Prof. dr. Ann Brysbaert

Making, thinking and being together.
Past social practices in technological production.

2018–
Professor of Ancient Technologies, Materials and Crafts, Leiden University, Fac. of Archaeology, The Netherlands (LU, FdA).

2015–20
Principal Investigator of project: SETinSTONE. Awarded an ERC Consolidator grant: LU, FdA.

2018–20

2015-12/2017
Associate Professor, Material Culture Studies & Archaeological Sciences, LU, FdA.

2016-2018
Director of Research, LU, FdA.

01-06/2015
Lecturer in Archaeological Sciences, School of Humanities (Archaeology), University of Glasgow, Scotland.

2008-2013/4
Principal Investigator of: ‘Cross-Craft Interaction at Tiryns, Greece’ and co-initiator of the ‘Tracing Networks in the Mediterranean and Beyond’ project, funded by Leverhulme Research Grant. Universities of Leicester, Glasgow, and Exeter.

2014
Invited Professor, University of Bordeaux Montaigne, Maison Autonome and LaScArBx, France.

2013-15
Senior Marie Curie – Gerda Henkel Research Fellow, M4Human Programme. LU, FdA.

2010-13
Senior A. von Humboldt Research Fellow, University of Heidelberg, Germany.

2009-13
Academic course tutor for the Distance Learning (DL) MA programme, University of Leicester, School of Museum Studies.

2008-12
Professor in Ancient Greek Studies, DIKEMES, Athens, Greece.

2004-2009
Lecturer of Archaeology & Anthropology, Collections Care. Programme Director of the DL. Museum Studies.

2004-05
Post-doctoral fellowship, University of Tübingen, Germany. INSTAP funding: study and publish the painted plaster from Qatna and Tel Sakka.

2000-2004
PhD degree, University of Glasgow. Supervision: Dr. R.E. Jones, Prof. A.B. Knapp.

1998
ICCIROM Course: Conservation of Mural Paintings and Related Architectural Surfaces, Rome, Italy.

1993-1996
BSc in Archaeological Conservation, Institute of Archaeology, U.G.L. London, UK.

02-04/1991
Erasmus Exchange Programme, Egesat, Univ. Autonoma & Universitat de Barcelona, Spain.

10/1987-09/92
M.A. in Archaeology, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium. Major in Egyptian and Aegean Archaeology

http://archaeology.leiden.edu/organisation/staff/ann-brysbaert.html
https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Ann_Brysbaert
http://leidenuni.academia.edu/AnnBrysbaert
http://www.tracingnetworks.ac.uk/content/web/cross_craft_interaction.jsp
https://materialentanglements.org/people/
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Inaugural speech delivered by

Prof. dr. Ann Brysbaert

at the acceptance of Professor of Ancient Technologies, Materials and Crafts
at the Faculty of Archaeology
at Leiden University
on October 25, 2019.
Mijnheer de Rector Magnificus, dames en heren, honoured guests,

**Making, thinking and being together. Past social practices in technological production**

**Introduction**

Music: Fantasia in d by Abraham Van Den Kerckhoven, played by Jeroen Pijpers.

After having heard this magnificent piece of music on the Baroque organ of the beautiful Grote Auditorium here in Leiden, let me ask you all a simple question: where does the music sit in this stunning performance? … This could perhaps be answered by posing a multiple choice question:

1. In the organ?
2. In the head of the organist?
3. In the coordination of his finger and foot movements?
4. In the music score?
5. In the head and body of the composer?
6. In the air molecules carrying the sound?

The answer is naturally all these options. This beautiful music performance is the seamless interplay between all six options together. The music is performed on the organ, by pressing its keys and bars, the small hammers fall on the strings that send out an acoustic vibration which reverberates through the air. Before and during this touching of keys and bars, the organist knows by heart when to touch which key, feather light or solidly strong, fast or slow. His planning and thinking of the next key is constantly in the make, the music is becoming as it is played, until its last note has been performed, and its sound had died away. The organist, Jeroen Pijpers, knows exactly which of the keys to touch by which of his 10 fingers, and which bars with his two feet. The coordination of hands and feet is as much driven by his body as by his thinking and his experience. While playing, his entire body works in perfect harmony. There is no boundary between his body and his thinking nor between his body and the musical instrument: they are one and together at work, in one performance. And simultaneously, the organist’s eyes follow the notes on the music scores which are internalized and transferred to hands and feet, via the body, via the brain, and expressing his feelings, too. We often hear that a piece of music was played passionately, and it may move us to tears while the music simultaneously moves and vibrates through the air we breathe. Listening to music we like keeps us concentrated in the now and here, so the music sits in us, too. But it also sat, originally, with its maker and inventor, the Flemish composer Abraham Van Den Kerckhoven. So, no matter which answer you had given, you would have been entirely correct, but not completely; let us, therefore, set aside multiple choice questions such as this one.

What this beautiful music and its performance illustrates, ladies and gentlemen, is the complete and utter connectedness of people with things and materials. Let it stand as a symbol for the interlacing of technical knowledge with skills, for the forging of a performance through doing, making, and crafting. The fabulous Delphic tripod was once contested by Apollo and Herakles, and its three legs will on this occasion lead you on a journey through ancient technologies, materials and crafts this sunny Friday afternoon.

Before we set off into this triple realm, many of you may wonder what, if any, is the point of a chair in ancient technologies, materials and crafts, especially its relevance for the world today? Ancient technologies new, digital, technologies, perhaps? And ancient materials, a field fraught with loss and decay because of bad or no preservation at all? And what about these crafts, the poor substitute of the arts? What is the point of placing these topics into one academic...
position? Let me start by confessing that I chose that title myself and that I plan to convince you of its merits in the next 40 minutes. If I convince half of you, I'll be happy.

**Ancient Materials**

It is fascinating and inspiring to study how people in the past solved issues in their day-to-day lives through complex techniques of handling, making, and how they learned to communicate via situated learning. Archaeological knowledge about ancient technologies, and people's making and crafting together, constantly illustrate how relevant these observations and findings are for us today. This might be one of the ways to convince you today that the title of the chair I have held since last year is appropriate. For example, it is highly useful to observe how people dealt with rubbish in their daily lives. It has been said that civilization can be measured by how people deal with their rubbish and how they treat animals, and yes, we still have some lessons to learn! When we have finished our yoghurt pot which is made of plastic, we may perhaps clean it out before throwing it into the bin, if a separate one for plastic exists. This has recently changed in Leiden. But its use-life has expired, it has lost its value, so it gets tossed out.

