

We know the birthplace of humanity was in Africa but we still don't know where

Pinpointing the place from which we steadily evolved into the strange, upright, over-sized brain creatures we are today would help explain not only how we became the world's dominant animal, but also the lone surviving variant of our species.

In 2019 a group of researchers led by Vanessa Hayes, a geneticist at the Garvan Institute of Medical Research and the University of Sydney in Australia, came up with an answer... They discovered that the oldest mtDNA lineage found today is in speakers of Khoisan, a language used by foragers and hunter-gatherers in Namibia and South Africa. As the lineage is found only in living people in southern Africa, the study [concluded](#) that they are [the ancestral population of all living humans](#).

...

Its conclusion, however, has not been warmly accepted by experts in the field.

"It's sort of like looking at modern populations and saying 'here they are in this place today, they have the oldest genetic lineages, therefore that must be the site of origin of modern humans,'" says [evolutionary geneticist] Sarah Tiskoff.

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Recent studies have cast doubt on the very premise that modern humans have a single origin... Rather than a clear tree of linear progress, modern humans evolved in a messy circle weaving in a myriad of directions.

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