

# Part I: Introduction





# I Wrapping and Unwrapping, Concepts and Approaches

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## What Is Wrapping?

In everyday English, to *wrap* is to cover or enclose in soft materials (*Oxford English Dictionary*). The term conjures up ideas of gifts wrapped in colourful paper, of fresh towels or loose garments wrapped around the body; of being warmly wrapped up against the cold weather. The action of wrapping creates a relationship between the wrapping materials (or wrappers) and their contents. These contents may be bodies, objects, or places (Hendry 1993, 26). The wrappings that are used to cover and enclose their contents may be made from a wide range of malleable materials, typically paper, textiles, or leather, or thin sheets of plastic. These materials share certain properties: they can all be wrapped, folded, shaped, and tied (Harris 2008, 225–27). However, bodies, objects, or places may also be wrapped in a stiffer material: special items, for example, may be wrapped in boxes to preserve them, or, at the other end of the scale, a person may be, metaphorically, wrapped in love or care through language (Hendry 1993, 21–26, 52–69). Wrapping can be distinguished from other forms of adornment or covering in that it can be removed. Typically, what is wrapped can be unwrapped. It is here that Gell distinguished the otherwise similar practices of tattooing and wrapping the body in cloth; cloth can be removed from the body, whereas tattoos cannot and so provide a contrasting form of wrapping (Gell 1993, 87–91). To unwrap is not simply to reverse wrapping; the act of unwrapping is significant in itself and has its own outcomes. Unwrapping may refer either to a physical or a conceptual revelation

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(Wieczorkiewicz 2005), whereby knowledge is gained or secrecy exposed. The removal of wrappings and their application elsewhere may be a device to accumulate and store the power of their contents (Gell 1993, 89). As investigated in this volume, wrapping is the act of covering, enclosing, and containing with a wide range of materials, patterns, and metaphysical or conceptual devices. Unwrapping is seen as equally significant; the removal of wrappings is potentially an arena of revelation and finding out, the exposure of secrets, an act of disclosure of withheld knowledge, or the creation of an emotional response such as surprise or awe. The intention and purpose of wrapping and unwrapping becomes, therefore, the subject of contextual enquiry.

Through covering, enclosing, and containing, wrapping materials have properties and efficacy that act on their contents or the perception of their contents. Wrapping materials are acted on in order to be applied to surfaces, bodies, objects, and places. They may shape, cover, and form their content every bit as much as the contents can be transformed by them. Through texture and surface, wrapping may adorn and decorate. As a cultural and technical act, wrapping is a form of containment that can be used to conceal and reveal, camouflage or highlight, transform and exhibit, conserve and preserve. In Warnier's work the experience and practice of containment are revealed through multiple media such as skins, container forms, and envelopes that are used as technologies of power (Warnier 2007, 154). As intentional acts, wrappings are put in contact with their contents and enable actions to be performed; they may also be perceived as boundaries to create interfaces between objects, subjects, and the world. There is also an ambivalence in the act of wrapping; the relationship between the content and wrapping is questionable. Wrapping may make the contents clearer or conceal them to the extent that they cease to exist. To unwrap may reverse these outcomes or create an entirely new state of existence.

From such a perspective, wrappings bestow specific materialities that are also forged through human agency. Following Ingold's definition, materiality is considered to be a combination of 'the "brute materiality" of the physical world' and 'the ways this world is appropriated by human projects' (Ingold 2012, 435). These materials and processes are worked through techniques. This volume examines wrapping by placing emphasis on the materials, techniques, and processes by which the lived world is created and transformed. From this perspective, materials are acted on (Lemonnier 1992, 5–6) as they are cut, crushed, woven, or assembled before being finally transformed into a wide surface or a structure that can in turn be wrapped and unwrapped. The concept of materiality emerges from material practice, as a transformative potential, and plays a role in the construction of an individual's social and material world (Kuechler 2008, 2003, 266).

Through the chapters in this volume we bring together twelve contributors from archaeology, anthropology, and conservation who develop these

concepts to present contextually specific studies of wrapping. The topic has wide applicability as people across the world in the past and present have engaged in wrapping and unwrapping practices as a means of creating and transforming themselves. However, it is also specific, because these wrapping practices are embedded in beliefs and thoughts belonging to a particular time and place. In this introduction, we present wrapping as material action and review the theories and methodologies of investigating wrapping that have developed in archaeology and anthropology. What follows seeks to present the methods and contributions made to a topic that is rooted in excavation, artefact analysis, participant observation, and conservation practice.

### Wrapping as Material Action

Through investigating the act and intentions of wrapping, we recognise the subtle yet potent role that wrapping and unwrapping have played in different societies. The addition of a particular wrapper can be used to alter the content it enwraps, to manipulate its perception by others, and to provide a surface with which to contain or convey emotions. Wrappers can take a simple form but convey profound messages, as for example the square Korean wrapping cloths (*pojagi*) of the Chosŏn dynasty between 1392–1910 C.E. (Kumja Paik 2003, 10). Used by royalty and poor alike, and made by women from specially procured silk, scraps of left-over cloth, or oiled paper, these wrapping cloths played a prominent role in the daily lives of the Koreans, who used them to cover, store, and carry objects (Kumja Paik 2003, 11, 14). Whether covering a table of food, an altar, a bridal gift, bedding, cutlery or clothes, there was an “unspoken folk belief that by wrapping an object, *pok* (good fortune) could be enclosed or captured within a *pojagi*” (Kumja Paik 2003, 12–15). Made exclusively by women, who at that time were confined to work alone in the inner court of the household, blessing and happiness were stitched into the *pojagis*’ very fabric (Kumja Paik 2003, 20–21; Sŏng-mi 2003, 24). These cloths remind us of the relationships, creativity, intentions, and emotions that are involved in the act of wrapping.

As material action, wrapping may be temporary or permanent; it may also involve psychological, symbolic, and physical transformations of objects, place, and people. For instance, the practice of foot binding in China demonstrates the complex interplay between bandages, skin, flesh, and bones—and emotions. Throughout its long history, foot binding in China had many forms and a rich and varied significance (for details: Ko 2001, 2005; Wang 2000). Young girls had their feet bound with cloth bandages by their mothers, the aim of this painful process being to reduce the size of their feet and to prepare young girls for marriage, sexuality, and reproduction (Wang 2000, 4–20). Small bound feet in tiny socks and shoes were an object of beauty and a taboo for the male gaze and touch; in literature and art, they were portrayed

as objects of desire and the centre of erotic symbolism (Wang 2000, 24–28). Through shape and posture, the practice differentiated male and female bodies and, indeed, separated women with bound feet from those with unbound feet (Ko 2005, 136–39; Wang 2000, 32). Resulting in the permanent transformation of the bones and flesh of the feet, binding created social boundaries and opportunities; it was a process through which girls were prepared for their ideological role in life.