Let us for a moment travel back in time to about 1300-1200 BCE. In the Aegean Bronze Age, our plastics were people's ceramics. When clay is fired it becomes quite difficult to entirely destroy, so it turns up in excavations in large quantities. At the Late Bronze Age site of Tiryns in the East Argolid, heaps of ceramic sherds were found in a workshop inside the massive fortification walls of its Lower Citadel. Lorenz Rahmstorf (2008, electronic catalogue by find type: 138-168) recognized something odd about a large number of such sherds, both decorated and undecorated, fine and coarse wares, and called them 'circular modified sherds'. Often, these broken pieces of ceramics, from the body of a pot or flask, or in some cases the foot of a goblet, were modified by clipping or hammering off the edges of the sherd into a roughly circular shape. In some cases, these modified sherds had a hole drilled through them. At this point, you may ask yourselves, ladies and gentlemen: did these people have nothing better to do than spending time on these, seemingly useless activities? Far from! After having been broken and ready to be thrown out, these sherds were being re-appropriated by these people, and, with a little work, they were given a new life, a new use. These could now be simple spindle whorls, or lids and stoppers of otherwise not preserved flasks, perhaps made from leather or basketry, as we can still see them in Greek ethnographic museums. A short additional study illustrated that such practices were already common on Crete in the Early Bronze Age (S. Todaro on Phaistos) and continued to be in vogue well into the Roman times (S. Rotroff, Corinth). But what was perhaps most striking in Tiryns was that these simple and recycled materials were in use in a palatial workshop where uncommon practices of modifying materials can be observed in the production and use of exotic goods. The raw materials being worked there such as amber, glass, ivory, gold and Lapis Lacedaimonius, were all materials foreign to the Argolid, and the ivory rod, wall brackets and faience vessels were not typical for Mycenaean palatial contexts. So what the working practices in this workshop also highlights, next to thorough recycling of materials is that the artisans’ practices amalgamated both purely local and completely exotic activities and that some of these production lines cannot be characterized as one or the other (Brysbaert and Vetters 2013). These artisans were used to working with completely different types of materials and did so accordingly, depending on time, availability and demand. The stamp of a craftsman being a specialist, therefore, may have to be revised in such contexts.

Also older building materials such as painted plaster, no longer deemed aesthetically satisfactory, providing insulation, or expressing the status of the resident, or all of these, were reused and recycled. Reuse is when something is used in the same way as before. For example, when a shirt has become too small, it can next be worn by your little brother or sister. In contrast, recycling involves at least some form of processing...
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East Mediterranean painted plaster, sometimes also termed ‘wall paintings and frescoes’, were used to decorate several Late Bronze Age palaces on the Mycenaean Mainland but also on Minoan Crete, in the Cyclades, and in several palatial or elite centres in the East Mediterranean, the most famous ones being located at Tell el-Dab’a in the Egyptian Delta (Bietak et al. 2007; Brysbaert 2002, 2008; Becker 2019; see also Jones 1999, 2005; Maran et al. 2015). These paintings showed intriguing scenes of female processions bringing gifts, of hunting and feasting, of music and dance performances and boxing boys, of entire cities watching boats arriving, and of mysterious rituals involving blue monkeys and crocus flowers. But, as much as nowadays, after these scenes had decorated the palace walls for some time, people wanted to redecorate their dwellings and decided that these scenes needed refreshing or removing altogether. In some cases, the paintings were stripped of the walls during which process they were broken up in hundreds of undefined pieces, and were practically recycled in new painted plaster coats, or as fills for the floors in new buildings. The Plakes house in Mycenae provides a very good example of this but it is far from the only one. Placing broken painted plaster in the floor packing was a practical way of getting rid of rubbish which was, at the same time, compatible with the building materials used in the newly built set of rooms (Iakovidis 2013: 245-256). However, in other cases, the processes which took place are less easy to explain. The very finely layered fresco fragments found at Knossos, on Crete, in a small separate room in the House of the Frescoes were not just dumped there but neatly stacked, and removed from their thicker backing plaster layer (Brysbaert 2003; Shaw and Chapin 2006). At the elite centre of Gla in Boeotia, similar painted fragments were found in a rock crevice (Iakovidis 1998; Brysbaert 2008). Both occurrences have been seen as perhaps serving a more ritual or purposeful deposition rather than just rubbish dumping, but their exact meaning still alludes us. Finally, some painted plaster fragments were found inside a 13th century BCE furnace in Room 210 located in a palatial Tiryns workshop where remains of metal working, such as moulds, crucibles, a hidden bronze ingot, metal scrap and slag were found. These remains define the workshop as a metallurgical one, while incomplete and other glass beads, an Egyptian blue pigment lump, a terracotta figurine, a miniature vessel and an Aeginitan cooking pot were also found in the same context. The cooking pot, which was set in the floor of Room 210, was repurposed within the metallurgical processes of the workshop. The glass beads, miniature vessel and figurine were possibly part of rituals connected to the metal working practices. The Egyptian blue material is blue because copper forms a blue colour in the glass phase of the material. But bronze scrap may provide the same result, implicating that metal scrap, through Egyptian blue pigment, may end up being painted on plaster as we know from so many examples (Brysbaert and Vetters 2013: 185-186). This little blue lump thus links metal workers with glass workers and wall painters. These crafts cross over through the physicality of materials, losing value in the hands of the metal smith but gaining value for the glass worker and painter through recycling, and, even more crucial, through collaborative efforts and interaction between people and their crafting practices. This phenomenon was also known from the Egyptian Amarna glass and metal workshops (Shortland 2000). But what were the painted plaster fragments doing in this metallurgical workshop? At the time, we thought that they were supports for the round crucibles in the oven, it is one of many possibilities. When temperatures of 850-900 °C needed to be reached, plaster could withstand this because the dissolution temperature for calcite to quicklime is from around that temperature and above. The same temperature range is needed to produce frit, a form of glass paste and known to the Mycenaeans in the form of Egyptian blue pigment and the basis for faience. A similar temperature range is needed to make sure that ceramics are fired thoroughly enough so that the process becomes irreversible, i.e. that the hydrogen bond in the clay is broken and that water
is driven off by this heat so it can no longer return into clay paste. Information plaques at the Site of Eleftherna on Crete also teach us that the funerary pyres of crematorium A, used to cremate the human remains on site reached 800-1000 °C and burned for several hours. The same plaques also mention how close the construction of these pyres were to close those described in Homer who refers to these high temperatures as being able to consume men, animals and objects. Studying workshop contents is fascinating and even when these are determined as metallurgical or other, studying every flake and tiny strip of material found in these rooms enhances a better understanding of the people’s ways of life and work within such places. The artisans at Tiryns produced metal items but also collaborated with glass producers, they placed their trust in religious rituals as part of their practice, and they recycled what they could because they thoroughly understood the compatibility of the materials. And this is what you may have noted from the above observations, ladies and gentlemen: a common temperature range, 850-900/1100 °C, affects all these materials. How is that possible and what makes this possible? And what is the importance of this?

