

By Advocate De Waal Lubbe (UPE)

I have researched the topic in view of writing an article, which was then expedited, by an article under the heading, The Khoisan People Of Great River, Great Brak River Museum Newsletter, January 2012, written by their editor, René de Kock.

Mr. de Kock makes the statement that the San people originated on the North coast of Africa, were then driven further and further south by stronger Nations. He further states that the San, also known as Bushmen, travelled down the West coast to arrive in Namibia some 20 000 years ago, and that : "our San probably moved to the Western Cape more recently, about 10 000 years ago, because of the milder winters and better food sources". He then further states and I quote: "it is generally accepted that the pastoralist people, (the Khoekhoe or Khoikhoi), speaking the Kwadi language, entered South Africa a little over 2 000 years ago, arriving from the North-East..... Today there are about 2000 people in South-Africa who speak Khoekhoe and not many more in adjoining Namibia".

Mr. de Kock does not refer to any authority for his opinion, so we have to accept his knowledge as personal. All I can say is, that this is not in line with the opinion of any recognized, knowledgeable archaeologist, scientist, etc. on the subject, over the last 20 years. If he is so blatantly wrong, in respect of the basis of his article, I doubt whether any weight can be given to anything else he wrote in the said article.

In his book, **Shorelines, Strandlopers and Shell Middens - Follow the San.....**, printed March 2006,

Prof.

John Parkington, Professor of Archaeology at the University of Cape Town, where he has taught since 1966, and researched the long term history of hunting and gathering people in Southern Africa, in the evolution of modern people, gives us well researched scientific answers, in respect of the Khoisan's long term history in the Western Cape.

Dealing with **Elands Bay Cave**, he points out that excavations there prove, that this cave has been occupied by strandlopers for over 20'000 years. Bear in mind that strandloper is the colonial term for beachcombers, which were Khoisan, living along the Western Cape shores.

In respect of Klassies River Caves, west of Humansdorp, he writes that: "This shell pile is 23 meters deep and has the earliest evidence of extensive shellfish gathering anywhere in the world. The base of the pile is about **120 000 years old**, reflecting systematic gathering.... Even the top of the pile is older than 40'000 years". He also refers to the human skeletal fragments, skull mandibles, maxillae, teeth and some limb bone fragments, all of which fall within the range of morphological variation known from modern living people, consuming great quantities of seafood.

In the early 90's, Hillary Deacon, then of the Stellenbosch University, showed conclusively that the deposits at **Klassies River**, began building up about **120 000 years ago**, and ceased to accumulate after about 50'000 years ago.

Prof. Parkington, in respect of Blombos Cave near Stil Bay, writes that and I quote:

"Luminescence dating of this sand body by Zanobia Jacobs and Ann Wintle as shown it to be about **77 000 years old**. Underneath this sand, (Prof. Chris) Henshilwood, now joined in the excavations by Judy Sealy and Royden Yates, found several meters of MSA shell middens with some extraordinary associations. The uppermost MSA layers, older than **77 000 years** remember, contained a series exquisitely made stone bifacial leaf shaped points, perforated estuarine shells that must have been beads and some very persuasive bone points. This precocious set of artifacts seems to preempt developments elsewhere in the world by several tens of thousands of years prompting the view that the southern Cape was in the van of innovative and inventive behavior at this time. Fragmentary human remains are all those of modern humans. The excavations are still in progress and the base of the deposits has not yet been reached".

Lastly, Prof. Parkington refers to **De Kelders Cave**, where occupation was between **70 000 and 100 000 years ago**.

Prof. Alan G. Morris, Prof. in Human Biology at University of Cape Town, Medical School, in 2002, (Paper originally presented at the Dual Congress at Sun City, South African, July 1998), in an article with the heading "Isolation and the Origin of the Khoisan: Late Pleistocene and early Holocene human evolution of the southern end of Africa", with the object to demonstrate the reasons why Khoisan populations were probably not indigenous to areas outside of southern Africa, writes that the strongest evidence of prehistoric Khoisan populations in east Africa, is the evidence of two groups, Sandawe of central Tanzania and the Hadza from Tanzania, because of their hunting and gathering mode,

their click language, and their supposed morphological (looks) affinities. He clearly states that no skeletal evidence exists. The language similarity is there, but it is not supported by physical anthropological data. The physical dissimilarity between these African click speakers and the Khoisan populations, are so striking that they "do not resemble the Bushmen in the least".