While wrapping applies layers, unwrapping takes them off and has its own particular significance. According to studies of Christmas-giving in America, wrapping gifts adds the giver's personal sentiment to the contents; it also acts to transform the shop-bought commodity inside into a personal gift through the act of its wrapping in mass-produced paper (Caplow 1984; Carrier 1993, 60). Unwrapping of gifts, especially from family, is often accompanied by some kind of formal ritual. A gift will perhaps be opened by the recipient on or around Christmas day in the company of friends or family. Before being unwrapped, these gifts may be displayed with other similarly wrapped gifts below a Christmas tree or in a pile in a living room (Caplow 1982, 389). By contrast, on other occasions unwrapping gifts may be a spontaneous act that takes place in front of the giver. The unwrapping process brings an element of surprise and excitement to the act of giving; and it heightens the emotions. An ostensibly similar practice of wrapping and unwrapping gifts is found in Japan. There, however, there are different signals embodied in what appear to be the familiar materials and practice of unwrapping. In Japan, the intention of wrapping is not so much about concealing followed by unwrapping to create a surprise as about separating the recipient from potential pollution from the donor (Hendry 1990, 1993, 14). Rather than unwrapping the gift immediately, one is supposed to put it aside. Immediate opening is impolite, because it removes the focus away from the sentiment and toward an unseemly interest in the content (Hendry 1993, 14). Indeed, the recipient may not open the gift at all but, instead, make an assessment of its value while it is still wrapped and then pass it on as a gift to someone else. Hendry points out how misunderstandings between Japanese and British forms of gift giving, wrapping, and unwrapping can lead to the breakdown of social relationships (Hendry 1993, 14).

Moving beyond the close relationship of wrapping to malleable textile and paper materials, we recognise the enclosing, covering, and enveloping aspect of wrapping in other media. In his study of body tattoos in the Pacific, Gell recognised the potency of pigment and pattern to wrap the body in social identities and a protective layer (Gell 1993). Although distinct from the cloth wrappings, which can be removed (Gell 1993, 87), there is nevertheless a relationship between clothes and tattoos that is recognised through language. The word *pulu* in Samoa is associated with back tattoos and, used with the compound *ta*, it means to strike or wrap and can therefore be taken to mean that the design is wrapped around the body (Gell 1993, 96). Other verbs associated

with tattooing are caulking, a process rather like sealing a canoe with breadfruit gum or the protective layer of a coconut husk, and interposing, which is associated with the idea of creating a defensive screen between a person and the world (Gell 1993, 96). The relationship between, on the one hand, wrapping as the application of material layers that can be removed and, on the other hand, the metaphorical and metaphysical forms of wrapping is worthy of investigation—and, here, context becomes all important. The concept of wrapping should not be so rigidly defined in the name of academic rigour that it excludes other, interrelated, aspects of a culture.

By covering, enclosing, and enveloping, wrapping can be understood as an act of grouping, a gathering process or a means of quantifying to achieve control over things and people. In Gell's example, for instance, people are grouped together in hierarchies through tattooing (Gell 1993, 300–03), albeit a permanent form of wrapping. In other cultural contexts, grouping is also true for objects. In the North American Plains, ceremonial bundles are made by North American/Plains Indians and are composed of two or more small objects, such as animal or plant parts and mineral or manufactured objects, and these are grouped together through being wrapped in cloth or skins (Zedeño 2008, 363–34). These bundles represent more than a simple collection of objects: they are repositories of knowledge, powerful in their own right and as potentially powerful as people with their own life histories, personalities, and social positions (Zedeño 2008, 364–65). It is through the effect of being in a bundle with other potent objects that the individual collection becomes more than a sum of its parts (Zedeño 2008, 364). In this and other instances we see the role of wrapping to group, gather, and enclose, with the potential to transform the contents within.

Consequently, the concept of wrapping used in this book is based on the principle that wrapping is the act of enclosing, binding, enveloping, or covering. Unwrapping is the act of removing the layers of wrapping. The contents of wrapping may be bodies and objects, places or space, either singly or grouped together. In this volume we consider clothing, for example, as a form of wrapping that is specifically used to cover, enclose, and adorn the body. From this perspective, all clothing is seen as a means of wrapping the body. A distinction is often made, however, between draped clothing (a clothing technique) and tailored clothing (Anawalt 1981, 5). By wrapping, and indeed unwrapping, contents may be gathered together, transformed, hidden, or revealed. The materials used to wrap or unwrap vary. Interestingly, nearly all the authors in this book deal with textile wrappings. Textiles are investigated as clothing materials, either through wrapping techniques (Johnstone, Chapter 3; Douny, Chapter 10) or through the idea of textile-wrapped bodies, whereby the implication is that wrapping may reveal, conceal, or redefine shape (Malkogeorgou, Chapter 4; Makovicky, Chapter 5). Wrapping the dead body in textiles highlights the concept of layering in materials not only to

perpetuate beliefs but also to ensure the appropriate treatment of the dead body (Harris, Chapter 6; Wills, Chapter 9).

Wrapping, however, is not limited to sheets of malleable materials such as textiles. The contributors to this volume also contrast clay and textile envelopes (Garcia Ventura & Lopen-Bertran, Chapter 11), wrapping the dead in layers of leather, wood, and turf in addition to textile (Harris, Chapter 6), and wrapping landscape in images carved in stone (Croucher & Richards, Chapter 12). As a consequence, wrappings constitute units that are designed in such a way as to be filled or to hold people and things. The intention behind these acts is both specific and variable, which is demonstrated directly through the reshaping and restitching of a valuable dress over time to suit changing fashions and concepts of the female body (Malkogeorgou, Chapter 4); the contrasting ways in which a baby is swaddled or carried in different geographical regions (Russell, Chapter 2); and in the questions raised by the textiles used to wrap objects in burials in the Iron Age (Gleba, Chapter 7; Banck-Burgess, Chapter 8). The contributors to this volume draw on a wide range of methodological and theoretical developments in both archaeology and anthropology. The following sections outline the principal ideas from which this volume draws its inspiration.

