

Course programme

Friday

Please plan to arrive between 16:30 and 18:30. You can meet other course members in the bar which opens at 18:15. Tea and coffee making facilities are available in the study bedrooms.

19:00	Dinner
20:30 – 22:00	Outline of the traditional historical account of British origins. Recent geneticists' attempts to make sense of British origins
22:00	Terrace bar open for informal discussion

Saturday

07:30	Breakfast
09:00 – 10:30	Introduction to genetics
10:30	Coffee
11:00 – 12:30	World Prehistory based on genetics
13:00	Lunch
14:00 – 16:00	Free
16:00	Tea
16:30 – 18:00	Genetic results on British origins
18:00 – 18:30	Free
18:30	Dinner
20:00 – 21:30	Quantitative linguistic methodology
21:30	Terrace bar open for informal discussion

Sunday

07:30	Breakfast
09:00 – 10:30	Linguistic results on Celtic and Germanic languages
10:30	Coffee
11:00 – 12:30	Pulling together the evidence from genetics, linguistics and the Historical Eyewitnesses: Caesar, Tacitus, Strabo, Gildas and Bede
12:45	Lunch

The course will disperse after lunch

Course syllabus

Aims:

Methodologically, the course aims to provide the student with a foundation in the new disciplines of archaeolinguistics and archaeogenetics using phylogenetic and geographic database approaches.

From the point of view of results, the course aims to offer a tentative revised narrative for the settlement prehistory and history of the British Isles from the Ice Age until today.

Content:

The origins of the British seem to have been securely laid out since Bede in AD731, who described the coming of the Anglo-Saxons, and since Buchanan in AD 1582, who suggested that the early British were from Gaul, ultimately leading to the modern concept of an Iron-Age "Celtic" Britain. However, the traditional views are coming under scrutiny with the tools of DNA-based population genetics. This course will explain the basics of DNA analysis, describe current genetic and linguistic research on British origins, and re-examine some of the ancient sources in the light of the new research. A knowledge of genetics and Latin will be helpful but not essential for this course.

Presentation of the course:

The course consists primarily of lectures.

Outcomes:

As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

Describe the basics of genetics, genetic anthropology and global human prehistory

To perform historical language research using phylogenetic methods

Be familiar with areas of conflict between:

- the traditional settlement history of the British Isles according to Bede on the one hand,
- and on the other hand, a more ancient settlement timescale suggested by other chroniclers, and by genetic and linguistic research

Reading and resources list

Listed below are a number of texts that might be of interest for future reference, but do not need to be bought (or consulted) for the course.

Author	Title	Publisher and date
Colin Renfrew & Paul Bahn	<i>The Cambridge World Prehistory</i>	Cambridge University Press 2014
Forster & Renfrew	<i>Phylogenetic Methods and the Prehistory of Languages</i>	McDonald Institute, University of Cambridge
Renfrew	<i>Making of the Human Mind</i>	Weidenfeld & Nicolson
Oppenheimer	<i>The Origins of the British</i>	Robinson Publishing

Website addresses

Note Students of the Institute of Continuing Education are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current Institute course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

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