article features soil change, its diminishment, transport, concentration, and enhancement. They also devote attention to a critique of population estimates with respect to resources, requirements, and impacts. They conclude, as the volume is concluded, that the Maya sealed their own fate. Competition and rivalry lead to mismanaged agrarian landscape and to collapse.

The illuminating results on the Maya forest vegetation of Thompson and others in chap. 7 looks at dominant trees in the contemporary forest and their archaeobotanical collections reflecting ancient Maya use. Based mainly on upland habitat plots, the preferential location of Maya settlements, they document that trees in the archaeological record match the contemporary tree distribution, arguing a direct relationship between the past and present. They tantalizingly conclude the Maya forest today serve as a "partial proxy" for understanding ancient Maya plant use. This is significant.

Population, land use, and resource exploitation are the core of volume and the feature of chap. 8 by Lentz and others. This complex chapter grapples with issues to address sustainability. Considering settlement and population levels by habitat, the authors estimate daily resources requisites and present a long-term millennial multicomponent land use model tied to diverse plant remains including cacao presented in Table 8.4. Further, they infer little erosion based on isotopic enrichment of C_4 plants around *aguadas*.

Despite the compelling evidence of skillful management in ancient times, this chapter concludes that this elegant sophisticated enduring system, for which they have gathered mounting evidence, was undermined in the end by drought. This is hard to appreciate if the complex subsistence system present in this and other chapters evolved in the context of the annual droughts and fueled the development and maintenance of *aguadas*! There is no doubt that drought is harsh on any farmer and many instances are recalled by master Maya farmer, yet they admonish that it is not so much the annual *quantity* of precipitation but the *timing* of delivery. The year 2008 was very wet, but the delivery of the rain was exactly at harvest and everything was ruined. It is just as dicey to have too much rain as too little.

The discussion of volcanic ash in chap. 9 by Tankersley and others interprets volcanism based on analyzed clay deposits of *aguadas*. Clay, dominated by silica, is composed of degraded volcanics. The data, however, as presented, are hardly evidence for catastrophic volcanic events. The comparative data sources for XRF are murky, characterizing volcanoes by regions (Mexican, Guatemala, El Salvador, Fig. 9.5), disregarding the compositional diversity of major and trace elements that cannot be averaged together meaningfully.

The volume offers great detail, and we have an overall picture of locations of residential excavations, *aguada* coring, field mapping, and material collections. Sadly, there is no easy means to understand the connections of these topics (a table coordinating the locations and results presented on soil, chemical, isotope, tree, biomass, etc.). Only the most assiduous reader would take the list of operations in the introduction to compare with maps and profiles in chaps. 2 and 6, cross-reference the relative dating presented in chap. 11, associate the absolute dating and stable isotope data in chap. 9, or question the provenience for plants presented in chap. 8. The index does not help in associating excavation data and results among chapters (e.g., soil descriptions, *aguada* tests, collections). These shortcomings affect the value of the data.

Taken as a whole, the results are fascinating. The forest habitat data are important and the attempt to balance resource needs and population is critical to isolating variables that impact sustainability. Views and interpretations throughout are valiant and groundbreaking. There has been no equivalent effort, including the University of Pennsylvania project, to synthesize Tikal data and results.

The research results demonstrate that the development of the Maya was integral and embedded in the Maya forest. Innovations in water management are clearly connected to a landscape that naturally absorbs rather than retains water. Diversity of archaeological uses of forest resources is shown to be a mirror of the forest today. Complex land uses are connected to a wide variety of plants and isotopic plant signatures. These results point to a sustainable environmental context of growth and development. Yet, the conclusions that are drawn are unrelated to these results. Somehow, the finale is that the collapse was a result of resource overexploitation.