## **Disciplinary Approaches to Wrapping**

### **Archaeology**

Archaeologists investigate past human societies, many of which are known only from their material remains. Owing to the nature of this archaeological record, one of the principal foundations of their research is the analysis of artefacts. Archaeologists use such analyses in their search to understand more about the people who made, used, deposited, or discarded such material objects. In the quest to understand people, they share the general concern of the humanities to understand the motivation of individuals and groups, both cross-culturally and through time. Archaeology, as a discipline, typically works without texts and oral traditions. For this reason, perhaps, it tends to focus on developing methodologies and theoretical perspectives. It is through these approaches that archaeologists interpret material culture as evidence of the thoughts and actions of past people. They, like many of the contributors to this volume, are concerned with excavation techniques and artefact studies. At the same time, they also attach great importance to the means by which they arrive at the interpretation of these material remains.

Wrapping has been most closely studied through the discovery of wrapped archaeological artefacts, the identification of the wrappers, and an interpretation of the meaning or intentions of wrapping practices within the context of a given society. Because many of the materials used for wrapping are organic and highly perishable, archaeological evidence for wrapping is often complex, partial, and fragmentary.



*Preservation and Identification* Where there are favourable preservation conditions, wrappings may be studied directly through their preserved remains. In ancient Egyptian tombs, for example, the dry, undisturbed chambers provide good conditions for the preservation of complete, or nearly complete, wrapped artefacts and wrapping materials. Here, mummified bodies wrapped in layers of linen bandages survive alongside wrapped statues, rolled papyrus scrolls, and preserved items of draped clothing. Some of the most famous objects and statues from Tutankhamun's tomb were discovered wrapped; the 'treasury' of the tomb was guarded by a sculpture of the god Aunbis shaped as a jackal and draped in textiles (Carter 1933, pl. II). For the most part, however, archaeologists have to work with more fragmentary evidence for wrapping. In the burials of temperate Europe, for example, textiles and other organic materials are at times preserved in waterlogged conditions or through their contact with metals that produce salts that create a mineral replacement or pseudomorph of the original material (Bartel 2002, 163–66; Bender Jørgensen 1992, 11–13; Chen, Jakes, & Foreman 1998; Good 2001; Masurel 1992, 65–66). In this and other situations, such fragmented archaeological remains may not provide clear enough evidence to show whether the material was wrapped around the artefact or simply put under or over it. Wrapping can be researched only on a case by case basis according to the circumstances of its preservation.

Even where there are no wrappings preserved, archaeologists may be able to recognise where they were once present. The position of bones in a burial may suggest that the body was originally bound (Bradley 1994, 63; McAnany et al. 1999, 132; Richter et al. 2010, 327–28). At Hemp Knoll, near Avebury in Britain, for instance, the central inhumation of a Beaker grave was recovered in a tightly flexed position with the knees pulled up against the chest, suggesting it had originally been bound in wrappings that have since decayed (Robertson-Mackay 1980, 140–41). The temporal implications of binding the dead are demonstrated in the Late Formative deposits of the Maya site of K'axob, Belize, where tightly wrapped bodies in seated and flexed positions are believed to represent the prolonged display of the corpse as part of its transformation into an ancestor (McAnany et al. 1999, 131). Where organic materials do not survive, wrapped clothing may also be identified through the position of fastenings. In Anglo-Saxon graves on the British Isles, paired shoulder brooches in female graves may have held up a wide tube of fabric that was fastened on either shoulder, a suggestion supported by iconographic evidence (Owen-Crocker 1986, 28; Walton Rogers 2007, 144).

For archaeologists, faced with materials transformed by the environment in which they have been preserved, the challenge is to apply detailed and careful scientific analysis to identify the original materials and the features that identify examples of wrapping. Such identification is, of course, a key principle in the study of any archaeological material and not exclusive to wrapping. Excavation and examination methods need to be sympathetic to the properties

of wrapping in order to record the type of information relevant to the identification both of the material used and how an object was wrapped. They record a range of information on the type and sequence of single or multiple layers, their inward or outward faces, their association with ornaments or fastenings, and their location within the excavated archaeological context. There are a number of examples of Iron Age (Celtic) princely burials from Central Europe where archaeologists have been able to record wrapping practices despite the complex decayed nature of their evidence (Banck-Burgess 1999; Bartel 2002). For example, fragments of organic wrappings have been identified on two Iron Age bronze vessels found in burials at Glauberg, Hesse, Germany (Bartel 2002, 163–66). The sequence of wrapping on one of the vessels reveals layers of textile, inward-facing stitched fur, with crisscrossing bands lined with a patterned textile. These wrappings raise questions about what the vessel might have looked like in the funeral procession and its significance for the afterlife (Bartel 2002, 163–66).

The fact that so many forms of ancient wrappings fail to survive in all but the most favourable conditions emphasises the ephemeral nature of many of them. Their vulnerability to decay seems somewhat ironic, given that wrappings were probably added in an attempt to care for, protect, and preserve their contents, at least in the short term. The presence of fragments of textiles on copper alloy mirrors from burials from the Ninth Dynasty to the First Intermediate Period (late third millennium) in Egypt suggests that they were coverings intended to protect both the material of the polished reflective surface and, in a cosmological sense, the appearance and soul of the deceased (Price & Gleba 2012, 10). Examples such as these demonstrate how even the smallest traces of preserved remains not only strengthen the evidence for wrapping but also raise questions relevant to the interpretation of the site and the beliefs of past societies.

*The Wrapped Body* There are many ways in which the body can be clothed and that, as already outlined, can be considered to be a type of wrapping. One question that arises in archaeology is the distinction between draped and tailored clothing traditions. Draped garments are those ‘obtained by wrapping a piece of material around the body’ (Anawalt 1981, 9); these can also be referred to as wrapped clothing and are technically distinct from tailored garments. In the case of the latter, the cloth is cut, stitched, and shaped into limb-encasing garments. Complete garments from early periods are rarely preserved. As a result, both wrapped and tailored clothing techniques are often analysed through a combination of their representation in statues, paintings and illustrated manuscripts; preserved garments; fragmentary textile evidence; and experimental reconstruction. Early technical studies of Etruscan, Roman, and Greek clothing used an analysis of statues carved in relief to understand the technique of draped garment styles such as the toga, cloak, tunic, and veil

(Bonfante 1975; Wilson 1938). In New Kingdom Egypt, wrapped garments were predominantly made using rectangular pieces of textile, as is known from preserved textiles and representations (Kemp & Vogelsang-Eastwood 2001, 438–40; Vogelsang-Eastwood 1992). In later periods in Egypt (as in Rome), evidence shows that some garments were not rectangular textiles cut or wrapped to shape but, instead, woven on the loom with curved edges, a technique unlike that used in modern cutting and tailoring (Granger-Taylor 1982, 14–16; Pritchard 2006). Through studying the figurative paintings of the Mesoamerica codices, Anawalt investigated regional clothing traditions according to five principles of garment construction: draped garments, slip on garments, open-sewn garments, closed-sewn garments, and limb-encasing garments (Anawalt 1981). Through identifying these techniques of draped and tailored garment construction, Anawalt distinguished variations in costume and regional identities (Anawalt 1981, 193–205). Such studies demonstrate how close observation of wrapped and tailored techniques can be used to understand both expressions of identity and changes in style through time.