Ancient Technologies
This leads the excursion into ancient technologies, specifically that of pyrotechnologies all of which influence and transform the materials by fire, in one way or another. The materials linked with pyrotechnologies are ceramics, metal and glass or vitreous materials, and plaster. Lime-based plaster is in fact the oldest of all these, not ceramics, as many may think. Already in the 1970s Gourdin and Kingery (1975: 134, 139) and later Kingery and colleagues (Kingery et al. 1988) discussed in great detail the origin of and development of the oldest pyrotechnological innovation of lime plaster, dating back to pre-pottery and Neolithic phases in the regions of Anatolia (Asikli Hüyük and Çayönü Tepesi), Mesopotamia and Palestine (Tell Ramad, Jericho). Of great interest to the researchers was the large amounts of lime plaster present on the floors which did not indicate accidental firing of the wrong material but: “...force us to the conclusion than an organized community effort involving simple kilns or enclosed fires occurred in the pre-ceramic Neolithic.” (Gourdin and Kingery 1975: 149). A renewed study on the topic in the 1980s though brought out that the “invention” of lime plaster can be traced back to at least the sites of Epi-Paleolithic Geometric Kebaran (ca. 12,000 BCE) and its use in architecture to the Natufian (Hayonim Cave, 10,300-8500 BCE). Further innovations show a close affiliation with the development of ceramics in the testing and usage of mineral aggregates, surface slips and burnishing (Kingery et al. 1988: 219, 244). Pre-Pottery Neolithic B plastered skulls known from Jericho, Beisamoun and Tell Ramad show the intricate work people were able to create by dissolving lime into quicklime at the temperature of at least 850 °C, slaking it with water to make a plaster putty mouldable into facial features over an armature and remains of actual skulls, and decorate it with pigments to give the objects a skin colour. Shells were set into the eye sockets, just below the eye brow. The latter was modelled in a plaster strip in the same fashion as the beard. Paint for hair and lips finished the face.

What fascinates me, ladies and gentlemen, is how the knowledge of dissolution temperatures and mixing materials, were transferred from working with one type of material to another. Similar is the spread of the technological knowledge of making plaster over large areas with distinct material cultural traits, despite the fact that these technologies are both energy- and labour-intensive (Kingery et al. 1988: 236-7). Interesting parallels can be observed based on ethnographical fieldwork. For example, Eliade (1978: 81) states: ‘Like the shamans, the smiths were reputed to be “masters of fire”’. Eliade heard many myths and stories while doing ethnographic work and the Yakut people, a Turkic group living in the Sakha republic in Russia, said that ‘[t]he first smith, the first shaman and the first potter were blood brothers.’ He continues: ‘In employing fire s/he caused the transformation of matter from one condition into another.’ Moreover, ‘[t]he first potter who,
with the aid of live embers, was successful in hardening those shapes which he had given to his clay, must have felt the intoxication of the demiurge: he had discovered a transmuting agent! That which natural heat – from the sun or the bowels of the earth – took so long to ripen, was transformed by fire at a speed hitherto undreamed of. … the great secret lay … in discovering how to 'perform' faster than Nature, …[...] and without peril, to interfere in the processes of the cosmic forces. No wonder that smithing has often been associated with magico-religious forces and powers. The gods Hephaistos and Athena come to mind here because both are associated with crafts or smithing, but going into this direction would shape a different story altogether.

Recently, Sven Hansen (2017) has discussed how ceramics influenced working with metals in their alloying process, and that the mixing of metals is a distinctive phenomenon of the second half of the 5th millennium BCE. Metallurgists already knew in the 5th millennium BCE at Varna (Bulgaria), Nahal Mishmar (Israel), and Mehrgargh (Pakistan) that fillers in ceramics changed, and even improved, the properties of the clay and its final product after firing. Beyond pottery making itself this was of crucial importance to produce successful moulds and crucibles from refractive clay (Evely et al. 2012), the functional ceramics which had to withstand high heat while the liquid metal was poured from the crucible into the mould. The ceramics could not crack or break, and very likely it may have taken a while to experiment before the correct refractive clay mixtures were ready to tolerate high temperatures. Is it then, as Hansen argues, such a big step to mixing metals too, and see what that led to? Perhaps not, and success was reached in arsenic copper and tin bronzes at specific points in time in the 4th and 3rd millennia BCE. But was it that simple? Was there, first, that much metal around to experiment with? And what if it went wrong? Who determined how much arsenic or tin needed to be added to reach the desired effect, how was its testing done, and where did these raw materials come from? We may never have answers to all these questions but discoveries of new materials will certainly keep us on our toes. The most recent findings, reported only in September this year by Prof. Ernst Pernicka, Dr. Daniel Berger and their team, show now much clearer that the tin found as an alloy to copper from the second millennium BCE finds from Israel, Turkey and Greece may not have originated from the Afghan region or the Taurus Mountains, but from places like Cornwall and Devon. These findings show the complexity of people's movements over large distances in the context of trade networks where highly appreciated raw materials such as amber, glass and copper were driving forces (https://phys.org/news/2019-09-enigma-bronze-age-tin.html; accessed 25/09/2019; Berger et al. 2019). The study of innovative technologies is a recognised field of study and as a discipline it dates back to the beginning of last century. Ground breaking studies are still needed and the Anchoring Innovation project, which started in 2017 and which is held at several Dutch Universities, led by prof. I. Sluiter and prof. A. Lardinois, is in the position of forming the forefront of such new work for the next decades to come.

Also in 2017, an important volume came out, edited by P. Stockhammer and J. Maran, with the title: Appropriating Innovations. Entangled Knowledge in Eurasia 5000-1500 BCE. In reviewing its 21 chapters, three observations struck me:

1. Innovative technologies seem to emerge together. One can perhaps describe this best as a technical package without which the individual innovations would not have succeeded in getting anchored (Chapters 5, 6, 9, 11, 14, 17, 19). As many of you know, I strongly believe in cross-craft interaction practices in any sphere of activity, whether farming, crafting, or monumental building. Perhaps such technical packages will be recognized more frequently as a result of thinking about them in relation to cross-craft interaction, but also in relation to embedded activities and practices (Brysbaert 2011, 2012). This is not new: already Gordon Childe (1925) recognized such
technology packages in his *Neolithic Revolution* and so did Andrew Sherratt (1981) in his concept of ‘Secondary Product Revolution’. Gordon Childe (1925) also linked the technological and economic innovations with human mobility and communication between societies in Asia and Europe. However, due to his diffusionist approach, he became less popular once Renfrew argued for the possibility of independent developments, in different regions, of the same technologies. Despite this, and alongside Stockhammer and Maran, I believe that Gordon Childe still has valuable thoughts for us to reconsider, especially when it comes to thinking about technology and materials, and especially asking useful questions.

2. A second observation made in several chapters of the book (Chapters 3, 5, 16, 17) which fascinated me was that older technologies may happily continue to exist next to newcomers rather than being replaced. This makes a lot of sense since habits of consumption and, therefore, also those of production, when things work well, do not change easily. We only need to think of ourselves having to learn yet again another version of word processing, moving over to electronic banking, swapping to smart phones and android systems. Many will do this with pleasure while others see it as a waste of time: why change something when it works well? Bread has been baked in the same way for millennia. It is mostly the scale and means of baking that changes. The Old Egyptian toolkit of a carpenter contained the same tools and tool shapes than those the traditional carpenter has now in his tool box. Only the metal parts are a different metal. But perhaps the best example is the use of flint and obsidian, known to have been in use until into the 20th century CE in Greece, not as stone tools by themselves but embedded in the bottom of threshing sledges.

