

Tracing the origins of the British using genetics, linguistics and chroniclers

Start date	10 May 2019	End date	12 May 2019
Venue	Madingley Hall Madingley Cambridge		
Tutor	Dr Peter Forster	Course code	1819NRX030

Director of Academic Centres Sarah Ormrod

For further information on this course, please contact Head of Academic Centre Administration, Zara Kuckelhaus
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To book See: www.ice.cam.ac.uk or telephone 01223 746262

Tutor biography

Peter Forster's research concerns the molecular population genetics of humans. Born in 1967, he studied chemistry at the universities of Kiel and Hamburg, specialised in genetics at the Heinrich-Pette-Institute of Virology and Immunology in Hamburg and received his PhD in Biology in 1997. After postdoctoral research at the Institute of Legal Medicine in Muenster until 1999, he was appointed a Fellow at the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research in Cambridge. From 2006-2009 he was a university senior lecturer in forensics and life sciences. Peter Forster is currently Director of Research at the Institute for Forensic Genetics in Muenster (Germany), Vice-President of CSAR (based at Churchill College, Cambridge), and an editor of the International Journal of Legal Medicine (Springer, Heidelberg).

Peter Forster has co-developed phylogenetic network analysis of mitochondrial DNA, Y-chromosomal DNA, and linguistic data. He also specialises in DNA ancestry tests. In 2011, the Cambridge Philosophical Society awarded Dr. Peter Forster the William Bate Hardy Prize for his work on human origins, jointly with Dr. Beverley Glover (plant sciences). In 2013 he was elected a lifelong member of the German National Academy of Sciences, and in 2016 a Fellow of the Royal Society of Biology.

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
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 texts that might be of interest should you wish to supplement your learning on the course. Any essential reading is marked with an asterisk *

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

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.

Information correct as of: 22 March 2019