As an example of a wrapped garment, the Roman toga has long fascinated researchers. It was a highly symbolic garment of status. It was the legally required dress in the forum and theatre and was worn only by male Roman citizens (and, somewhat surprisingly, by female prostitutes) (Croom 2002). It was also rather impractical and hence unpopular, because it had constantly to be rearranged on the body (Croom 2002, 41–49; George 2008, 95–96). Attention to the folds and drapes of the toga was essential; there was a proper way to put on, fold, and wear its various fashions (Croom 2002, 42–48). Studies of such examples of wrapped clothing extend beyond the documentation of wrapping techniques to question how wrapped garments were used to investigate a person's characteristics—for example, their gender and sexuality—or to consider their role in concealing and revealing parts of the body such as female breasts (Bremmer 1991; Dalby 2002; Lee 2005; Llewellyn-Jones 2003, Stafford 2005). In the classical world, draped clothing influenced everyday bodily behaviour such as styles of walking, sitting, and standing. In Athenian comedy, for instance, men whose long tunics reduced their walking speed were taunted as being passive homosexuals (Bremmer 1991, 19); and Greek statues, gods, and heroes were portrayed in a standing position, wearing short tunics, a stature and dress considered to be synonymous with physical power (Bremmer 1991, 24). From these studies, we can understand something of what it meant to wear this wrapped clothing in the ancient past and recognise the embodiment of gender and the self through dress.

Wrapping also serves as a way to care for the body either by protecting a vulnerable or wounded body part or by changing its appearance in response to certain beliefs. The stitched hand-leathers (palm protectors) and finger bandages preserved in the Bronze Age salt mines in Hallstatt, Austria, provide an example of this usage: they were intended to protect the miners' hands

when they were hauling ropes (Reschreiter & Kowarik 2009, 56–57). The fact that bodies were once wrapped can also be detected from bone deformation: skulls, limbs, or other body parts, especially those of young children, become permanently altered in shape if tightly bound (for example, Duncan & Hoffling 2011). Bones may also be ‘wrapped’ after death. A Near Eastern Neolithic mortuary practice, for example, involved removing skulls that were subsequently revitalised, using clay and paint, so that they might be displayed inside houses (Garfinkel 1994; Wengrow 1998, 785).

Not only the living or dead flesh-and-bones bodies were wrapped; representations of human or animal forms were, too. In addition to the (already mentioned) jackal draped in textiles in Tutankhamun’s tomb, statues and statuettes of rulers and divinities were also found clothed or wrapped in textiles (for instance, Carter 1933, pl. XI, XIIb). It is nearly impossible for archaeologists to detect whether statues were once wrapped or dressed when all physical trace of perishable materials has decayed. A case for accessorised statues has been made at the Pre-Pottery Neolithic B (PPNB) site of ‘Ain Ghazal, Jordan, where plaster statues are believed to have been dressed in wigs and clothing (Grissom 2000, 43–44). Here, smoothed plaster body parts contrast with the unsmoothed plaster on the chest (which is presumed to have been covered by clothing), and brows are recessed where the hair would once have been. On other statues, the white face surface ends in a v-shape on the chest, suggesting that at this point it met a v-necked garment (Grissom 2000, 43). While such interpretations are subject to debate, they do show that it is important to consider the possibility that statues that we are used to seeing unwrapped may once have been dressed. If this was indeed the case, then their appearance and, no doubt, their impact would have been much altered. Such examples reveal how the living, the dead, and the represented body can be curated, cared for and transformed through the act of wrapping.

*Unrolling, Conservation, and Museum Display* In their quest to understand the past, archaeologists are more often concerned with unwrapping rather than with wrapping, with getting deep inside past contexts and artefacts in order to understand date, origins, and meaning. In the nineteenth century, mummies were unwrapped, or ‘unrolled’, in front of an audience (Granville 1825). During these displays, the mummy case, ornaments, layers of linen bandages, and wadding were removed in the quest to find the actual body (the skin, the bones, the face). The body itself was then dissected to find more out about the treatment of the internal organs during mummification and about gender and race. Finally, the hieroglyphics painted on the case were deciphered in an attempt to discover the mummy’s name (Dawson 1934). Today, composite artefacts such as mummies are conserved whole and explored through computer tomography (CT scan) and X-radiography (X-ray) rather than scalpel (Parkes & Watkinson 2010, 58–61, Taylor 2004). The development of these methods

has been fuelled both by ethical considerations about the treatment of human remains and by the growing appreciation that the wrappings are meaningful in themselves (Cortes 2012, 85–97; Taylor 2004). Non-invasive methods have the potential to explore delicate materials that might otherwise be destroyed through unwrapping or unrolling (for example, Taylor 2004). New methods such as these are being applied to, for example, the delicate carbonised rolls of papyri from the Villa of Papyri, Herculaneum, Italy. These rolls were charred when the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 C.E. destroyed the town, and attempts to unroll them to read their text have so far had limited success, owing to their extremely delicate condition. The development of virtual methods of analysis, such as CT scanning will, it is hoped, allow the scripts to be read without unrolling, and thereby destroying, either them and or their rolled form (Seales, Griffionen, & Jacops 2011, 84). Thus archaeologists are increasingly moving beyond simply wishing to preserve the wrappings and wrapped artefact as they come to recognise that the layers, wraps, and rolls are as important a means to understand the complexity of past material culture as are the artefacts themselves. This importance is further illustrated by the ancient Egyptian mummies, whose linen wrappings offer insights into the preparation of the body for the afterlife. Yet the debate about what it means to unwrap these bodies to be put on museum display remains multivocal and controversial (Wieczorkiewicz 2005, 67–68). And so the act of unwrapping becomes, in this context, a metaphor for the process of investigation, interpretation, and public display.