3. The third observation is that innovative technologies could essentially be driven socially rather than technologically. It is true that through crafting and making, we often also share things, we connect and engage with an audience and it makes us feel alive when we can explain how we made something and when people show their appreciation. Crafting certainly is a social phenomenon because it connects us to other people, but it is just as much a technological phenomenon as well, it combines the two. It is the satisfaction that one feels in making something that is appreciated by others – clients, friends, family, the boss, or apprentices – that constitutes social capital. It is that ‘social capital’ which drives the Transition Towns and many citizen-driven initiatives and cooperative working groups that result in a new type of economy, the Social Solidarity Economy (SSE, see Brysbaert and Kretchmann 2018). Is it then a surprise that such economies grow in places where things do not go well and where crises have struck hard? People as social beings find each other again, through making things work out, together, and they find ways to be sustainable in small groups, while caring for each other. This resounds very much also what Tim Ingold (1993) describes in his taskscape: working and doing things together while caring for each other. Expanding on this topic would be the subject of a lecture by itself.

I forgot to tell you an important matter concerning the concept of technologies which helps us to move on and link technologies to yet another part of our tripod. Most of you know that the region consisting of the Aegean, West Anatolia, the Levantine coast and parts of Egypt, where I have worked on and off for 30 years now is close to my heart for many very good reasons. For many additionally good reasons the Aegean rises above that and already did so when I turned seven and I found my father’s books on ancient Greek but failed to be able to read even though I had just learnt to read at school. Frustrated by that, I turned to his books on temples and pyramids instead. But ancient Greek was the first thing I wanted to get to grips with in high school. After five years of ancient Greek before I attended university classes in fundamental philosophy and art history, the concept of
technē became my focus. Technology as a term recognises the connection between the ancient Greek words technē and logos. Technē is most often translated as ‘crafts’, and often opposed to the arts. Needless to say, or perhaps not, our understanding of the crafts versus the arts is a modern one whereby crafts are seen as the poor sister of the arts. The crafts are the hands-on practical set of activities that produce mundane day-to-day items while the latter is considered the much more noble form of expressing oneself through materials, aesthetics, and techniques. Art pour l’art is just one of those thoughts emanating from this opposition. I do not agree with this division between crafts and arts, it only results from a rather limited view of what both mean.

Crafts (ancient and modern)

And this brings us to the third leg of our already proverbial tripod journey. Archaeologists like everything in three’s: stone age, bronze age, iron age – although it was argued by Damian Carrington (2019) that we may soon have to add the plastic age to the series. We like early, middle and late bronze ages, we like high, middle and low chronologies, etc. But back to crafting. The word ‘crafting’ can evoke anything from a DIY shed visited on weekends by ‘the guys’ while ‘the girls’ get together in knitting and book clubs. These stereotypical notions of crafting and gender have triggered strong reactions in the last few decades. The ‘Do It Together’, or DIT movement, emphasizes instead the embedded social character of crafting; and in doing so, it breaks through at least some of the gender stereotypes. Other such movements are the repair cafes, Fab Labs, Fab Academies, and the MaakStudio in Leiden. These voluntary movements bring people of all ages and backgrounds from different parts of the world together. But also the Transition Towns can be understood in this context. People with common interests in producing things and turning their ideas into material realities often also share a conscious need to reduce their carbon footprint in repairing broken things, reusing older items, and recycling as often as possible those materials which would otherwise pollute our beautiful earth. As we saw earlier, we can still learn from past recycling patterns!

Crafting and making, now and in the past, are thoroughly embodied social practices: while people make something they are there with their whole being. In producing anything from music to bike wheels or a tasty meal, people work with a ‘body of raw materials’ and form these into newly created bodies that may result in finished objects. People, materials, objects and contexts are all connected through a ‘glue’ consisting of their knowledge, experience and skills to act and transform. Simultaneously, past people may also have interacted with the world of symbols, ancestors, and other beings. At each and every moment where people and materials converge, crafting and making is part of it, and it can become innovative as the result of curious (and inherently risky) explorations of materials, skills, each other, and the self.

A craftsperson or an artisan is both a maker and a thinker. Both aspects are part of a unifying social process in which crafting is a way of exploring, of problem-encountering and –solving, whether the end result is a tangible object or a wonderful music and dance performance. As such, crafting becomes the process of building personal self-identity (Sennett 2009), whether the craftsperson is an architect, a baker, a carpenter, a nurse, a gardener, or a political activist. The self-identifying power of what we do and make has for long been very well anchored in our name-giving and we can see this across language boundaries too. For example, the name Miller originally referred to the person who owned a mill where farmers could let their grain be grinded into flour. In the Netherlands we have the names Mulder and Mulders, in Belgium De Molenaere and Meunier, in Germany Müller, in Greece Mylonas, in Finland Mylläri. And this can be found for many professions: smiths, bakers, etc. Especially the Netherlands have a wealth of such family names and you are famous for this also abroad. Having a profession, or possessing the skills of a craft goes far back in time. We can travel back in time to the end of the Mycenaean period during the Late Bronze Age and look at the Linear B tablets, the first written Greek records. They refer to many people with specific professions: textile workers, sheep herders, ox-drivers,
carpenters, wall builders, perfume makers, military people guarding the coasts, tax collectors, copper or bronze workers, glass workers, and many others (for overview: Nakassis 2013). The tablets, most of which were found at the Palace of Pylos in Messenia and at Knossos on Crete describe in some detail the economic transactions between the palatial administration and the people who lived and worked in their territories. Typical texts (e.g. Py Jn series, see Smith 1992-1993: 179-180, 211) indicate, for example, how one and a half to five kg of copper or bronze was distributed to an individual smith. This was expected to be worked by the smith who received this ratio, into a set number of weapons such as arrow heads or javelins. For that work and especially depending on their status as smiths (working through the ta-ra-si-ja or di-do-si systems or not), they may receive remuneration (Nakassis 2013: 165), or own a piece of land on which they could grow their own crops. Some paid taxes, others were exempt (Smith 1992-1993: 206). I will come back to these fascinating tablets in a moment.

Making something is part of a process that involves thinking and reflecting about what to make and how to make it. These thoughts and reflections are transformed into tangible items while thinking and reflecting continues. Indeed, thinking does not stop once the hands get into action as we saw earlier on with the music performance. Considering crafting in this way resonates Ratto’s concept of critical making (2011: 253). Critical making focuses on the shared acts of making in which value is achieved through the act of shared construction, joint conversation and reflection. While Ratto’s (2011: 253) understanding of this concept is applied to our contemporary context, it is of use, too, in archaeological and anthropological contexts. There, it seems that most, if not all, artisans, according to Ingold (2013: 6-7, 2011: 17-18, 56) may have been critical makers. While crafting, making and being together, routine actions, such as sawing a plank, need constant physical adjustments as the work goes on. And perhaps, we still could all be critical makers, especially when making and thinking about archaeological replication practices and the learning curves involved, but also in our teaching, in the class room or in the field.

