

Ancient Literatures Unit

Belief systems have 3 key stories-creation of world, creation of man, origin of death

—demigods-beings who are part god/part man, serve as a link between the gods and men

Oral traditions change over time before being written down and “saved”, those who write down the stories add things to them (usually religious beliefs)

Earliest Writings: Religious, Heroic, Hymns, Wisdom, Folktales

Commonalities: Flood, Quests, Archtypes

Many EPICS are part TRUE, part LEGEND, part RELIGIOUS belief.

Qualities of an Epic:

- Hero
- Cultural Values and Ideals
- Vast scope
- Plot includes journeys/supernatural elements
- Tone is serious-often contain formal orations
- Universal themes and values (good versus evil, honor, courage)

5 major world religions: Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism. Islam is the only one with the concept of Fate as opposed to Free Will, which exists in the other four. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all worship the same god, just in different forms/names. Hinduism and Buddhism have no hell, just heaven (nirvana). Buddhism has no god. Hinduism is the only polytheistic religion.

Mesopotamia and Egypt Introduction-pages 14-29

Historical Background on The Epic of Gilgamesh (page 32-33)—written 1000 years before other ancient texts

Sumeria: The Epic of Gilgamesh (pages 34-46)—Sumerian King 2700 BC

A-Gilgamesh as 2/3 god—buddy Enkidu—cause trouble, Gilgamesh scorns Ishtar (goddess) and Enkidu is killed to punish Gilgamesh [SMITE]

B-Gilgamesh goes on Quest to find eternal life: Focus on Gilgamesh as a 1/3 human—Quest elements challenges, test, goal

Lions, scorpion guardian, darkness, other guardians, ocean of death(boatman) reveal his character: courage, honesty, determination/perseverance, faith, humility

Y-Story of the Flood—story within a story—U-tim survived the flood because Ea warned him (Ea warns U-tim because U-tim is a good man and has faithfully worshiped Ea-World destroyed for being too noisy [SMITE]) U-tim releases a

dove, a swallow and a raven to determine if the waters have receded. After the flood, the gods regret destroying the world and U-tim gives sacrifices to all of them. They decide to bless U-tim—he gets eternal life. U-U-tim tests Gilgamesh and Gilgamesh fails—gets a consolation prize—secret hiding place of a plant that will renew your youth. Gilgamesh leaves U-tim.

W-Gilgamesh finds the magic plant that grants the renewal of youth—on their journey home it is stolen by a snake (sloughing of skin)

Returns home empty handed but his experiences have made him better man and he rules his people as a great king.

Hebrew: Genesis: Creation and the Fall (pages 64-69)

Yahweh creates the world and everything in it. Then he creates man from the dust of the ground and places him in the Garden of Eden. Physical description of the garden and its location between the rivers. Then he brings the animals for Adam to name. Then he creates Eve from Adam's rib. Together they live in the garden. The serpent talks to Eve and convinces her to eat from the Tree of KNOWLEDGE. Eve and Adam eat from the tree. Consequences: serpent has to crawl on its belly and people will always fear it, woman's pains were increased at childbirth and men will rule, and men will have to work hard their whole lives to survive. Yahweh sends them out of the garden so that they can't eat from the Tree of LIFE. [SMITE]

Noah and the Flood (pages 70-73)—Hero of the Hebrew people

Yahweh becomes grieved that he created man—limits him to 120 years of life (no longer immortal) When that isn't enough, he decides to destroy the world and "start over." SMITE. Only Noah is a righteous man and is favored by Yahweh. Noah is told to build an ark and gather animals to repopulate the earth. Flood lasts for 150 days and then the waters recede. Noah releases a raven and a dove to see if the waters have receded. Symbolism of the dove with the olive branch is created (represents peace/renewal)

After Noah leaves the ark he sacrifices to Yahweh and they make a new covenant (agreement). Yahweh promises to never flood the earth again (and gives the rainbow as sign of the promise).