Archaeology is interested not only in the wrapping techniques practiced in ancient cultures but also, equally, in the process of wrapping and unwrapping artefacts for conservation and display in the present. In 2008 the Manchester Museum decided to cover several of the mummies that were on public display in its Egyptian Collection (O'Neill 2011). The covers used consisted of sheets of modern cloth wrapped around the mummified bodies. According to the museum blog, this procedure was 'carried out in order that the human remains be treated with respect and to keep the bodies on display in line with the Manchester Museum Remains policy' (quoted in O'Neill 2011, 130). This unusual display policy produced a heated public debate. Responses on blogs and web forums, and from the museum's own public consultation, showed that the majority of museum visitors wanted to see the mummies uncovered, with only a few mentioning the ethical considerations involved in displaying the dead in this fashion (O'Neill 2011, 130–31).

These examples, then, represent the the main perspectives adopted by those archaeologists actively engaged in the study of wrapping and unwrapping. Archaeologists discuss the broader issues, too, of course—materials and technology, production and consumption—alongside the more specific topics such as clothing and burial practices. All these interests, in their different ways, contribute to the rich intellectual origins of this book's chapters.

## Social Anthropology

Social anthropology investigates contemporary societies, seeking to understand human practices on a cross-cultural basis. It examines, by this means, the plurality of the contextual meanings that emerge from the relationships between human beings and the natural and material environments in which they live. The role that individuals play in the shaping of cultures through their bodies remains the focus of the discipline. Social anthropology brings to light, through participant observation, different systems of beliefs and knowledge, behaviour and language—and the social and technical aspects of the act of wrapping through participant observation. From the social anthropologist's perspective, cultures are understood through a close examination of the production and consumption of objects that themselves constitute interfaces between individuals and the world, the self and society. Using this approach, wrapping and unwrapping become sociocultural practices that occur through the material practice of 'making' and 'doing' (Naji & Douny 2009). These practices emerge from webs of relationships involving subjects, their bodies, places, materials, and objects. Hence, wrapping and unwrapping as embodied practices are observable, and capable of being experienced, in everyday life and/or ritual settings.

### Wrapping as Sociocultural Practice

Anthropologists have investigated wrapping as an embedded social practice used to materialise beliefs, concepts, and social institutions. Two books published in the 1990s have been particularly influential: Hendry's *Wrapping Culture* (1993) and Gell's *Wrapping in Images* (1993). As yet, there is no direct equivalent to these books in archaeology. Hendry's study of Japan starts with observations on the practice of wrapping gifts in paper, straw, wood, and cloth as the proper methods of gift presentation serving to demonstrate the correct level of politeness and care for the occasion (Hendry 1993, 12–51). Her analysis of wrapping soon moves into recognising that such aesthetic presentation is also found in language, space, packaging, the body, and people. The organisation and use of space in Japanese homes, temples, gardens, and work places is interpreted as a form of social wrapping whereby guests penetrate the interior to different degrees (Hendry 1993, 98–100). Like wrapped gifts, the choice of words for formal greeting and well wishes demonstrate care and politeness while they also conceal their contents and mark the occasion as special (Hendry 1993, 52–67). Hendry presents wrapping as a structuring principle in Japanese society and in this way shows how material and metaphorical wrapping is an expression of deeper social values, which both order and organise the social world.

Although Gell presents very different examples of wrapping in his book on tattooing in Polynesia, he shares Hendry's concept of wrapping to construct the social person and social relationships, which he explains as social



reproduction (Gell 1993, 4–8). These concepts have been taken forward by other authors. For example, in his study of the Pot-King of the Mankon Kingdom, in the Grassfields of Cameroon, Warnier (2007) describes the body of the king as a container for the living, bodily, and ancestral substances that are necessary to revitalise his kingdom. In Warnier's ethnography, the king has three bodies, which are his physical body as a pot, the palace, and the city, all of which are enclosed by a skin envelope, ditches, and borders. These enclosures are made of openings and closings through which various contents such as life substances, people, money, and commodities transit through time. By being porous, the skin of the king's body and the boundaries of his palace and territory create inside/outside dialectics (Warnier 2007, 186–95) between the king and his subjects through which the king's embodiment and mediation of power occur. The multiple forms of containers as technologies of power enable practices of containment through which the Kingdom of the Mankon is reproduced over time.

These anthropological approaches provide an intellectual basis from which to see forms of layering, wrapping, enclosing, enveloping, covering, and containing not simply as symbols of social and political institutions but also as a means to perpetuate identities, political power, and social organisation.

*Concealing and Revealing, Protection and Empowerment* As in archaeology, researchers researching from an anthropological perspective have recognised the role of wrappings as material and conceptual devices to engender their contents. In many societies, acts of revealing or concealing different aspects of the body respond to laws, taboos, and prohibitions. Drawing on colonial ideas of dress, undress, and nakedness, Masquelier (2005, 7–10) discusses the cultural specificity of appropriate body covering and its interpretation as moral or immoral. In the eyes of colonialists and ethnographers of the early twentieth century, bodies without sufficient clothing were considered naked, hence immoral and primitive. These Westerners failed to recognise that small items of clothing such as a waist cord or an armlet were sufficient dress to those who knew how to read them (Masquelier 2005, 10). The morality of the concealed and revealed body has been hotly debated in contemporary Europe in terms of Muslim women's veils. Because attitudes to the veil are multifaceted and sometimes contradictory, no single interpretation can represent the full spectrum of attitudes. For example, to some in British Muslim communities, veils, dress lengths, and styles are means of concealing the body by which faith, identity, modesty, and beauty are expressed (Tarlo 2010). From this perspective, the veil by its very concealment reveals that which is internal. Yet veiling the body, especially the face, is often seen by those outside these communities as hiding the identity, as a challenge to the freedom of the individual and a symbol of the submission of women to men (El Guindi 1999, 23–46; Joppke 2009, 107–26). Contrarily, from this perspective, veiling is seen

to conceal and confine the internal self. From these examples we understand the potential of wrapping to change radically the perceptions of the wearer through its ability to cover and leave uncovered. These examples provide a reminder both of the complexities involved in reading meaning across cultures and of the potential danger of reading opposing messages in a single form.