Crafting is a technical as much as a social series of practices, as we saw earlier, and this tends to create social distinction. Crafting is about making and breaking, about thinking while doing, about becoming and being, and about being together. Someone who, becomes very skilled in what s/he does for a living, through training and life-long practicing, develops differently than someone who does not follow that path. Technical and social distinctions are logical consequences of such level of making, and are linked to value attributions at various levels. But the more we specialize in what we do, the more we need others, too. In both past and present, material items have been and 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 joint interactions and activities. The action of making and the outcome of the crafted objects connect cultures, communities and generations. Handmade objects have a story to tell as they gathered time while being made. They connect us to our past and to our histories (after Greenlees 2011: 5).

Crafting, or making are ‘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). 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 that crafts, their material outcomes and aligned social practices, in the past or present, do not stand on their own. Instead, they are interlinked, socially, politically, economically at any given stage through material acquisition, any part of their production lines, their consumption, their reuse and recycling and final discard (Cross-craft interaction: Brysbaert 2007, 2008, 2011b).
We should still briefly return to the Linear B tablets I mentioned a moment ago. What is totally fascinating about these is the following: people seem to have had a profession, carpenter, smith, textile worker, but many of them also had a second, other, job. Smiths that receive annually a few kilos of copper or bronze will have worked this into weapons within a week according to a colleague who has tested this out by experimenting, so this would hardly constitute a living. So they may have done other smithing work as well: for themselves, for their local communities, the dámos, or for the religious community, the priests, and the sanctuaries they dedicated to. They just needed to get access to the raw materials. Or they may have done different work altogether, such as being a farmer or holding office in the palace administration for the rest of the time.

Perhaps the best case study where ancient technologies, materials and crafts come together is our current ERC Consolidator-funded project, SETinSTONE. Especially in the 14th and 13th century BCE the region of the Argive Plain and its surroundings was a changing place where, on a gigantic scale, monumental constructions were being built into their final shape. Many cemeteries grew in size or were newly established in this region and beyond. At the same time, large-scale pottery making, metallurgy, the fashioning of luxury items for the elites, potentially also textile working and perfume production are all crafts mentioned in the Linear B tablets as we have seen. People in the region were mainly subsistence farmers, but they also produced high-level crafts, and were a critical workforce of the monumental-scale construction. None of this would be possible without many people being on the move: between home and farm land, between quarries and building sites, between workshops and resource extraction places for fuel and raw materials. Well-organised planning of these construction activities meant that also the infrastructure needed to be in place. Roads had been built in the region already a few centuries before the famous Mycenaean Highways were created. These impressive, sometimes stone-built, roads connected Mycenae with several other centres in the region and allowed people to travel for multiple reasons and with plenty of different cargoes. A recent case study in labour costs for that important 13th century BCE shows that when human and animal efforts for monumental building, domestic pottery production and house construction in the region are combined, these efforts may not have had a detrimental impact on the Mycenaean society of that time as a whole (Brysbaert, in press), since far more people were still involved in subsistence work. Many more figures are being prepared as we speak, both by my team and myself, so these statements will become refined over the next year. Together with Irini Vikatou, Daniel Turner, Victor Klinkenberg, Yannick Boswinkel and Riia Timonen, we have now entered the last year of this exciting project and some of its results will be presented in our workshop next week, and in several PhD defences during the coming year.

Ancient technologies, materials and crafts in the faculty

Having come to the end of the tripod journey, there is a second tripod I want to share my views about, the tripod of the faculty of Archaeology with its three departments: world archaeology, archaeological sciences, and heritage and museum studies. Some say: our faculty is divided in three departments while I strongly believe that it is built on these three departments, for the very good reason that it structures our administration and teaching, and soon perhaps even more. It structures, it does not divide. The strength of our faculty lies in the combination of all three departments at the levels of teaching and research. Having taught in contexts of world archaeology (at Leicester, Athens), archaeological sciences (at Leiden, Glasgow, Leicester) and museum studies and collection management and heritage (at Leicester, Athens), I believe it is crucial to connect these three ways of working with archaeology in the minds of our students from the very start so that they open up to the possibilities this offers for jobs, research and serving the community. We cannot expect our society to reach out to us at the university, leave alone embracing archaeology as a need
through which to understand ourselves and the past better, unless the seeds for this are planted within its own very fertile soil, i.e. with the students.

Our teaching crosses boundaries and our research, too. No one studying material culture which, structurally, falls under the department of archaeological sciences, can maintain that they work decontextualized. This automatically means that our work is anchored in a region and a time frame which then often fits with one of the wide range of units in the department of world archaeology. Equally important, none of us, nowadays, can maintain not to care about our heritage, our museum collections, our responsibilities concerning our heritage, and how we should be caring for it to ensure its future. When I was asked to take up this position I promised to sit at the intersection of the three departments, not just for its structure but also for its content in terms of research and teaching. Everyone in material culture studies crosses over boundaries and it brings, with it, the creativity that comes with curiosity and innovation. As Mary Douglas (1966) advocated in her seminal work *Purity and Danger*, boundaries and liminal spheres entail risks, dangers and unknown places. But is it not our task and obligation, as university staff, to cross boundaries? To take risks? And to be creative? And take our students on such journeys so we all continue to learn, get excited and live in fascination for the past, the present and the future? How can we as archaeologists maintain that we are interested in how past people lived and worked, if we are not in the least interested by what people do and make today, both at home and in other parts of the world? Crossing boundaries, whether geographical, social, technological and even emotional ones, will bring us all to a new country, to new territory. It sets us off on a journey, we become the apprentice again. We will need to be open-minded to learn new things, to be humble and accept others and their ways of life, and what they have to teach us. I guess that the journey in which crossing technologies and crossing crafts has helped my own apprentice journey all along. And it is still not done, the learning and the traveling, and it likely never will because they so much go hand in hand, as already Gordon Childe pointed out. Horden and Purcell (2000: 385) have written that it was the high levels of mobility in Greek history that in fact allowed for the much needed stability people craved. People moved and travelled to work, to shop and trade their goods, to buy new materials, to learn a new profession, to visit friends and family. In the past and now, people created connections, through all these activities and their far-reaching mobility. Moving and travelling is intrinsically connected with stability, but certainly not to being static.

