

KhoiSan

The First People of Southern Africa



- Covers the Countries of Botswana and Namibia, as well as parts of Angola, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Contains the Kalahari desert

Variety of vegetation and animals

The Kalahari Basin

Bantu & Khoisan

- Khoesan is a combination of Khoekhoe and San people
- The San have been inhabiting southern Africa for over 100,000
- Khoekhoe were pastoralist
- San were hunter gathers
- Around 1500BCE, members of the Bantu language group migrated east and south from West Africa
- Bantu people changed the economy of the region
- 2 major language groups in Southern Africa are Bantu and Khoi-San
- San DNA has the most variations of any human on the planet



Film sourced from <https://www.facebook.com/MakeourKhoelanguagesofficial/videos/2585121485043860/>



Play

Khoisan Languages

- Kwadi (extinct)
- Khoe (most spoken)
- Tshu-Khwe (least click sounds)

Colonial Impact

- First settlers called them Hottentot
- Many were forced to speak Afrikans
- Some languages have gone extinct
- Nama is the only San language with government recognition

Can you name a famous Khoesan woman? Answers on slide 10

Everyday Life

- Society is divided up by gender and age
- Men and boys hunt and trap animals
- Women and girls gather and set up homes
- Elders make decisions about who will marry
- There are spiritual guides in the community
- They know all about the vegetation in the area; what is medicinal, poisonous, tasty, hallucinogenic
- Hunters are amazing and track herds of game
- Use all the animal skin and fat included
- The San do not believe in ownership of the land
- The spiritual beliefs are a combination of animus and supreme being
- Hold rituals for children coming of age, celebrations, and for healing the sick





Image sourced from <https://sanpeopleandthekalaharidesert.weebly.com/housesliving-conditions.html>

- Settlements like these are set up and taken down when they move

Made of materials found around the dessert

Usually one room sometimes 2 only for sleeping or the ill

Nomadic Housing

Art

For Ritual

- Rock art engravings and paintings
- Animals from the region and some from outside the region
- San Trance Dance - spiritual practice to engage with the natural world

For Beautification

- Bead works on clothing and as jewelry or head ornaments
- Face painting and decorative cuts or tattoos

Image sourced from https://www.krugerpark.co.za/africa_bushmen.html





Rock art from Twyfelfontein

Life is Art, Art is Spirit, Spirit is Life

- a) Tattoo marks on the face of this Khoe-San woman (Photograph from Valiente-Noailles 1993: plate 37; Hollman pg 35)
- b) Coiled beadwork design from Khoe-San apron / engravings on rock in similar pattern from the Gestoptefontein-Driekuil Complex (Hollman pg 33)
- c) Trance Dance (clip from the film *Around the World in 80 Faiths*)