Psalm 104 (pages 90-92)—possible author King David—1000 BC

Everything in nature happens as an action from Yahweh. The psalm focuses on the glory and diversity of life that Yahweh has created. Yahweh causes life to grow in the daytime and sleep at night. Speaker feels awe and love for Yahweh and gratitude for many blessings.

Egyptian: Book of the Dead (pages 52-53)—Osiris Nu

Based on the most important belief in Egyptian culture—resurrection from the dead. Osiris taught the Egyptians how to farm and other important secrets, his brother, Set, became jealous that the Egyptians all favored Osiris and so Set kills Osiris. Isis finds her brother's body and brings him back to life. Then Osiris becomes the lord of the underworld (Afterlife). Egyptians believed that if a person lived a good life, was preserved properly, and has the right ceremonies and prayers performed that a person could be resurrected and live in the afterlife.

In this section, Osiris Nu, is a man who is praying to Osiris and trying to convince Osiris to let him into the afterlife. By taking on Osiris' name (calling himself Osiris Nu) he is demonstrating how he wants to become immortal and connected to Osiris. He also mentions Ra—the God of the sun as the rising sun and the setting sun—hinting again at immortality.

Egyptians believed that they supported their Gods through their prayers and offerings. They did this to make their Gods happy and to gain eternal life after they died. His prayer is that Osiris will not allow his body to rot away to nothing, so that he can become immortal like all the others Osiris has saved.

Osiris Nu is confident that his prayers will be answered because he has lived a good life, never committing any acts that would displease the Gods and always praising the Gods and being true to them.

He describes how he shall escape the decomposition process because his God will save him.

Adoration of the Disk (pages 54-55)—King Akhenaten and Queen Nefertiti—1350 BC

Akhenaten wrote this song to praise his heavenly father, Aten. Like Osiris Nu, Akhenaten has taken his God's name as part of his own (Aten). This literally means the Son of God.

Song of Praise to Aten—the sun god. Symbolism in the song describes the earth "coming alive" with the dawn and the light of the sun, and "going down to death" each night with the setting of the sun. The hymn focuses on the glory and diversity of life that Aten has created and given life to with his light. Speaker feels love, loyalty for Aten as a Father of all life. Gratitude for all Aten's blessings.

India Introduction pages 102-113

A brief introduction to Hindu beliefs

Brahman is the Cosmic Spirit—what you attain after being reincarnated enough to have reached enlightenment.

Dharma-Duty, what you must do in life

Karma-Destiny, accumulation of good or evil that determines your placement in your next life

Reincarnation-people are reincarnated higher or lower in the caste system based on their karma

Caste system-people are divided between untouchables, commoners, ruling class, priests—you are your caste for life and can only advance yourself in your next life

Vishnu—Preserver

Also known as Rama, Krishna, Varaha, Narasimha

Rides an Eagle

Married to Lakshmi—goddess of wealth

Shiva—Destroyer

Depicted in deep meditation, has a third eye and matted hair

Rides a Bull

When he dances, life and death occur

Married to Ganga—the Ganges river

Brahma—Creator

Depicted with 4 heads, pointed in every direction

Rides a Swan

Married to Saraswati—goddess of learning

India: Rig Veda (pages 115-118)—Sacred Hymn—1500 BC—Aryan culture/religion

Still recited today at weddings and other sacred ceremonies. Written down around 600 BC The Rig Veda is a collection of songs, proverbs and other bits of wisdom.

They reveal the things most important to the Aryan culture. The Rig Veda is the oldest of the Vedas (there are four total). Each one is hundreds of lines long and deal with many different topics.

Creation hymn- Describes the nothingness that existed before creation, "that one" refers to the power that started it all. First was Water and Darkness, then

Heat. The first emotion was Desire and it entered "that one", from desire came Thoughts. Then multiple thoughts existed and together they formed the boundaries of creation and everything in it. AFTER that, the gods came to be—they are not the source of creation.

