

The Cultures and History of Medieval Catalonia

Tutor: Dr Carole Cusack

The area between Barcelona and Nimes has a distinctive atmosphere, and its position between the Mediterranean, the Iberian Peninsula, and northern Europe meant that from the Romans onwards the region has been strategically significant. Today visitors encounter a unique tapestry of classical, Visigoth, Jewish, Muslim and Christian influences, recognized by the Spanish as 'Catalonian' (French 'Languedoc') culture. In the Middle Ages the region was a crossing-point for pilgrims travelling to and from Santiago, an embarkation point for Crusaders, a refuge for popes escaping Rome, and a hotbed of religious dissent and conflict (for example, the Cathars and the Albigensian Crusade). This course explores the dynamic cultures of medieval Catalonia.

\$78 (6 units)

Course No: D231

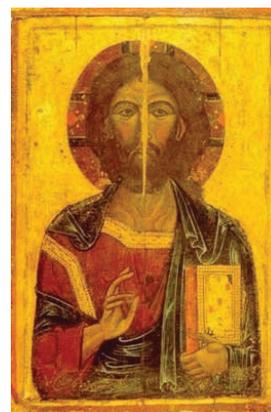
Portraits of Russia

Tutor: Dr Robert Forgacs

This course, focussed on the life and work of some of Russia's most outstanding personalities, will begin with the work of Andrey Rublëv, Russia's most famous icon painter, and his circle, and the Byzantine background to Russian iconography. Russia's greatest poet, Alexander Pushkin, and his immortal poem 'Yevgeny Onegin' will be the subject of the second unit, while the third will be devoted to the novelist Ivan Turgenev. The fourth unit will provide an overview of the music of Alexander Borodin and Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov, with the fifth unit being devoted to the music of Tchaikovsky, Russia's first professionally-trained composer. The course will conclude with a unit on the life and tragic death of the last Tsar and Tsarina, Nicholas II and Alexandra.

\$78 (6 units)

Course No: D232



The Middle East, Past and Present

Tutor: Dr Douglas Golding

To even begin to understand the turmoil in the Middle East today – the conflicts in Syria, Iraq, Turkey, Israel/Palestine, and elsewhere – we need to know more than most of us do about its geography and its violent history. We also need to understand how much the peoples of the Middle East have in common, including their concerns for land and religion, and a mindset which keeps the past eternally present. This course is presented by a tutor who has visited most of the countries of the Middle East, studied its history, and spoken to people of many backgrounds and with many points of view. It's a course designed both to inform and provoke discussion, and challenge many fixed opinions.

\$78 (6 units)

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Southeast Asia: History, Culture and Australian Involvement

Tutor: Cavan Hogue (ex-Ambassador to USSR with diplomatic postings to Indonesia)

Southeast Asia is more important to Australia than anywhere else but most people's knowledge of it tends to be superficial and often inaccurate. Our media focuses on Europe which is of marginal relevance to Australia and where we have no influence or importance. This course provides an introductory overview of the region which matters to us and where we can have some influence if we play our cards right. We look at history, politics and geography as well as regional developments.

\$78 (6 units)

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Introducing WEA Sydney

WEA Sydney is a voluntary, independent, not-for-profit adult education organisation.

Its mission is to provide adults with a range of stimulating, varied educational activities which develop knowledge, understanding and skills. Special emphasis is on opportunities for serious, objective study of the arts, humanities and sciences.

Since its foundation in 1913, WEA has been governed democratically by its students and members through the WEA Council and its Board.

Feedback on Robert Forgacs' last course *Portraits of France:*

"We like the diversity of the personalities in the course and their contributions and innovations to society and their relevance to the present day."

"We appreciated the tutor's full replies. We found them very encouraging and knowledgeable. The visit from the tutor was enjoyable and informative. Thank you Robert."