne opératoire* of any object that we study/work on (see Brysaert 2011a), may illustrate the slow or fast (but, in any case, continual) change of objects and materials, whether we do something to them at that given time, or not. Understanding these processes (conservation issues) at work is therefore crucial to the interpretational process in our work as archaeologists (see Brysaert

2008). The biography of an object also begins (long) before we even touch it; this is nicely illustrated in how an ordinary beach pebble can become someone's property (Hodder 2012: 23-24), whether it will be used as an ad hoc tool, or whether it remains just a pebble, but nevertheless one that attracted (remember the camper's hammer tool), and as such gets appropriated. Other cases where deep time is embedded in the biography of an object include the Early Helladic weight or spool (TN<sup>2</sup> 707) from Tiryns (Rahmstorf 2008; Case Study I, Brysbaert and Vettters 2013), which dates to the Late Helladic IIIB Middle period (c. mid-13<sup>th</sup> century BC) when it seems to have been in use as a pestle in the production of Egyptian blue pigment material. Questions arise: How did an object, dating to at least 1000 years before (Early Helladic, 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC), end up being used as a pestle in this workshop, and why? As was realised both through the literature and the workshop studies at Tiryns, this ancient object curation and reuse was far from the only case that could clearly be identified at Tiryns and elsewhere. In the case of the Early Helladic weight, the object was assigned a new identity and function in its later Late Helladic IIIB Middle context, but to what extent did its earlier function still play a role in its curation until its later usage? Can such reuse and curation of such an object say anything about potential links to a long-gone past that is understood and perhaps even manipulated by the people who curated it in the first place? We may think, for example, about the famous case of the Elgin marbles and their history, how they ended up in the British Museum and what their current meaning is in terms of identity negotiations, both in Greece and in the U.K. 'Studying material traces of movement will focus on how factors such as materiality, mobility, hybridization, co-presence and conflict impact(ed) on the formation of identity and subjectivity, whether past or present' (Rowlands 2010: 236). The papers presented take such deep temporal and wide geographical perspectives on board and form an important framework in which more detailed studies need to be positioned in order to promote their full impact in as many scales as they belong to.

### Crafting the book

In the context of European and Mediterranean prehistoric crafting, the papers in this book highlight the daily lives of people of so-called distinct social classes who interacted with each other through creative crafting and, as such, produced both items of varying qualities and meanings, and also specific and multiple identities, *while* crafting and creating these exquisite material remains. This book is very much the joint effort of all authors who created and crafted this volume and its multiple themes and topics. These can be highlighted as follows:

In remarking that non-ferrous metalworking production sites in the prehistoric period have so far been limited and that one of the reasons often referred to is the seeming lack of evidence, **Daniel Sahlén** argues that it is more related to current preconceptions of the prehistoric metallurgical production site. His paper discusses the evidence of casting at two Late Bronze Age and Iron Age sites in Scotland, with the aim of reconstructing production on a site level and comparing these

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2 TN refers to the 'Tracing Networks' project database.

trends within and between sites. His investigation illustrates that the production of non-ferrous metals in late prehistoric Scotland was carried out not only at central sites with a socio-economic specialised production, but at a range of different site types. His conclusions compare well with evidence from other regions in north and west Europe, where the evidence from manufacture of non-ferrous metals shows a similar variety in the types of production sites for non-ferrous metals, a topic that will also recur later in this volume.

**Anna Sörman** uses the concept of ‘workshops’ as a starting point to review preconceptions about the social and spatial organisation of bronze crafting, focusing particularly on how it influences expectations of crafting evidence in the archaeological record. She postulates that ‘workshops’ and ‘workshop production’ are central to archaeological understanding of metalworking in Bronze Age societies and argues that assumptions of a permanent, customised crafting place hosting the full manufacturing process, as often implied by the term ‘workshop’, are unsuitable for understanding the nature of bronze crafting in southern Scandinavia during the Late Bronze Age. Instead, drawing on evidence from south-east Sweden, her research reveals that the craft is characterised as flexible, embedded and multi-locational. Furthermore, differences between loci where ornaments, on the one hand, and weapons, on the other, are crafted seem to relate to the intentions of their intended bearers and to demonstrate the heterogeneous organisation of prestige goods production. Sörman concludes that such user-oriented production provides an interesting example of the organisation of elite-motivated crafting outside the context of centralised states.

Research about the social structure of Iron Age craftsmanship is often based on the asserted existence of two well-separated social classes: elites on the one hand, artisans on the other. Through controlling the means of production and their economic predominance, elites would have controlled the artisans’ activities, while the artisans would be placed in a subaltern position within the social fabric of the community. **Alexis Gorgues** challenges these well-established ideas, mainly through a detailed analysis of archaeological contexts. In focusing on the northern part of the Iberian world, located between the Ebro River valley and the southern slopes of the French Central Massif, he considers social hierarchies in order to define precisely what context can be associated with “elites”. In analysing the evidence linked to craft activities and its repartition within social space, he demonstrates a clear relationship between elites’ mansions and skilled craft activities. He discusses the meaning of this correlation in order to demonstrate that the elites could intervene directly, as craftspersons, in specific production processes linked with highly skilled activities. Gorgues concludes that elites’ direct interest in technical activities was double: first, it was a crucial instrument in their networking strategies, and, second, technical skill could also help to construct their identities. This paper shows clearly how identities are totally context-specific and can blur conventional distinctions between elites and artisans.