Examining the data presented in "Tikal. Paleoecology of an Ancient Maya City," an alternative scenario can be evoked, one that should be considered seriously. The forest is replete with all the requisites to manage daily life. The ancient Maya emerged in this rainforest adapting to annual droughts. Upland settlements are never far from lowlands and wetland resources and, therefore, accessible to diverse resource zones. That the ancient monumental architecture was neglected and fell into disrepair is obvious, but if this occurred over several generations, would it be a drama? Perhaps the fractious farmers slowly disengaged with the maintenance regime and simply continued to farm, co-creating the Maya forest garden we know today.

Anabel Ford

Lewis-Williams, J. D.: Myth and Meaning. San-Bushman Folklore in Global Context. Walnut Creek: Left Cost Press, 2015. 249 pp. ISBN 978-1-62958-154-5. Price: $ 79.00

Lewis-Williams is professor emeritus at the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa. He is the founder and former director of their Rock Art Research Institute and has authored over 120 articles and 19 books. Much of Lewis-Williams' work concerns his influential proposition that southern African rock art is overwhelmingly attributable to the ancestors of the San or Bushmen hunter-gatherers of southern Africa and in particular to their shamans. In his interpretation, the images and motifs of southern African rock art are profoundly related to the experiences of shamans, their control of "supernatural potency" and their social roles amongst the San and wider African peoples.

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This not uncontroversial thesis is based on Lewis-Williams' decoding of the "art" by searching for indigenous insights in recent San ethnography and in the exceptional notes, dictionary, and texts on the beliefs and language of the now extinct southern San group, the /Xam, as compiled in the later 19th and early 20th centuries by Wilhelm Bleek, his sister in law, Lucy Lloyd and his daughter, Dorothea Bleek. In his earlier writings Lewis-Williams identifies an interlocking web of San ideas, signifiers, metaphors, and idioms that all articulate around shamanic themes and he argued that when these ideas are known to scholars, the otherwise elusive meanings of many /Xam narratives and rock art motifs become apparent.

In "Myth and Meaning" Lewis-Williams names these meaning laden words and phrases as "nuggets" and building on earlier work he uses them to analyze six /Xam narratives from the Bleek archive. This analysis forms the basis of six chapters: "Bringing Home the Honey"; "The Mantis Makes an Eland", "The Fight with the Meerkats", "A Visit to the Lion's House"; "The Mantis Dreams"; "The Broken String." Lewis-Williams uses the narratives to underpin and develop his shamanic hypothesis. His methodology and choice of themes will be familiar to followers of his earlier work. These chapters are supplemented by four further chapters that explore the historical background of the Bleek archive, the relationship of the narratives to the rock art, and Lewis-Williams' wider theoretical stance.

"Myth and Meaning" does not bring anything radically new to Lewis-Williams' work. What it does do, however, is add welcome new layers of detail to his arguments and present a new reflection on the evolution of his thesis. Throughout the book Lewis-Williams seems keen to address earlier criticisms of his work in an even handed manner, whilst explicitly relating how his own thinking has changed over the years. He is keen, for instance, to problematize words like "myth," "shaman," "and "trickster." At the same time, his analysis brings a balanced, humane, and historically appropriate window onto the colonial realities behind the Bleek archive and the human strengths, frailties, and inconsistencies of those involved. Dorothea Bleek is accordingly recognized as both condescending and paternalistic but nevertheless having held an uncommon affection for the San. Similarly the /Xam were not all wise storytellers. Some were ungrateful, short tempered, and vain.

It is interesting that the subtitle of "Myth and Meaning" is: "San-Bushman Folklore in Global Context" because Lewis-Williams' starting point is a rejection of universalizing Western categories of analysis, such as myth and story, and an explicit move away from the classic theories of myth as expounded by Malinowski, Freud, Jung, Lévi-Strauss, and others. Alternatively, Lewis-Williams strives to focus on the specifics of the historical context of the /Xam evidence and San cosmology to extract indigenous insights, yet he also still wants to say something of global significance.