While wrapping through dress is closely associated with expressions of identity that highlight the body through their presence, it may also make visible or invisible the contents it enwraps, create secrecy, and be used defensively. Inspired by nature, military design makes use of disruptive colour patterns to create camouflage on weapons, buildings, clothing, and vehicles. Through camouflage, military design is intended to fuse bodies and objects within their surrounding environment as a means to confound the enemy and avoid recognition from a distance. In nature, numerous animals, insects, and plants species are capable of blending into the landscape in remarkable ways through innate protective and self-defense techniques called *mimesis* (Newark, 2007: 12).

In other cases, wrapping to reveal and conceal may lead to empowerment and protection amplified through magic, which metaphysically creates a protective wrapping around the body. For instance, a combination of materials embedded with magic are found in European folk dress. Here skirts, shawls, hats, and metal charms were worn to embody protective power or ensure fertility through negotiations with the invisible world (Welters 1999). Similarly, wild silk embroidered motifs on prestigious Hausa gowns or charm gowns covered with Arabic calligraphy worn underneath Hausa men's robes are imbued with magic and thus act as protective body envelopes. In the meantime, they empower the self through reinforcing the charisma of the Hausa elite (Douny 2011). As Claude Ardouin demonstrated in his lecture 'Protecting the Family, Protecting the Body: Talismanic Islamic Motifs on the Woollen Weavings from Niger Bend, Mali' at University College London, wrappers may be used to close off spaces and to metaphorically or literally protect bodies and space. For instance, the *Fulani Maabube Arkila kerka* serves as mosquito covering that stands in the nuptial room while also protecting against the cold and sandy winds. It may also be treated as a talismanic barrier that prevents malevolent spirits from entering and causing harm (Ardouin 2010). In these examples anthropologists investigate the material and conceptual boundaries created by wrapping that act on many levels of the self, society, and the spiritual world. Such anthropological studies show that while texture, pattern, and physical presence can be intentionally used to conceal and reveal, to protect and empower, the means by which people perceive these effects is contextual and may also be reactionary.

*Materialising Identities* Enclosing, covering, and containing with wrappings are used either as means to materialise the identity of the contents or to add identity to an otherwise uninscribed surface. ~~Tilley proposes that the~~



~~concept of identities refers to the ways by which social and cultural identities materialise through time in objects, cultural transmission, and inheritance (Gosselain 2000; Tilley 2011, 348). These are ongoing processes by which people ‘make’ themselves, and they describe how social and individual identities are constructed, reproduced, transformed, and passed on to the next generation (Tilley 2011, 350).~~

Wrapping as a social and cultural practice of materialising identities (Gosselain 2000) and, by extension, social status, gender, and life-cycles is found predominantly in the literature on textiles, cloth, clothing, and dress. Textiles constitute a vast domain of research in social anthropology and other disciplines that focus on the body as the articulation of cultural meaning (Femenias 2010; Hansen 2004; Schneider 1987; Weiner & Schneider 1989). Clothing can be put on and taken off at a different frequency, whether changed through a day, a season, or over a lifetime. This process of wrapping and unwrapping the body through the addition and removal of clothing allows different aspects of the person to be revealed and concealed according to the situation, which changes through time. Through this clothing materialise aspects of a person, whether these are aesthetic, economic, and moral values or aspects such as charisma, power, or gender. Such wrappers may reveal the true nature of the contents or may be so integral to the contents that the wrappers’ removal changes the contents’ nature entirely. Attire made of selected materials, bearing motifs and colours and designed to be worn in a specific way, are often meant to achieve political and social goals by disclosing gender roles and status (Allman 2004; Eicher 1995; Kuechler & Miller 2005; Perani & Wolff 1999). Parts or elements of dress may be added or removed while old and new textile traditions, patterns, and styles may be mixed; thus new designs emerge in creative ways. For example, Ghanaian *kente* cloth is a colourful and intricately patterned woven fabric that is popular in African American culture. A *kente* cloth pattern may be incorporated into dresses, on shoes, or on Christmas cards. Similarly, the cloth may be made into scarves or hats. It was originally associated with Asante elite, such as the royalty as in wrapping the body of the king. It may also adorn university ceremonial gowns in America (Ross 1998, 232) where *kente* cloth stands as an expression of African-American identity. In many social and historical contexts, the cloth has symbolised pride of origins, cultural heritage, and authenticity (Ross 1998, 196).

As cloth is used to wrap the living, so it is used to wrap the dead. Among the Ebira of Nigeria *Itokueta*, a stripped hand-spun white and indigo cotton cloth is used as a burial cloth that symbolises the continuity between the living and the dead in the context of masked performance and display at funeral ceremonies (Picton 2009, 302). Cloth bears a different design for a deceased man or a woman and is wrapped around his or her body to reveal identity, status, and gender. The entrance of the house of the deceased is draped with *itokueta*

as a means to signify a death. This drape is the same cloth used to wrap the body and emphasises the relationship between the body and the house. Later, the cloth is taken down from the wall and used to wrap the deceased for burial. This practice of displaying *itokueta* demonstrates the importance for the Ebirá people of establishing a relationship between the deceased and their community. As Picton writes: ‘In advertising the fact of a death, the cloth also marked out the transition within the composition and perhaps the status of the household, and it invited the wider community to participate in the grief of the household at least by visiting to greet the close relatives of the deceased’ (Picton 2009, 309). Here, through draping, wrapping, and performance, a cloth wrapper reveals Ebirá social and individual identities as it brings the life-death continuum into a same symbolic system of meaning.

The materiality of wrappings used to transform a material’s surface and texture may also transfer social identities between different media over time. African body arts such as paintings and cicatrised tattoos on men’s and women’s faces, arms and hands, or chest constitute ‘long-standing forms of dressing the body’ (Renne 2010, 72). Cicatrised tattoos consist of designs cut in the skin that are darkened with charcoal or lampblack that is rubbed onto the wound before it heals. As Renne suggests, this form of body art provides indications about the wearer’s social status—such as wealth and premarital status or ethnic affiliation—as well as meeting the criteria of beauty and attractiveness (Renne 2010, 73). In her examination of the African lace that enjoys a wide popularity across Nigeria, Renne proposes that cicatrised tattoos, as ‘lace-like patterns’ on the skin, display an ‘aesthetic of figured, plain and textured surfaces’ (Renne 2010, 73). In this sense, the visual and tactile characteristics of these expensive lace textiles recall body art forms such as the cicatrised tattoos (Renne 2010, 72). Here, patterns on skin and/or textures that result from skin incisions that, in turn, thicken and thus produce a relief-effect on the skin are also replicated on embroidered or woven cloth that materialise and reveal an individual’s social acuity, status, and, hence, identity (Renne 2010, 74).

