

# Bushmen - Definition

The **Bushmen** or **San** peoples of [South Africa](#) and neighbouring [Botswana](#) and [Namibia](#), who live in the [Kalahari](#), are part of the [Khoisan](#) group and are related to the [Khoikhoi](#). However, they have no collective name for themselves in any of their languages. They have a [sign language](#) that they use while hunting.

With the [pygmies](#) of Central Africa, they have been considered root of [female DNA](#) lineage - the legendary [Mitochondrial Eve](#).

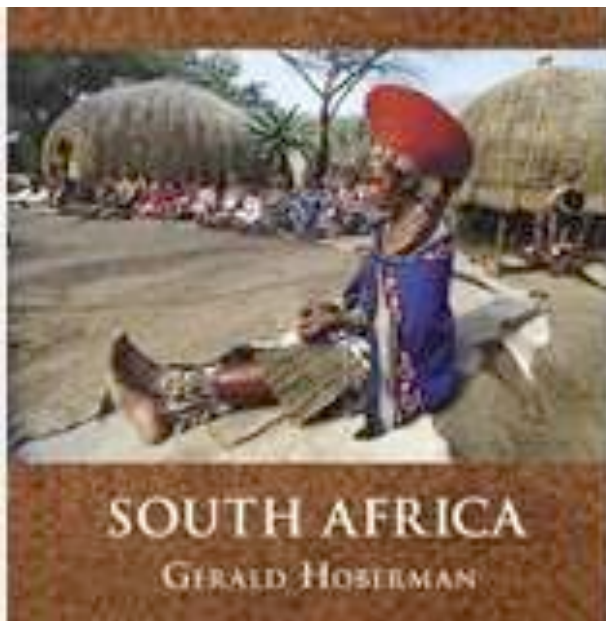
The term **San** was historically applied to them by their ethnic relatives and historic rivals the [Khoikhoi](#); as the term means *outsider* and was derogatory, many of this group prefer to be called **Bushmen**, despite the fact that the term is considered politically incorrect by most Westerners (see this [UPI feature](#)).

In modern South Africa, the Bushmen have largely been absorbed into the so-called [Coloured](#) or [Cape Coloured](#) population of the [Western Cape](#).

The Bushmen of the [Kalahari](#) were first brought to the western world's attention in the 1950s by South African author [Laurens van der Post](#) with the famous book *The Lost World of the Kalahari*, which was also a BBC TV series.

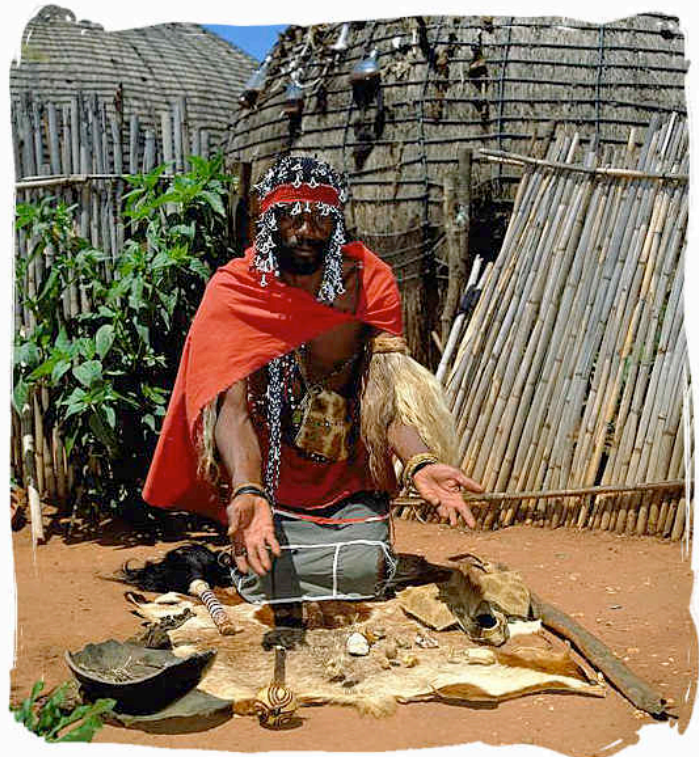
Since [2002](#), the Bushmen of Botswana are seeking legal action to prevent the Botswana government from removing them from the Central Kalahari Game Reserve, their ancestral homeland. The Bushmen are arguing that the Government of Botswana is attempting to destroy their culture through forced relocation and persecution based on their identity.

Information found at: <http://www.wordiq.com/definition/Bushmen>





South Africa: Black Homelands



# History

*Main article: [History of South Africa](#)*

South Africa is one of the oldest [nation-states](#) in Africa. The area that is now South Africa was inhabited by the [Khoi](#), [San](#), [Xhosa](#), [Zulu](#) and various other native tribes, when [Dutch](#) settlers arrived in [1652](#). In time [Great Britain](#) encroached more and more, leading to the [Anglo-Dutch War](#) and the two [Boer wars](#). In [1910](#) the four main republics in the region united as the [Union of South Africa](#). In [1931](#) South Africa became a fully sovereign and self-governing [dominion](#) under the British crown. In [1961](#) it became a republic.

The descendants of the white settlers remained a minority among the black Africans. After the Second World War the whites were able to maintain their rule by implementing [Apartheid](#), a series of harsh laws segregating the country along racial lines. The Apartheid system became increasingly controversial in the late 20th century, leading to widespread sanctions and growing unrest and oppression by the [National Party](#) government. In [1990](#), after a long period of resistance by various anti-apartheid movements, above all the [African National Congress](#), the National Party government took the first step towards negotiating itself out of power, when it lifted the ban on the African National Congress and other left-wing political organizations, and released [Nelson Mandela](#) from prison after 27 years. Apartheid legislation was gradually removed from the statute books, and the first multi-racial elections were held in [1994](#). The ANC won by an overwhelming majority, and has been in power ever since. Control of the country is now largely in the hands of the black majority, which makes up roughly 80% of the population. Despite the end of Apartheid, millions of South Africans continue to live in poverty and the official unemployment rate is 40%. However, a series of voluntary and legislative moves, under the controversial system of BEE [\[1\]](#), or Black Economic Empowerment, have helped to redress decades of racial imbalance in the management and ownership of South African business and industry.