Having specialized on issues of shamanism and healing that lie at the heart of Lewis-Williams' analysis, I am repeatedly struck by how well his "nuggets" relate to my own work and I recognize this as testament to his extraordinary scholarly dedication. But I am also struck that, like many other scholars who focus on San shamanism, Lewis-Williams' search could be broader as it takes remarkably little account of the wider world of San and indeed Khoekhoe healing although this arena contextualizes his work better than any other field. His comments, for instance, about the relationship between healers and lightning, the idea of people "owning" animals, the relationship between urine, body odor, and potency, and the wider context of words such as *!gi:xa*, which approximates to "medicine person," are central to his argument but can all be better understood against a broader San perspective. Equally, I believe taking account of the ideas and narrative habits of the San and Khoekhoe who live or lived around the same region as the /Xam should have a stronger role in his analysis. Working with people who are possibly only two generations away from the /Xam "informants" and may well share immediate relatives, reveals something of the way narratives are told, often in very /Xam sounding convoluted back and forth repetitive ways. Moreover, these people hold ideas of healing that are far closer to those of the Khoekhoe than they are to the San of the northern and eastern Kalahari and hence this raises questions about the relevance of predominantly drawing on the ethnography of the more northern Ju/'hoansi and Naro for interpretation of the /Xam. On a wider note, given the admirably reflective tone of "Myth and Meaning," I am also slightly surprised that the question of representation and generalization does not arise. How much can we really say about the /Xam and wider San based on interviews with a handful of individuals? Having said this, what has been said by these individuals does seem typical of much said right across the Kalahari.

My main bone of contention with "Myth and Meaning, concerns a tension I have long felt in Lewis-Williams' work. Lewis-Williams describes the San world in terms of a three-tiered cosmos. On a horizontal axis there is the camp, hunting ground, and waterhole and on a vertical axis, gods and spirits above and the dead below. Despite asserting how blurred San boundaries are between the sacred and profane and dreams and reality, Lewis-Williams persistently promotes the notion that the vertical, and to his mind inherently shamanic, axis, "seems to have been more defined and important" (89). Moreover, in line with his underlying Marxist starting point and his retention of grand theory, Lewis-Williams identifies the role of shamans as one of controlling access to the supernatural and thereby playing a hierarchical role in controlling the means of production.

I find these arguments against pure egalitarianism compelling but I am less convinced that San shamans played such an exclusive role as Lewis-Williams suggests. Considering just how embedded ideas of "supernatural" potency flow are across San populations, and not just shamans, and how it is far from just the shamans that can control the weather and have abilities to heal and prophesize or communicate with spirits and the dead, I remain wary of placing too much weight on the socially distinctive powers of shamans and their overwhelming role in

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the production of rock art. But these are not so much criticisms of this book as a recognition that interdisciplinarity has much to contribute to this field and there remains exciting work to be done. Chris Low

Liisberg, Sune, Esther Oluffa Pedersen, and **Anne Line Dalsgård** (eds.): Anthropology and Philosophy. Dialogues on Trust and Hope. New York: Berghahn Books, 2015. 293 pp. ISBN 978-1-78238-556-1. Price: $ 95.00

"The present book is no ordinary anthology. It is a workroom in which anthropologists and philosophers have commenced on a dialogue on the two research topics, trust and hope, that are important for the field of anthropology as well as for the field of philosophy. The interdisciplinary efforts of the contributors demonstrate how the coming together of anthropologists and philosophers can result in new and challenging ways of thinking."

The above passage comes from the close of the editorial introduction (18) and is a fair summary of the book's offerings. In particular, the book suggests methodological innovations concerning how research topics might be conceptualised, studied, and written-up in an interdisciplinary fashion.

Besides the "Introduction," the book comprises six dialogues and an epilogue. Each dialogue sees an anthropologist and a philosopher (from Denmark or the USA) working in pairs; they work to focus their attention on a shared research topic, exploring how their specialised methodologies might be brought into profitable relation. Their deliberation is then written-up as a brief joint statement, followed either by a jointly written essay or by two essays that comment closely upon one another. The premise of the volume is that "trust" and "hope" – but surely not only these key themes – can best be understood when "a strong empirical foundation" and "an equally strong conceptual exploration" are practised in alignment. The book ends with a joint summation by Anne Line Dalsgård and Søren Harnow Klausen, "Anthropology and Philosophy in Dialogue?," reflecting on the book's intentions and outcome.

