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Nota di contenuto	Cover; Title; Copyright; Contents; Foreword; Acknowledgements; Note on Terminology; Note on References to the Bleek and Lloyd Notebooks; Introduction; SECTION 1: TEXT, MYTH AND NARRATIVE; Chapter 1: Reading Narrative: Some Theoretical Considerations; Chapter 2: Text or Presence? On Re-reading the  Xam and the Interpretation of their Narratives; Chapter 3: Whose Myths are the  Xam Narratives?; Chapter 4: The Question of the Trickster: Interpreting  Kaggen; SECTION 2: INTERPRETING THE  XAM NARRATIVES: A DISCUSSION OF THREE BOOKS Chapter 5: Reading the Hartebeest: A Critical Appraisal of Roger Hewitt's Interpretation of the  Xam NarrativesChapter 6: Foraging, Talking and Tricksters: An Examination of the Contribution of Mathias Guenther's Tricksters and Trancers to Reading the  Xam Narratives; Chapter 7: History and Interpretation: Some of the Implications of Andrew Bank's Bushmen in a Victorian World: The Remarkable Story of the Bleek-Lloyd Collection of Bushman Folklore for Reading the  Xam Narratives; SECTION 3: READING THE NARRATIVES Chapter 8: Hare's Lip and Crows' Necks: The Question of Origins and Versions in the  Xam StoriesChapter 9: The Story in Which 'The Children are sent to Throw the Sleeping Sun into the Sky': Power, Identity and

Difference in a |Xam Narrative; Chapter 10: The Story of 'The Girl of the Early Race who Made Stars': The Discursive Character of the |Xam Texts; SECTION 4: CONTROVERSIES; Chapter 11: RELIGION in a |Xam Narrative; Chapter 12: Antjie Krog, Stephen Watson and the Metaphysics of Presence; Conclusion; Bibliography; Index

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## Sommario/riassunto

The Bleek and Lloyd Collection consists of the notebooks in which William Bleek and Lucy Lloyd transcribed and translated the narratives, cultural information and personal histories told to them in the 1870s by a number of /Xam informants. It represents a rare and rich record of an indigenous language and culture that no longer exists, and has exerted a fascination for anthropologists and poets alike. Yet how does one begin reading texts that are at once so compromised and so unique? *Bushman Letters* is an important book for it examines not only the /Xam archive, but also the critical tradition that has grown up around it and the hermeneutic principles that inform that tradition. Wessels critiques these principles and offers alternative modes of reading. He shows the problems with the approaches employed by previous critics and, in the course of his own detailed and poetic readings of a number of narratives, suggests what their interpretations have left out. The book must be described as metacritical: it is criticism about the critical tradition that has grown up around the /Xam archive and in the fields of folklore and mythology more widely. *Bushman Letters* addresses a curiously neglected area in the burgeoning literature on the Bleek and Lloyd Collection: the texts themselves. In doing so, the book makes a substantial contribution to the study of oral narratives in general and to the theoretical discourse that informs such studies.

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