Another aspect of investigating the technical and social relationship between artisans and elites that blurs boundaries sits in the meaning of the tools of specific trades. While tools are traditionally seen within the sphere of crafting only, **Verena Leusch and co-authors** discuss the social role of artisans or metallurgists within

the chalcolithic society, in the light of new comprehensive studies of archaeological materials and anthropological remains from the Varna I cemetery in Bulgaria. The use of gold plays an important role in this context as it highlights the appeal of certain artefacts and, at the same time, marks their profane and/or sacred importance within observed contexts. Here, the remarkable amount of tools and/or weapons that can be addressed as prestige objects is noteworthy. Their association with the metal craft has already been discussed in the available literature and is reviewed here based on the newly obtained data. The authors specifically question and discuss whether the tools found among the grave furniture of the 'rich' burials indicate the skilled manual work of the supposed social elite, or whether they should be regarded as abstract symbols of power. From this standpoint it is clear that tools refer not only to a craft but to a social class that, traditionally, would not be associated with crafting at all.

A totally different context of tool making and using is implied by military undertakings. Military commanders acquire their peak efficiency during fights and, in order to facilitate the transmission of orders, a warlord needs proper commandment tools. On the battlefield, musical instruments and banners play a crucial role in maintaining leadership within the clash of arms. In the Late Iron Age contexts of France and Spain, some of these instruments, which were produced by highly specialized craftsmen, have been excavated. These objects seem to have been strongly linked to just a few people whose social profile was quite exceptional. In focusing on the presence of military 'transmission' tools, mainly musical instruments, in Late Iron Age west Europe, **Alexandre Bertaud** investigates the identities of the artisans able to create such objects and asks whether these artisans were intimately linked to military elites, or even perhaps depended directly on the nobility. Through the analysis of these artefacts and their production processes, he aims to define the kind of craftspeople that could produce such instruments, while the study of these allows him to approach the notion of identity, both individual and collective. In investigating the morphology of these artefacts, which seems to indicate specific aesthetical and technical choices, Bertaud gains a better understanding of the prevailing choice-making processes that took place during the production of these instruments. This finally leads him to discuss the nature of the relationship between the users and the makers of these objects in context.

The paper by **Dioscorides Marín Castro and co-authors** focusses on the study of the chipped stone tools from the Minferri site, an Early Bronze Age settlement in the east sector of the Ebro valley in northeast Spain. In characterizing the whole lithic tool production processes, from the raw material procurement stage to their consumption, the authors investigate whether there was some form of crafting and economic specialisation within such settlements. Through holistically integrating the studies of raw materials, techno-morphological and use-wear analysis, they were able to evaluate the importance of lithic resources for the development of labour in the Bronze Age communities of northeast Iberia. The procurement strategies of the communities that used the evaporitic lithic material also illustrated the lesser prominent existence of metallurgical activities in this region, which seemed to have been complementary to the lithic well-developed and omni-present industry. From the investigation of both crafts, it became clear that within specific Early Bronze

Age Iberian communities, the procurement strategies underlying both lithic and metallurgical crafts were similar. The items produced by each type of material and their subsequent contexts of usage, however, were dictated by rather different conditions altogether, and these conditions eventually dictated the technological choices that these communities made in favour of lithic industries over that of metallurgy in this specific context.

The two final case-study papers offer grounds for complementary discussions on the main topic of this book during the west and central European Iron Age, and specifically in the Hallstatt cultural contexts. **Emilie Dubreucq** postulates that until recently, our understanding of metal smithing during this Protohistoric period has been developed mainly through the study of their end products. Therefore, she investigated the structure of production – , i.e. the workshop as a working place, the study of the wastes produced and the range of tools. As complementary sources, these also enable the characterisation of the artisans' activities while illustrating the organisation of their work, as well as their daily life. For her it was essential to characterise the features linked to metal craft between the end of the first Iron Age and the beginning of the second Iron Age. During this period, the concentration of power is particularly noticeable within the funerary world, where the aristocracy is particularly apparent. This was also a time when hill settlements and their suburban areas were reoccupied and refortified, and when they became real centres of power. These locations are regarded as the home of the elite, but also as centres of craft production. Thus, attempting to define the role(s) of the elite members and of the artisans in a society that grows more complex seems to be a particularly valid method of approaching the nature of their relationships.

Within this Hallstatt context, the final chapter by **Anne Filippini** approaches new aspects of the social status of craftspersons during the fifth century BC in the West Hallstatt area. Based on case-study material from two recent archaeological sites excavated at Bourges (Cher-France) and Lyon (Rhône-France), she investigated the most ancient metallurgical contexts in the region through a multidisciplinary approach. In particular, the extent of the craft production and the smithy activity were strong focuses, and her work on iron aimed to characterise and differentiate the smithy waste produce (slags, metal scraps, waste material, rough items) and other iron production remains that could be found at these sites. At the same time, she investigated the artefacts and the nature of their constitutive metals, as well as the ways the workshops were supplied with iron and the identification of different production modes. In this way, the smiths' very high level of specific know-how and the inherent internal organisation of the workshops became apparent. Filippini's study offered the opportunity to reveal the value of iron and all the social implications of metal productions within this west Hallstatt context. The results obtained led to refined understandings and interpretations of the social and economic roles of the craftspersons' status and, through these, their settlement occupation patterns.

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## Web resources

[www.transitionnetwork.org](http://www.transitionnetwork.org), as of 16/06/2015.