

Exploring the human past through ancient DNA: mobility, kinship, and new narratives

Ancient DNA (aDNA) has emerged as a powerful tool in archaeological and evolutionary research disciplines. In my talk, I will illustrate how aDNA analysis can address a range of questions and challenges, drawing on my archaeogenetic work in the Mediterranean and the Caucasus. I will then explore how scientific biological evidence helps to shape historical interpretation. Lastly, I will discuss emerging directions in the field and the new perspectives arising as more countries engage actively in aDNA research—bringing forward insights grounded in their own historical and archaeological contexts.



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**THURSDAY
15/05/2025**

13:00
Costas Fotakis
room

I am an evolutionary biologist specialising in ancient human population genomics, trained and employed at some of the world's leading institutions in ancient DNA. I have contributed to pioneering transdisciplinary research integrating genetics with historical and bioarchaeological evidence. My primary interests lie in the population history of the Mediterranean and Southwest Asia, exploring biological processes such as population admixture, signatures of natural selection, biological kinship, and marital practices. My research sheds new light on past mobility, social organisation, and the interaction of human populations with their environments. I am also interested in combining ancient and modern genomics to build a synthetic understanding of the history and biology of our species.

