

First Millennium Studies Group Day Seminar

Meadows Lecture Theatre, Edinburgh University

DO THE CELTS MATTER FOR THE FIRST MILLENNIA?

Tuesday 21 June 2016

The 1990s and early 2000s saw a heated debate about the existence or otherwise of the Celts. Recent academic work has brought the question to the fore once more, with the “Celtic from the West” theory bringing together linguistics and archaeology to argue that Celtic languages developed in the Atlantic Bronze Age. The question of Celts has also come back into public view with the National Museums Scotland / British Museum *Celts* exhibition and a recent BBC *Celts* three-parter taking very different views of the material.

Where does this leave scholars working in the first millennia in Scotland and beyond? Field archaeology offers pictures of local and regional variation, while other classes of evidence (such as decorative metalwork, and language) suggest wider connections. This year’s day seminar seeks to move beyond the heat of the Celtosceptic/Celtomaniac debate and ask how we understand our first millennia archaeology in relation to other disciplines and to wider pictures of European history. How do we work in a protohistoric period, and how do we build grander narratives and convey the excitement of this work to a wider public without falling into over-simplifications? If we write ourselves out of this grand European narrative, do we consign Scottish archaeology to a periphery?

9.00 **Coffee/bookstalls**

9.30 Introduction

9.40 Katherine Forsyth: Can Greek and Latin writers tell us anything useful about Iron Age Scotland?

10.30 Manuel Fernández-Götz: Iron Age identities with and without Celts

11.00 **Coffee/bookstalls**

11.40 Brendan O’Connor: The Atlantic Bronze Age in the first millennium BC: a northerly perspective

12.10 Rachel Pope: Early Iron Age society from the burial evidence

12.50 **Lunch/bookstalls**

13.50 Fraser Hunter: The thinking behind the shiny stuff

14.15 Martin Goldberg: Ultimate La Tène? The use of different artistic heritages in Early Medieval Britain and Ireland

14.45 Thomas Clancy: Place-names, Celticity and northern Britain

15.30 **Coffee/bookstalls**

16.00 John Collis: Celts Ancient and Modern

16.40 Alex Woolf: ‘People called Celts’, ‘Celtic-speaking Peoples’ and the problem of linguistic continua in North European Protohistory

17.30 Discussion

18.00 **Reception** in the Macmillan Room

Attendance is free but please book your place to avoid disappointment:-

e-mail: fmsgseminars@gmail.com (label your e-mail FMSG 16 Celts)

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