**Ancient technologies, materials and crafts in the wider world**

What attracts me most about this new position is the fact that it energises my work, both research and teaching, in even more interdisciplinary directions. And this brings me to the third tripod where archaeology and especially studies on ancient technologies, materials and crafts form a tripod with one leg in each of the alfa-beta-gamma sciences. In the group of material culture studies we employ many different analytical and other techniques to investigate the archaeological material in order to suggest and provide answers: microscopy for which we have a world-class lab, instrumental analysis for which we constantly build up our networks with colleagues in the Netherlands and abroad. We carry out experimental replications, and we study existing communities that still employ pre-industrial technologies from which we may learn plenty more. Finally, with the data sets in our hands we try to make sense of these using also social anthropological and other theoretical frameworks in which our hypothetical thinking about our data may result in a meaningful narrative about the past in all its colourful facets and rich detail. I look forward to be teaching across all three departments within the faculty, and I hope to motivate and supervise students to think across boundaries as early as possible in their own careers.
Ladies and gentlemen, our world is riddled with challenges. Often older generations say that the young people have never learnt to live through difficult times, getting everything on a silver plate. But is that so? The climate and other crises are hardly a tasty serving on a silver plate. A training in archaeology, and more specifically, in how people creatively learnt to cope with day-to-day challenges in their environment in the past is so relevant to today that I cannot stress this enough. We still have much still to learn. I admire the climate activists in Sweden, Belgium, and now in the entire world. Yes, they miss classes in school but they are fully conscious of the world around them and while actively being involved, they learn much: to express themselves in a nuanced way over what worries them, to demand being heard, to learn to interact with politicians, researchers and older generations, to be politically and socially engaged in matters that have an impact on them and on their future families, and to be empowered to stand up and make their points clear to the world. They should not stop, they should be followed by all young people until the older generation supports them and the necessary measures are understood and taken. It is precisely this moving out of our comfort-zones and away from home which is what makes us open-minded, perhaps vulnerable but also strong, and creative, and we learn most along such journeys. There are so many examples of how past people moved out of their comfort zones and started again, in a new job, another land, with a distant journey ahead (e.g. Molloy 2016; Petronotis 2017). From time to time we should take a leaf from their book and to you, students, I say the following: express yourselves, know what you want and spread your wings beyond the cosy Netherlands. Go on an apprentice journey, learn and teach, it will make you richer from every perspective. Learning any type of technological skills is crucial, whether IT or a skill for which you need your hands and your whole being. Equally important is having and taking time to train in these skills, to develop, to be creative, as past practices teach us. We also ask you: take ownership and responsibility of your education. We can help by pointing out how you can contribute to a more flexible programme suited to your personal needs. We also have the responsibility to teach you, the next generation, how our constantly updated education is geared towards your future, through ongoing research which is linked to current issues: the climate crises, problem solving, working and failing economic and political systems, and more. Our contribution sits in providing technologically updated instruction, providing the critical tools needed to distinguish real from false facts and knowledge, and in teaching you to think critically and express this, while remaining empathetic to your surroundings. That way, we want you to develop further into responsible citizens who take ownership of knowledge and your actions. We hope that, through being with us for a few years that you learn to employ these, often transferrable, skills to sustain yourselves, your families and the entire society in which you live and work, and, that, in turn, you will pass on your knowledge and skills again to the next young ones.

Today, everything needs to be done faster and in larger quantities. As we give out of our hands more and more to the digitization of our lives, we lose the hands-on experience in daily tasks, which, at the same time, seems to affect us deeply. Why so? The lack of time results in burnouts, the brain circuit does not get the chance to cool down and recharge, the body cannot refuel. It is exactly in times like this that crafting seems to become important again and this is no coincidence, in my view. During the industrial revolution the Arts and Crafts Movement arose in reaction to the ugliness, speed and impersonal character of production chains, set in full-speed motion by the newly discovered steam engines and machines. Modern technologies seem to disconnect us from everything of what past technologies provided us with: identity, skills related to using hands, social personal face-to-face contacts, the empowerment of performing for an audience. Precisely then do we look to find such values again. After a full working week, and even during it, we need our sports clubs, we make things like jewellery, cards, and IKEA furniture, cook for each
other, help out our friends and neighbours in the garden, play with our children, we volunteer in soup kitchens or become bike buddies, and we may knit pullovers for our nephews. In Leiden there are 'kluswoningen' and 'zelfbouwwijken' ((DIY houses and neighbourhoods) to allow people to be involved in the building of their own house, sometimes even at the level of the entire neighbourhood. These are “slow” ways of dealing with speed, stress, lack of time for each other, and lack of recognition for what we do and who we are, especially if we are different. In such activities we find again what we are about: social creatures with common interests and values to share. It is through these hands-on activities that we express ourselves, communicate and appreciate, and these remain some of our most fundamental human needs.

This is also expressed in the Transition Town Movements against neoliberalism/capitalism which take this all to another, also political, next level. Perhaps the movement, most suitable to this inaugural address, with a political, environmental and activist taste, is what has been called Craftivism, run by the Craftivist Collective, since about 2005. Craftivism is best understood as a movement in which crafts are used to advance a political agenda (Poole 2019). The Guardian has since published a series of articles highlighting the phenomenon. People made satirical posters and plastered them on bus shelters all over Paris in protest against the corporate take-over of the climate talks in the UN COP21 meetings while artists brought over ice from Greenland to visualize the effects of climate change (Buckingham 2015). “We want to reach people through innovation, whether that’s through surprise, beauty, story or art. And especially when we’re working on a global campaign, images have the power to reach people when words fail,” said the then Greenpeace Media spokeswoman. Let us hope, in October 2019, that we have already walked the longest part of the journey before we will be heard! “Craftivism is like punk”, says Noshe Iqbal, but while …”knitting is not the Ramones, through painstaking collective action, craftivism has become an unlikely social and political force” (Iqbal 2019).

Ladies and gentlemen, crafting in these contexts reach some serious goals, by actively making items and distributing them in strategic places. Other movements even train people in how to use craftivism on community based levels in order to make positive changes within their communities. Sarah Corbett, who is at the forefront of this movement through the Craftivist Collective, makes clear how hard it is to protest and to be an activist, in gentle but non-misunderstood ways, to have self-control when it would be easy to let out the anger.

There is one further question I would like to address today briefly: how is it possible, in many of these (re-)activist movements that these often have a tendency to get stuck in an elitist context? The 19th century arts and crafts movement which promoted hands-on making of beautiful items to the enjoyment of all were soon far too expensive for people with a tight budget. A similar critique befalls the Transition Town Movement because it is only reserved for those with time, a luxury nowadays, although a lot of work goes into the inclusivity of its organizational set-up and execution of activities. But again: why does it go wrong? In my opinion this sits in a fundamental lack of educational appreciation for each type of job. University studies have often been seen as the top of training possibilities, but is that always so? Are all training trajectories always economically that viable and well embedded in society? I would argue that they are, given that the skills learnt are field-specific but also transferrable, also in archaeology as long as we are willing to see that. What is lacking, though, is an equal appreciation for all jobs and talents, including those that allow young people to develop any set of skills, whether university-based or not. We are trained to think, to use our heads, but no longer to do, to make, to move, or play, and I will come back to this point soon. Moreover, Ken Robinson (2006) said that we are also educated to be afraid of making mistakes while making mistakes and recognizing this tends to lead to new and creative ways of solving the issue early on. Again here, the apprentice journey shows us that there is always the need to learn something from each age group while
on the road. And in order to learn, one needs to accept that someone else may know something we do not. Archaeological knowledge on ancient technologies and people’s making and crafting together constantly illustrate how relevant these observations and findings are today. The example of dealing with rubbish hopefully illustrated this too. We have made mistakes, why not accept this and learn what can be done instead, all of us, young and old?