The archaeological and anthropological approaches outlined above present the history of wrapping research within these disciplines. The contributors to this volume draw on these themes while also developing them in new directions to bring their own insights into the analysis and interpretation of the acts of wrapping and unwrapping.

### Structure of the Book

The chapters that follow are grouped into three parts: Part II, Wrapping and Unwrapping the Living; Part III, Wrapping and Unwrapping the Dead; and Part IV, The Materiality of Wrapping: Materials, Objects, and Places. These parts reflect key areas of interest in the archaeology and anthropology of wrapping.

## Part II: Wrapping and Unwrapping the Living

In many areas of the world, both in the past and in the present, the living body is or has been in a constant process of being wrapped and unwrapped. The repetition of dress and undress is reoccurring and cyclical, changing according to factors such as day or night, the passage of time, and the occasion and stages in the life cycle.

Wrappers add to the body as containers, covers, and envelopes. Part II begins by looking at one particular kind of wrapping, the living body, one associated with the beginnings of a life. Russell (Chapter 2) views baby wrapping as an extension, a boundary and a portal of the mother's and child's bodies. She describes many of the techniques developed by women and men to bring babies to maturity, including swaddling, baby wearing, wrapping, tying, and carrying. Through her comparative approach Russell highlights the emotional, moralising, and didactic notions embedded in such techniques. During the cold war, for instance, baby-wrapping techniques became politically sensitised at a time when the United States was deriding Russian swaddling techniques as being hateful and ineffective, in line with its adopted ideological stance against swaddling.

The next three chapters (Johnstone, Chapter 3; Malkogeorgou, Chapter 4; and Makovicky, Chapter 5) focus on different approaches to wrapping as a form of dress. In the first, Johnstone examines wrapped garments in the New Kingdom of ancient Egypt (the Mid-Eighteenth Dynasty), dated to the middle of the second millennium B.C.E. To investigate her subject Johnstone combines iconographic evidence of clothing styles with preserved textiles and lessons from experimental archaeology to understand the techniques of Egyptian wrapped and tied clothing. This clothing style is time-specific and is a characteristic of the political and religious changes of the period known as the Amarna Period. Through her analysis Johnstone is able to demonstrate how this wrapped clothing, combined with jewellery, served to highlight the face and gesture of the wearer. At the same time she observes how the wrapped clothing was adjusted to show the internal emotional state of the wearer—for example, to reveal grief at a funeral. The knot used to tie the wrapped clothing also served as a form of protection, because it created a magic force to protect the wearer from evil. As a form of individual identity, the wrapped clothing of the Amarna Period aligned the individual with the politics of the time, ultimately bringing about its demise as people actively and visibly sought to disassociate themselves from that era.

Malkogeorgou (Chapter 4) shows, likewise, how the practice of wrapping can be closely linked to a particular time and place and, in so doing, demonstrates how wrapping has the ability to change the very shape of the female form. The author investigates an eighteen-century mantua dress of British design held at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. Like the ancient

Egyptian clothing of the Amarna Period described by Johnstone, the *mantua* was a dress of power and politics. Exquisite and representing many hours of work, it was made to be worn just once before becoming redundant when its political role had been played out. Subsequent owners were compelled to change and adapt the luxurious fabric for their own ends. Detailed analysis shows how the fabric of an eighteenth-century court dress was taken apart and restitched by the different owners over many years. Through these processes, the shape of the dress was re-formed and its role redefined to fit the intentions of the new owners. Alterations such as re-stitching allowed conservators not only to understand more about the first owner's body shape and eighteenth-century body aesthetics but also to reconceptualise the dress to re-create a specific and intentional female body shape that could be displayed to the public.

Makovicky (Chapter 5) approaches wrapping from a very different perspective, building on Gell's notion of wrapping as a symbolic technique for protection against, and control of, the supernatural world. The author here examines the role of Polish crocheted lace in rural Poland. She introduces the history of lace in these communities and its use to rub babies at christenings, wrap Christian alters, and dress married women. She examines the controversy caused by lace's most recent incarnation in the form of crochet lace G-strings. This transformation has proved controversial: crocheted lace as a material is too closely related to the spiritual domain to make its use in the making of G-strings anything other than highly contentious. The lace described by Makovicky brings a specific materiality to the body as it is an open, lacy layer and considered to reveal the female body.

### **Part III: Wrapping and Unwrapping the Dead**

The investigation of the dead inevitably plays a special role in archaeology, given that so much of archaeological evidence is gained from burial grounds and burial chambers. Anthropologists are equally concerned with the dead since death is the final rite of passage. As in the Ebira example cited above, cloth often plays a role in the ceremonies and preparations of the body for the grave, whether used as shrouds, bindings, drapes, or clothing—or in the special care of objects placed in the grave. Archaeologists have long-since recognised that the wrapping of both body and grave goods is common practice (for example, Carroll & Wild 2012). The four chapters in this part offer examples from Bronze Age Scandinavia (Harris, Chapter 6); Early Iron Age central and southern Europe (Gleba, Chapter 7); Early Iron Age southwest Germany (Banck-Burgess, Chapter 8); and Egypt (Wills, Chapter 9).

The extreme fragility of any wrapping remains requires careful observation, handling, and recording of the process. The extent of this fragility is emphasised in Harris's exploration of the ordering principles behind the multiple layers of wrapping that covered and enclosed the men, women, and

children in burial mounds of the Bronze Age in southern Scandinavia in the latter half of the second millennium B.C.E. Clothed and wrapped in textiles and leather, surrounded by grave goods, enclosed in wooden coffins placed on and within stone platforms, and, finally, covered with thick layers of turf sods, these burials represent multiple layers of wrapping and enclosing. Each layer represents a modification of the dead, from the dressed body whose face was left visible, to the fully shrouded corpse or to the coffin buried deep in the turf mound, the construction of the layers may be seen as a performance involving many members of that society. Repeated over decades, this practice transformed the landscape and, Harris argues, was based on the ordering principles behind the then contemporary beliefs and knowledge. This reinterpretation of the archaeological evidence has only been made possible by presenting the evidence according to the wrapping sequence at the time of burial rather than according to the unwrapping sequence of the excavation.

