

M9: The Eurasian Clan Spreads Wide and Far

Time of Emergence: 40,000 years ago

Place: Iran or southern Central Asia

Estimated Number of *Homo sapiens*: Tens of thousands

Tools and Skills: Upper Paleolithic

My next ancestor, a man born around 40,000 years ago in Iran or southern Central Asia, gave rise to a genetic marker known as *M9*, which marked a new lineage diverging from the *M89* Middle Eastern Clan. His descendants, of which I am one, spent the next 30,000 years populating much of the planet.



This large lineage, known as the Eurasian Clan, dispersed gradually over thousands of years. Seasoned hunters followed the herds ever eastward, along the vast super highway of Eurasian steppe. Eventually their path was blocked by the massive mountain ranges of south Central Asia—the Hindu Kush, the Tian Shan, and the Himalayas.

The three mountain ranges meet in a region known as the "Pamir Knot," located in present-day Tajikistan. Here the tribes of hunters split into two groups. Some moved north into Central Asia, others moved south into what is now Pakistan and the Indian subcontinent.



These different migration routes through the Pamir Knot region gave rise to separate lineages.

Most people native to the Northern Hemisphere trace their roots to the Eurasian Clan. Nearly all North Americans and East Asians are descended from the man described above, as are most Europeans and many Indians.

