



2023 Series 2 Course F

Title	National Epics
Date	Fridays, 26 May – 23 June 2023
Time	10:30 am – 12:30 pm
Venue	Leith Bowling Club, 2 Duke Street, North Dunedin
Convenor	Stuart Strachan Email: sjstrachanz@gmail.com Phone: 482 2339
Developer	Stuart Strachan
Course fee	\$50 (please do not pay until you receive an invoice)

This course will have an introductory talk plus seven poetical and two epics, all but *Gilgamesh* in the European tradition with an emphasis on their role in developing and nurturing national identity. It begins with the oldest known epic, *Gilgamesh*, based on the legendary exploits of a king who reigned in Sumer in approximately 2700 BC. It ends with the *Kalevala*, Finland's renowned national epic first published in the mid-nineteenth century.

All applications must be received by Thursday 27 April 2023. You will receive a response to your application by Monday 8 May 2023.

Please contact the Programme Secretary courses@u3adunedin.org.nz, phone 467 2594 with any queries.

National Epics

26 May

National Epics: an introduction -*Dr John Hale*, English and Linguistics Programme

A general look at the nature, literary form and role of national epics, and the cultures that gave rise to them over four millennia.

Gilgamesh -*Dr Deane Galbraith*, Religion Programme

We fittingly begin with the oldest known national epic written in Akkadian during the second millennium BC, which records the exploits of Gilgamesh, king of Sumerian city-state Uruk.

2 June

Iliad -*Robin Hankey*, formerly Classics Department

Best known of all the Greek epics, Homer's Iliad, late 8th to early 7th century, famously tells the story the "anger of Achilles" during the final weeks of the 10-year siege of Troy.

Aeneid -*Dr John Hale*, English and Linguistics Programme

Virgil's epic poem in Latin dating first century BC traces the legendary journey of Aeneas, a Trojan who fled Troy to Italy, where he became ancestor of the Romans.

9 June

Beowulf -*Associate Professor Greg Waite*, English and Linguistics Programme

An Old English epic poem in the tradition of Germanic heroic legend, set in 6th century, but written in the 8th or 9th century: it tells of the exploits of Beowulf, a hero of the Geats and slayer of the monster Grendel.

Grettir's Saga -*Dr Greg Waite*, English and Linguistics Programme.

The Saga of Grettir the Strong, is one of the Icelanders' sagas. It details the life of Grettir Ásmundarson, a bellicose Icelandic outlaw. Written about 1400 AD.

16 June

Song of Roland -*Dr Roberto Suazo Gomez*, English and Linguistics Programme

An 11th-century *chanson de geste* based on the Frankish military leader Roland at the Battle of Roncevaux Pass in 778 AD. Oldest surviving major work of French literature.

Lay of El Cid -*Dr Roberto Suazo Gomez*, English and Linguistics Programme

The only surviving medieval Spanish epic, the Lay is based on the true story of Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, a Castilian knight who fought for both Christian and Muslim forces.

23 June

Mabinogion -*Emeritus Professor Gareth Jones*, Bioethicist and Welsh language student, University of Otago

The Mabinogion, the earliest Welsh prose stories, belong to the Matter of Britain. The stories were compiled in Middle Welsh in the 12th – 13th centuries from earlier oral traditions. They were popularised by Lady Charlotte Guest in the 19th century.

Kalevala -*Stuart Strachan*, Finland enthusiast

The Kalevala is an 19th-century work of epic poetry compiled by Elias Lönnrot from Karelian and Finnish oral folklore and mythology. It was an important influence on Tolkien's fantasy writings and Tove Jansson's Moomins.