Gleba draws together early written sources and archaeological evidence from the princely burials of the first half of the second millennium B.C.E. in central and southern Europe, concentrating on Italy and Greece. Here she not only identifies funerary shrouds, wrapped cremation urns, and cloth-wrapped cremation bundles but also observes specific wrapped objects, such as weapons and wagons, which were carefully covered in fabric before being laid in the burial. How can these wrappings be best interpreted? Were they meant to protect the objects they enwrapped? Were they intended to make their contents visible or invisible? Or did they provide a material means to control the dead? In Chapter 8, Banck-Burgess provides a detailed insight into one such tomb, the early Iron Age (Celtic) princely grave from Hochdorf, in southwest Germany, dated to the end of the seventh century B.C.E. The methodology used to study the wrappings from this tomb provided a landmark in the investigation of fragile and fragmentary textile remains in burial contexts. Through analysis of fibres, dyes, micro-stratigraphy, and their position in the tomb, Banck-Burgess and the team working on the objects in this burial chamber were able to reconstruct the position of numerous textiles in the tomb and to reveal their full splendour. This painstaking work established the wrapping sequence: the man's body was first wrapped with a simple undyed wool cloth; this cloth was then used to wrap every facet of the wagon placed with him; and, last, the body was laid on top of coloured and decorated textiles that were quite unlike the plain wool cloth that lay right next to his skin. Banck-Burgess, like Gleba, questions the concept of visibility and invisibility, thereby suggesting that the act of wrapping may have been either a means of drawing boundaries between the living and the dead or a way of communicating between the living and the dead—or both.

Through excavation and artefact analysis, archaeologists examine how the dead were prepared for burial in the past. Conservators, on the other hand, are faced with how to present the dead in the present. Wills (Chapter 9) describes the wrapping practices involved in the conservation of Egyptian mummies

destined for museum display. She shows how current practices in museum conservation are designed to reduce the impact of conservation techniques by stitching invisible layers of wrapping onto the decaying surface in such a way that they pass unnoticed by the museum visitors who believe that they are gazing on the surface of the original artefact. The selection and application of this wrapping treatment respects current ideas about the appropriate treatment of human bodies stored in museums. It also demonstrates the ongoing role of wrapping as a way of maintaining the integrity of the body while at the same time handling it in line with current good practice.

#### **Part IV: The Materiality of Wrapping: Material, Place, and Objects**

At the heart of the idea of wrapping lies the great diversity of available materials, each with very different materialities. In this volume, *materiality* is envisaged as the physicality of wrappings as shaped through human agency and belief. The contributors to this final part of the book suggest that wrappings acquire meanings that become embedded in their materiality through both the transformative processes of specific materials and their relationships with the places, bodies and objects with which they are in contact. In Parts II and III, the idea that wrappings possess particular physical, chemical, or ideological properties derived from the matter and materiality of objects has already been touched on—for instance, in Makovicky’s study (Chapter 5) of semitransparent crochet lace and the studies of different kinds of wrapping in the Iron Age graves (Gleba and Banck-Burgess, Chapters 7 and 8). In Part IV, the contributors focus on the associations between certain material expressions and their contexts. They thus address the relationship between material and its meaning.

Douny (Chapter 10) examines the cultural significance and use of wild silk indigo wrappers as produced by the Dogon of the Tengu and Tommon kan areas of Mali. By focusing on the material properties of this insect-produced substance, and on its processing as well as its culturally determined modes of self-display and performance, the author demonstrates how this cloth of prestige materialises and legitimises regional, collective, and individual identities. Here wild silk is perceived as living and active. As a material of power, silk requires complex techniques and knowledge to transform cocoons into cloth. Douny proposes that this material practice constitutes a ~~Manden~~ heritage that the Dogon share with the neighbouring Marka-Dafing community. As part of an enduring tradition, *tome toun* wrappers legitimise the Dogon’s Tengu and Tommon identity while at the same time marking women’s social status and personal worth in the context of everyday life, weddings, and funerals. Through the use of wild silk, with its remarkable properties and elaborate manufacturing processes, such wrappings have come to be used as a form of self-display; they legitimise tradition, cultural identities, and social status, and they reaffirm both a shared heritage and an ancestral affiliation.



Garcia-Ventura and López-Bertran (Chapter 11) further develop this theme of materiality. They explore Mesopotamian figurines and cuneiform tablets dating to 2100–2000 B.C.E. These figurines and tablets were concealed with textile and clay wrapping under the foundations of temples and other public buildings. The first stage of their investigation was to catalogue the figurines that had textile wrappings still adhering to them at the time of the original excavation—that is, before these fragile traces were destroyed, as so frequently happened, in the cleaning and exhibiting process. They then used their knowledge of the material properties of clay and textiles to question the role of, and meaning behind, these wrappings. Through exploring the foundation context of these figurines and tablets, and the actions of those performing these rituals, they reflect on the relationship between the contents and the wrappings as packaging, protection, and concealment. Given that many of the wrapped figurines represent kings, they question whether these wrappings were intended to divest the body of corporality and/or to offer a form of magical protection, symbolising institutional powers and acting as a protection for the buildings that lay above them.

Finally (Chapter 12), and on a different scale, Croucher and Richards use the concept of wrapping to trace the way that the Rapa Nui Island landscape is mapped out with stone. Gigantic *Moai* heads stand astride *Ahu* stone platforms as living cosmological constructs that both physically and symbolically contain the landscape. These authors explore the relationship between covering the body in tattoos and wrapping liminal areas of the landscape. They do this by contrasting the tattooing of facial orifices with the positioning of petroglyphs at openings in the geological and spiritual landscape. These practices are, they argue, a measure to control dangerous boundaries and to channel *mana* (power) between realms. Tattoos thereby provide a means to wrap bodies and petroglyphs to wrap the land. Archaeological fieldwork, interpreted with the help of anthropological studies, has allowed the systematic interlinking of evidence on two such different scales.

These contributions in Part IV embrace the materiality of wrapping either for its transformative potential or for the technical, social, and ideological processes involved in the very act of wrapping. In these chapters the materiality of wrapping plays a role in the shaping of the individual's social and material world through materialising cultural identities (Douny, Chapter 10), reaffirming institutional power and presence (Garcia-Ventura & López-Bertran, Chapter 11), and embodying a cosmology (Croucher & Richards, Chapter 12).

We hope that the vibrant chapters on wrapping and unwrapping in this volume will provide an in-depth analysis and evaluation of this topic's potential to enhance our investigation into, and understanding of, human cultures. We are grateful to the contributors for their time and effort in researching this subject and hope that you enjoy their efforts.

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