Prof. Morris further states and I quote: "In the regional summary of serogenetic data, Cavalli-Sforza et al (1994) have confirmed the non-Khoisan biological nature of the Sandawe and Hadza. The Sandawe are shown to be genetically close to the Central-Western Bantu speakers, while the Hadza are a distinct population heavily affected by impact of genetic drift".

He then poses the question, why should Khoisan people have developed such distinctive morphological and serogenetic patterns? The answer, he says, lies in the fact that the Southern African subcontinent has undergone a series of dry-wet fluctuations over the last 100 000 years or so, with a particularly dry period at the height of the Last Glacial Maximum (LGM) at approximately 24 000 -17 000 years ago. The effect was the subcontinent would have been substantially depopulated from time to time. This provided the mechanism for both the isolation of the Khoisan and the place where their distinctive morphology and serogenetics developed.

Prof. Morris then, and this was in 1998 - 2002, said and I quote: "A further implication of the Cape coastal model is that the peopling of southern Africa can be seen as a movement to the north rather than a retreat to the south. Nearly all discussions of the living people of the Kalahari have assumed that they have retreated there because of pressure from incoming groups in the last 2 000 years, despite evidence that suggests long term settlement in the region. If the Cape coastal model is correct, then the present Khoisan populations of the Kalahari are the descendants of more ancient groups who moved north into the dry central part of southern Africa at the onset of the Holocene. The Khoisan presence in southern Angola and possibly southern Zambia may have even been more recent. Rather than the Kalahari being a refuge, it was an area of secondary expansion".

The Conclusion, Prof. Morris then comes to is, "The Khoisan of southern Africa must be seen not only as aboriginal populations of the region, but also as people who have been shaped by the climate and conditions of the extreme south of the continent. Their distinctive morphological and genetic characteristics are the result of a long period of isolation accompanied by a drift and selection that took them on a pathway separate from other African groups. Rather than a southward retreat into the Kalahari, the Cape coastal model implies that the distinctive features of Khoisan peoples originated in the far south and migrated north up as far as the margins of the Zambesi Valley in the northeast and the Cunene river in the northwest.

Beyond the Zambesi there is a little or no evidence of biological penetration of the Khoisan. The Cape coastal model of Khoisan origins is consistent with both modern population features of Khoisan people and the archaeological records in sub-Saharan Africa".

Prof. Alan G. Morris again, under the title, The Myth Of The East African "Bushman", which appeared in the South African Archaeological Bulletin 58(178):85-90,2003, as well as A Khoesan Survival Story, Quest 3 (2007), re-iterated and confirmed the conclusion above.

Interestingly, Prof. John Parkington, in his book, referred to above, makes the further very interesting comments, firstly, that we were here by **100 000 years ago, but not before 200 000 years ago**, secondly, and i quote: **"The mathematics of the genetic patterning are taken to suggest that this Eve lived in Africa some 100 000 to 200 000 years ago. Though disputed and somewhat wrapped in metaphor, this is consistent with the fossil appearance of our species at or around 150 000 years ago. More recent analyses of Y chromosome patterning, reflecting male lineages, point in exactly the same direction. Not surprisingly, Adam was also African!"**

The aforesaid scientific and academic facts taken into account, it is then no wonder that Prof. Curtis Marean, on the 18th of January 2012, after having read René de Kock's article, which he did, at request of Guy Harris, replied as follows: "I read the piece that Guy sent around. Both the genetic and linguist data that I am familiar with, strongly suggest that the Khoi lineage is indigenous to the southern African sub-region since at least 120 000 BP - I Know of no evidence suggesting a migration into the southern African sub-region so late. The concordance of the genetics and linguistics is particularly persuasive. The consensus view is that the khoi lineage as both a genetic and linguistic unit, has its origin point, near the root of modern human lineage. It is important to remember that the modern distribution of individual specific Khoi groups, within this region, is likely not a good reflection of they distribution 120 000 years ago, but their location as a group in the region, seems secure.