So, a Professorship in Ancient Technologies, Materials and Crafts should be able to contribute to many timely issues. Being part of the group of material culture studies my dear colleague and friend Annelou van Gijn and I have many common interests, but also plenty of different ones. Methodologically we work differently but with a strong interest in each other’s approaches. Annelou’s use-wear opens up another world, especially under the microscope. Our microscopy collection is world-class, and placed in a field that, as we speak, is growing in European universities and beyond with newly opening positions, and correctly so. For too long objects were excavated, washed, conserved, and stored, in better or worse condition but often stripped off their very valuable content remains. Often conservation polymer chemicals were applied all over these objects to preserve them for future generations. Using these well-meant processes, residues and use-wear traces were lost, covered up and mixed with often toxic plastics. Annelou has brought to the forefront a field with endless potential, by placing it firmly in the limelight at Leiden. As a leading expert she trains many people in her skills. I do not seek to take this over, one says that developing a skill to a professional level takes 10,000 repetitions, and my own journey has taken me elsewhere: therefore, we work complementarily.

Aegean and Greek Archaeologies are professionally very important to me but they are not always at the very core of my research. Many of you are aware of my 25 year-long itinerant work history which has taken me all over Europe and well beyond. In those years an intense feeling took place: I became uprooted and I asked myself often the question: where do I belong? And, do I belong somewhere? Where is home? For solidly-settled Belgian and Dutch people this may sound shocking but I see it positively. In fact, in the past it used to be a way of life which was quite common and even desired if you wanted to make it in life. An apprentice journeyed to become a master, and continued also after that, learning was never finished. Let me illustrate this with a short excursion into unusually well-researched fiction placed in the 13th century CE. Ken Follett (2008) describes, in his Pillars of the Earth, the life of Jack who wandered through many places in England and France before he becomes the master builder of the cathedral of Kingsbridge, the place he grew up as a child and where his stepfather was master builder. In one of his teaching sessions with Tom the Master Builder, Jack the apprentice came across a wealth of information that sprang up from travel. In asking how long a pole was, the other builders laughed and said: ‘in Lincoln it is 18 feet, in East Anglia 16 and in Paris, they do not even use a pole as measurement but a yardstick instead. In Kingsbridge, the pole is 15 feet long’. Tom then goes on explaining how the plan of the church they are building is entirely based on poles. But Jack got stuck with the burning question: ‘But what’s the point of having everything measured by poles? Why not build it all higgledy-piggledy, like a house?’ Tom’s answer is astonishing: ‘First, it is cheaper as all arches are identical and their templates can be reused which saves time. Second, it simplifies everything from the original layout to painting the walls and helps estimating how much materials we need for whitewashing. When things are simple, less mistakes are made and mistakes are expensive. Third, when all is based on a pole measure, the church looks just right. Proportion is the heart of beauty’ (Follet 2008: 572-575). In effect, in employing the pole, a standard measure stick, builders keep things simple, cheap, and beautiful. And these principles were known at other sites, only they used slightly different lengths of standards. That was nothing new, as along as the builder crews knew how to convert measures when they went working elsewhere.
It is this itinerant lifestyle which has shaped and sharpened my long-term interest in pyrotechnologies, architectural processes and practices, pigments and colours. I want to expand more on those in the current curriculum and lab facilities since most of these topics/materials build bridges between archaeological sciences and any branch of world archaeology and heritage-based studies. Each study, whether archaeology, engineering, law, or medicine should have a set of main questions and goals: How and what can we learn? How is it relevant to us and our society as a whole? What role can I, as a student and as a professional, play in this, in a responsible way? To such ongoing developments I want to contribute actively, in person, and with my colleagues at the FdA and beyond.

I mentioned situated learning at the very start of this address, and it is the wide ways of learning that I am interested in. After leaving Leuven where I particularly loved prof. Frank Van Wonterghem’s classes in ancient technologies and materials (little did I understand then why and where it would bring me), during my studies at the Institute of Archaeology at UCL in London I did apprenticeships at the BM, the Museum of London, the Tate Modern, and many abroad. Even earlier, a brief stop-over in Barcelona on an Erasmus programme taught me how lost in translation one can become when classes in hieroglyphs were taught in Catalan. First time away from the safe crucible of my studies at Leuven, my four months in Barcelona truly brought home the realization that archaeology can include so many periods, so many materials, so many crafts, and so many technologies. Architecturally, Barcelona must be one of most impressive cities there is. The works of Antonio Gaudi and others totally defy any imagination, and it was there that a new conscious deeply grown passion for (art nouveau and art deco) architecture and technologies took root. Some of the houses and districts were in need of repair and were undertaken in face of the imminent Olympic games of 1992, the year after my Erasmus. This awareness of the need to conserve the beauty and ingenuity of what people in the past had created surfaced in that year and a search for studies in that direction began upon my return to Leuven. At UCL, the foundations of an embedded understanding of ancient materials and technologies became a reality at the conservation department where Prof. C. Price had a strong influence on the skills learnt. Learning, trying and failing, making and passing on, are all skills that became layered along my journey and which eventually equipped me for this professorship. How to be passionate about such aspects if one does not live at the heart of it all oneself?

