

Roots of the British

histories, genetics and the origins of the people of the Isle of Man

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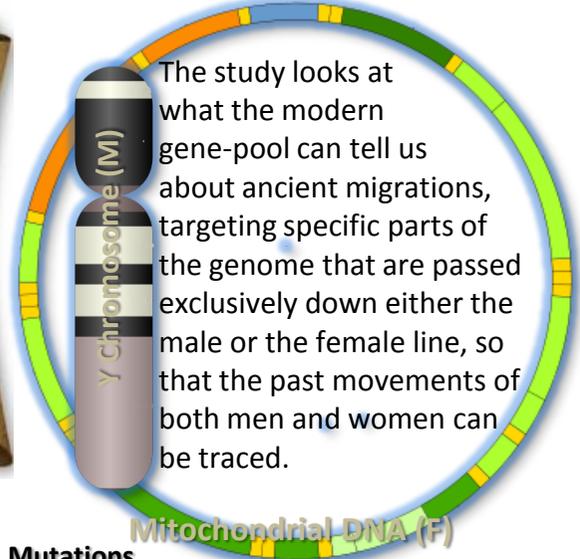
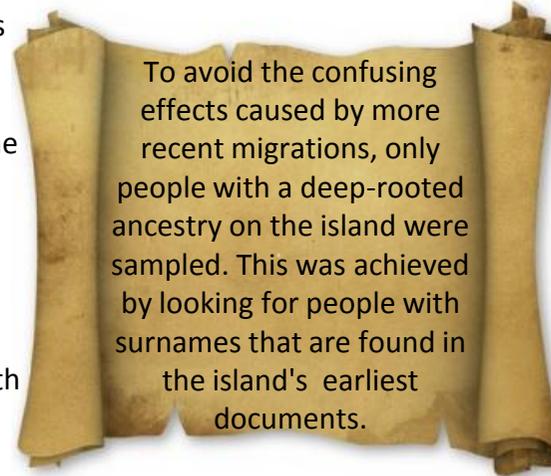
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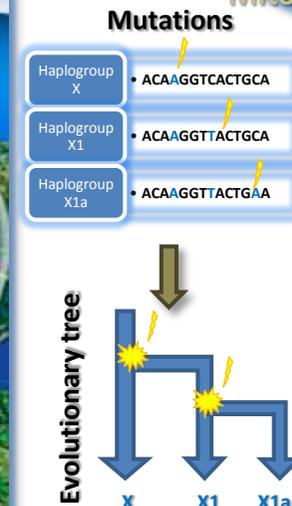
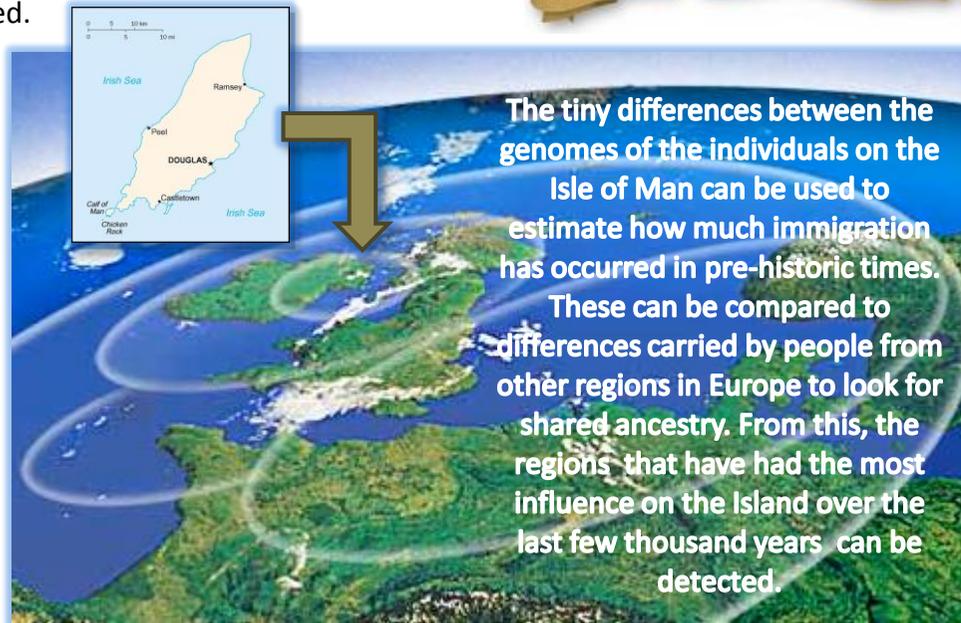
The popular understanding of the history of the British-Irish Isles is peppered with accounts of invasions and mass migrations of peoples from mainland Europe and beyond. This is reflected in the cultural identities of the people of these isles who may define themselves as of Celtic, Anglo-Saxon, or Viking ancestry.

Historians, archaeologists and linguists have struggled to agree on how much truth there is in these origin stories. It is clear the answer is not as simple as people assume. More recently geneticists have also entered the debate and it is hoped that with greater collaboration between all these disciplines, that a consensus can be reached.

The focus of this study is the Isle of Man, which is geographically at the centre of the British and Irish Isles. The island is also halfway along the western fringe of Europe. Its location makes the Isle of Man a convenient place to start the exploration of the genetic landscape of the region.



The study looks at what the modern gene-pool can tell us about ancient migrations, targeting specific parts of the genome that are passed exclusively down either the male or the female line, so that the past movements of both men and women can be traced.



The differences in the genomes caused by tiny changes to the genetic code, can be grouped into families known as 'haplogroups'. The frequencies of these haplogroups differ between populations. By comparing the varying frequencies we can make inferences about the population's history.