

Humans migrated back to Africa after leaving, fossil record shows

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It's amazing what you find in old genes. DNA recovered from the skeleton of a man who lived in Ethiopia 4500 years ago has given archaeologists clues about humans' migration back to Africa in antiquity.

Evidence from modern genomes suggests that there was a [substantial movement of people from west Eurasia back to Africa](#) – the cradle of humanity – about 3,000 years ago. But with no ancient African DNA to study, important information on the nature of the migration has been missing.

The researchers managed to extract and sequence DNA from the ancient skeleton of a man who lived 4500 years ago – dubbed Mota, after the cave in the southern Ethiopian highlands where he was buried. The cool, dry conditions inside the cave will have helped to make the DNA extraction successful.

By comparing Mota's DNA with modern sequences, the team has been able to work out how much of today's African genomes came from people who arrived in Africa from Eurasia. They show that four to seven per cent of the genome of most African populations can be traced back to a Eurasian source. This "backflow" of Eurasian DNA reaches across the entire continent, confirming the findings of [a study of modern genomes that was published last year](#).

Read full, original post: [Genome of ancient Ethiopian tells story of our return to Africa](#)