Also tacit learning experiences, as we know from ethnographical field observations of craft practices, is still very much present, even today. We tend to think of tiny, shy students, in the care of Master Craftspeople, who sit in a dark corner for the first few years of their lives, only allowed to watch carefully what is being performed in front of them, to bring the needed water and raw materials from outside into the workshop, sleep on a thin blanket by themselves while guarding the produce, and, in the midst of what seems, frankly, a miserable young life, learn from all such experiences. While some of these statements will not be too far from the truth (see displays in the Museum of Man and His Tools at Athens (Άνθρωποι και Εργαλεία. Όψεις της προβιομηχανικής κοινωνίας 2008), learning may be faster and better anchored when done via multiple approaches, tacit and verbal. The aspect of play, as recent studies of young animal behaviour have also shown, has been understated for too long in research of primates but is taking centre stage again, and we should not forget Johannes Huizinga’s famous book Homo Ludens. A Study of the Play-Element in Culture. And who, in this room, does not like to play from time to time with friends or your children: a volleyball game, a board game, darts, chess, theatre or music? Every game or instrument takes practice and plenty of observation to hone down these crucial skills to master it well. It even sits in the words we use: to MASTER it well.
Thank you warmly
To the college van bestuur and the faculteitsbestuur of Archaeology for their choice to appoint me as professor of ancient technologies, materials and crafts. I want to mention specifically Corinne Hofman and Jan Kolen, previous and current deans of our faculty for placing their trust in me that I will take up this post and carry it forward. They not only allow me to roam free in space and time by not having the title limited to a region. This way it will benefit many, because technologies, materials and crafts can be studied in any part of the world, from deep in Turkey, over the Levantine coast into Egypt, from Crete to Thessaloniki, from Western Europe to Easter Island, from Finland to New Zealand. I see your appointment for me to fill in this position as a recognition of my skills, as an acknowledgement of the station reached in my apprentice journey. Many colleagues from Leiden, the Netherlands and widely abroad need mentioning: for the tremendous support and trust when I worked on my PhD: prof. Bernard Knapp and Dr. Richard Jones. While very different, they were the best guides I could have imagined at Glasgow University: they were both strict and fair, and incredibly knowledgeable. I feel honoured to count them as mentors and close friends until today. Prof. Joseph Maran was the best host one could imagine when I was working at Heidelberg University. For almost 20 years of collaboration, thank you so much, it has been a fantastic journey for me. More recently I benefited a lot from interaction with prof. Chris Scarre, both at Leiden and at Bordeaux and I look forward to more stimulating discussions in the coming Spring. Dr. Alexis Gorgues, from Bordeaux-Montaigne University and who could make it here today: Alexis, dear friend and colleague, after almost a decade of working together about past material culture, I hope we can continue to brainstorm into the long hours. The pure energy and creativity that comes out of our discussions spark in multiple directions and, I believe, in many more future projects together.

Dear Willem, adjunct-director of the Netherlands Institute at Athens, also present here today, I thank you for your warm friendship, our shared love for all Greek matters, for long conversations on the working of the Institute and on how I can contribute to the Institute in future years.

I have learned a lot from conversations on Mycenaean and many other matters, archaeologically and beyond, with Sofia Voutsaki, Mieke Prent, Eric Moorman, Joost Crouwel, Gert-Jan van Wijngaarden, Corien Wiersma, and many other Dutch colleagues. It is a pleasure to be here and work with you, and I look forward to expand on these collaborations in the future. The many colleagues from the Anchoring Innovation crowd, especially Andre Lardinois and Ineke Sluiter, have been a source of constant inspiration, and I look forward to working even closer together as a post-doc is about to start at Leiden with me early next year.

My colleague and friend Annelou van Gijn, dear Annelou: working with you is pure pleasure. Your professionalism in the Material Culture group you lead is an example for everyone of us and beyond. And although you want to move away from research groups and open up to more collaborative creativity among us all, I know that also this will be embraced by you with the same energy, warmth and open-mindedness and I look forward to working together with you on all these aspects of our jobs.

My colleagues Corrie Bakels, Amanda Henry, Eric Mulder, Martina Revello-Lami, Annemieke Verbaas, Yvonne Haring, Wim Kuijper and many PhD students working in the labs make life in the C – corridor of our magnificent building an amazing experience. I learn a lot form each of you, we laugh a lot, and I look forward to more of it all.

I like to single out my current SETinSTONE team. Although I hardly talked about the ERC project today, they are probably
just as happy not to hear about it yet again. Nevertheless, it’s great working together with you and soon, Irini, Daniel, Yannick, Ria, and Victor, you will all go your own way and I am proud of you all, thank you! While on the SETinSTONE project I can count on the support of many people and especially Petra Kamer, Simone van Diest, Erik Kien, Edwin de Ruijter, and Maribel Adame-Valero were of great help in personnel, finance and accounting matters, thank you all warmly. We would be nowhere without you. Equally important are the second supervisors of the three PhD projects: Amanda Henry, Quentin Bourgeois, Karsten Lambers, for their critical reading of chapters, and for the valuable input of their expertise in our project, thank you! Finally, third supervisors joined in since the summer and autumn respectively: thank you to Tymon de Haas and Bleda During for your help in the last few months of the PhD project time.

Marie Soressi, as Director of Graduate Studies has been a great help in organisational matters related to PhD progress and submission regulations, thank you Marie! I look forward to many more years of fruitful collaboration with you.

This inaugural event would not be possible without the amazing help from Pedel Frank Geerlings, organ player Jeroen Pijpers, Jose Baggerman and Lilian Mulder, Erwin Florie, Dick Bensdorp, and many of their colleagues. Thank you all!

On a more personal note, my parents have been responsible for moulding me in my initial physical shape, and the always warm and welcoming hearth at our home in Belgium completed their task. Thank you so much for everything! The apprentice journey is never over but always having a base to belong somewhere is crucial. Many people have helped in making me feel at home in Leiden too: the fitness club: Fayola, Maxine, Marie-Louise, Despoina, and many others, thank you for dancing me through the panic till I’m gathered safely in (as Leonard Cohen sang so beautifully). Nienke and Maikel: we always manage to move away from work-talk which is wonderful. The best movies, coffee on the Saturday market, and looking at life over a beer or a greatly cooked meal led to unforgettable evenings together. Lena and Karsten: you have been friends from the beginning and I look forward to many other great discussions on travel and life abroad together.

Enjoying a conversation in Flemish is always fun, Caroline and Hilde, even if we often talk about work, but there is always so much more to discuss than that, when we get together. Cecilia, who would have thought that we would meet again here in the Netherlands, after our first student year in London together in the early nineties? The world, despite all our journeys all over the globe, is a small place after all. I am also blessed with some of the best neighbours one can imagine. They know me as being on the move and confirm that my apprentice journey is far from over. The smiling welcomes of Ellen, Eric, Tessa, Milco, Diane, Kees, Arend-Jan, and their truly concerning emails while I am away, always makes me want to come back. May we remain in the same building for as long as possible.

A last thank you goes to you, Jari. We do not have an easy life in separate countries and our lifestyle is not always easily understood. The challenges of having to travel not just for work but also to be together is both phenomenal but also enriching. However, in crisis times, in the past and in the present, this was and is how people often lived: farmers, sailors and seamen, business people, artists, doctors without frontiers, euro-parliamentarians, pilots and their crews. Despite that, we crossed many barriers in one piece, because we want it, and we decided that this is crucial to us. For your constant support and stimulation, intellectually and emotionally, for your sensitivity to the environment and any living creatures, a sensitivity which we happily share, and for your incessant humor and presence today, I thank you.

IK HEB GEZEGD.
Music:
Fuga in C  BuxWV 174  by D. Buxtehude,
played by Jeroen Pijpers.

Image for the cover:
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Neck_Amphora,_possibly_Chiosi_Painter,_Greek,_Attica,_c._50-500_BC,_Side_A_(Herakles_and_Triton),_Side_B_(Herakles_and_Apollo_wrestling_for_Delphic_tripod),_ceramic,_black_figure_-_Chazen_Museum_of_Art_-_DSC02683.JPG

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Dedication
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