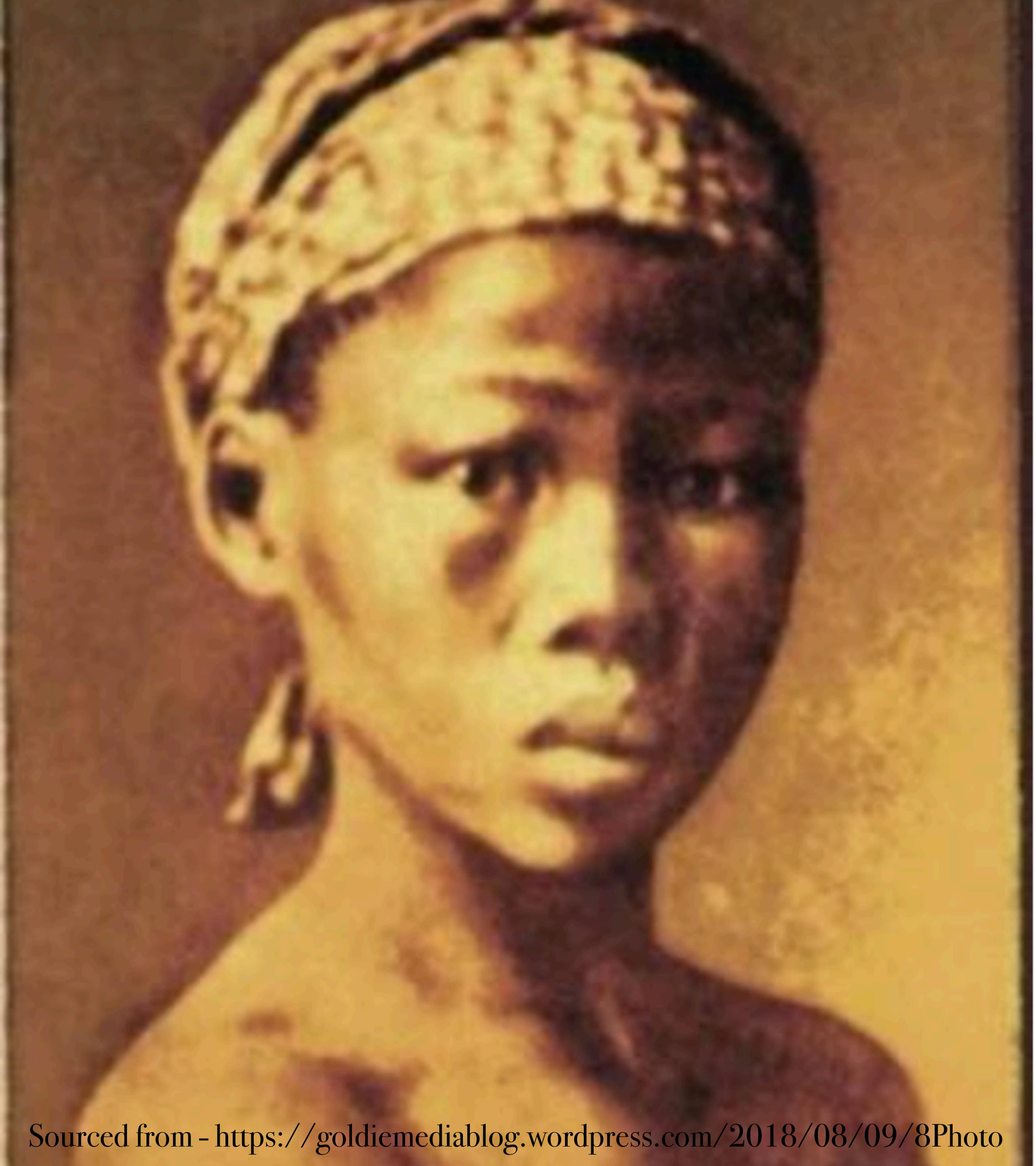


Final Thoughts

- Indigenous oppression through assimilation is global
- Capitalism threatens indigenous people
- Maintaining the cultures of antiquity could be a part of solving some of our global problems
- There is work being done to preserve the culture

Do you know these Koisan Women?

- Krotoa (pictured) born in 1643 was a servant who's linguistic skills supported an end to the Khoikhoi-Dutch war
- Sara Baartman lived from 1789 -1815 similar story to Pocahontas add misogynoir



in order of appearance

- Film of Khoisan language struggle in South Africa - <https://www.facebook.com/MakeourKhoelanguagesofficial>
- BBC Film: *Around the World in 80 Faiths: Africa* - segment on San Trance dance at the 18 minute mark - <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x3b5q2o>
- San Rock Art of Twyfelfontein - <https://www.africanworldheritagesites.org/cultural-places/rock-art-pre-history/twyfelfontein.html>
- brochure about learning NAMA - <https://nalrc.indiana.edu/doc/brochures/nama.pdf>
- Sarah Baartman Story - <https://www.blackpast.org/global-african-history/baartman-sara-saartjie-1789-1815/>
- South African Women you should know - <https://goldiemediablog.wordpress.com/2018/08/09/8-south-african-women-you-should-not-forget-this-womens-day/>