In "Dialogue One," Cheryl Mattingly and Uffe Juul Jensen discuss "Practical Philosophy and Hope as a Moral Project among African-Americans." Mattingly and Jensen jointly author a chapter that takes its lead from Aristotle, Kant, and Sartre, all of whom advised that exegetical philosophy needs to look beyond itself in order to comment successfully on worldly matters. This "beyond" includes other disciplines as well as the social practices and ordinary language of those whose affairs one would know and improve. "Hope" as a moral project entails taking informants' first-person perspectives on the future and placing these in a cosmopolitan context.

In "Dialogue Two," Michael D. Jackson and Thomas Schwarz Wentzer debate "Existential Anthropology and the Category of the New." Jackson and Wentzer author two chapters that both consider the existential human imperative to lead a fulfilled life. Jackson describes "existential dissatisfaction" among the Kuranko as they endeavour to improve their lot materially, socially, and spiritually; Wentzer examines the universal existential desire that human beings have to experience the new: a new beginning in a world that reflects our intentionality and desire.

In "Dialogue Three," Esther Oluffa Pedersen and Lotte Meinert deliberate upon "Intentional Trust in Uganda." Pedersen and Meinert write two chapters but coordinate their lines of research: both consider trust and distrust among the social spheres of Meinert's Ugandan informants, combining her fieldwork with Pedersen's theorisations of "prima facie trust" (or distrust) as against "reflective trust" as against "the locus of trust." The exercise aims to bring out both the cultural environment in Uganda and the agency of those working within it.

In "Dialogue Four," Sune Liisberg and Nils Bubandt deliberate on "Trust, Ambiguity, and Indonesian Modernity." Bubandt and Liisberg begin by sharing data: Bubandt's fieldwork material from Indonesia, where trust, authenticity, power, and forgery find a complex entwinement, is juxtaposed against Liisberg's philosophical interpretation of trust as linked to the tolerance of ambiguity and benign forms of self-deception. Each then reaches their own conclusions in their own chapters while sharing a common research question: "Can inauthenticity and self-deception be contained within trusting relationships?"

In "Dialogue Five," Sverre Raffnsøe and Hirokazu Miyazaki discuss "Gift-Giving and Power between Trust and Hope." Raffnsøe has his philosophical ideas responded to by Miyazaki through the lens of gift-giving in Fiji and Japan. Raffnsøe is concerned with the way in which successful organisational management requires both power and trust. Miyazaki responds by showing how gift-givers in Fiji place trust in gift-receivers – anchoring their thoughts in hope – as part of a wider practice to obviate uncertainty in life; the Japanese government, meanwhile, failed to manage a campaign of reciprocal (hopeful) gift-giving after the nuclear disasters of 2011.

In "Dialogue Six," Anders Moe Rasmussen and Hans Lucht debate being "With Kierkegaard in Africa." Rasmussen and Lucht take as a common starting point Kierkegaard's understanding of hope as an existential structure in human life. Their chapters then diverge in their analyses of Kierkegaard's position – in particular his understanding of nihilism – and their application of it to Obama's American Presidential campaign of 2008 (Rasmussen) and to hopes of Ghanaian fishermen that the outside world will respond to their plea for viable livelihoods (Lucht).

The "Epilogue" penned by Dalsgård and Klausen offers a "meta-reflection" on the book's project. Philosophy and anthropology may have a history of negative bias towards one another's endeavours; notwithstanding, recent decades of generic blurring have seen calls for interdisciplinary (or cross- or transdisciplinary) engagements. Can empirical discovery be more closely integrated with conceptual metaphysics? Moreover, the shortcomings of linking philosophy exclusively or even primarily with cognitive studies – where "empirical" findings derive from experimental laboratories – are remedied when anthropology can provide research material that is contextualised in "real life." Is there some way for anthropological espous-

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