Burial hymn—This would have been like a eulogy at a funeral. The speaker is talking to the audience and tells them to leave the funeral and enjoy their lives—the lengthening of their days. The speaker appeals to Tvastri, the creator of the Gods and protects all living things, to protect the funeral-goers and to give them long lives. He also asks for Tvastri's blessing on the women that they can have good husbands and be pure.

Then the speaker tells the widow (of the guy who is dead) to get up and rejoin the land of the living. (she would have been lying down next to his body).

The speaker tells the dead man to crawl back to the earth (his mother) and be comforted and protected by the earth.

The last section is where the speaker describes the earth as a young girl and as a woman—a mother figure, taking back the body of the man, like a child. The earth protects us in death and takes us back. Finally Yama, the lord of the dead, will build a 'house' to protect the dead man's remains.

At last, the speaker looks toward the day when he too shall die and be placed in the earth.

Mahabharata (pages 124-125)—World's longest Epic Poem—400 BC

Eight times as long as the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* COMBINED. It was recited from memory for hundreds of years before being written down. Two warring families (cousins) are each trying to rule the Bharata kingdom. The Kauravas are actually demons in human form and there are 100 sons. The Pandavas are their cousins and there are 5 of them—they are all demi-gods. They live in exile for years and then come back to reclaim the kingdom. Arjuna—great hero and prince has Krishna as a counselor (Krishna is actually the God Vishnu). The teacher, Drona, gives tests to see who is a worthy student.

Arjuna is the mightiest of the five brothers and is a student of Drona. He is loyal and brave and dedicated. Arjuna is deemed the best student because he is able to focus so completely on the target that he is blind to any distraction. He also kills a crocodile that attacks Drona, before anyone else can react.

Drona gives him a special weapon that is so powerful, Arjuna can never use it against a human.

BhagavadGita (pages 128-129)—

Lecture from the god Krishna to Arjuna outlining the concepts of Dharma and Karma—most quoted and beloved section of the Mahabharata.

Krishna tells Arjuna that he must fulfill his Dharma (duty) in order to have good Karma (which determines reincarnation).

Reincarnation is central to Hindu belief.

Ramayana (pages 132-140)—Valmiki—India's first poet—400 BC—Battle Epic

Rama's wife is stolen by the demon Ravana which prompts a war to get her back.

Rama's lieutenant, Hanuman, helps to rescue her. In the battle the gods give Rama a flying chariot. Through the battle Rama comes to understand that he is a god.

Ravana is so focused on Rama that when he dies, he is transformed and redeemed.

This is key because in Hinduism, there is no "hell", ANYONE can be redeemed and reincarnated at a higher level.

Persian/Arabian Introduction pages 562-575

The influence of Persian and Arabian Literature on the modern world.

Contributions from Persia include two key concepts that influenced everything after them.

First: the concept of an anti-god. Ancient religions had polytheistic backgrounds but it wasn't until the Persians that evil was personified in an 'Evil God' (concept that someone was IN CHARGE of the evil). Allowed for battles between good and evil (can't have a fight without a good guy and a bad guy) Good God: Ahura Mazda aka Ormazd. Evil God: Ahriman.

Second: the concept of ZERO and the numbers place. This revolutionized mathematics, allowing for complex calculations and formulas. All Math and Science has its basis in the Arabic number system with just ten numbers being used in infinite combinations.

Nomadic people—Persians (originally Aryans -remember them from their conquest of India?) settled and became city dwellers. Along come the Arabs (another nomadic people) who conquer Persia (after it had been kicked in the butt by the Greek Empire). Nomadic people make excellent conquerors because they have no cities to defend, they are highly mobile and skilled at fighting from horseback and they can hit a target and then disappear.

Hospitality is huge in Persian/Arabian cultures—that's why it is so important to know how to approach them and not insult them without knowing it. Three days of hospitality was the rule in the desert.

Original religions were very "Eastern" in that they were full of mysticism and philosophy. After the Arabs bring Islam to the region, most people become Muslim. However, the Sufis still exist. Sufis can be compared to the 'guru' or teacher in other eastern philosophies.

Jews, Christians (including Catholics), and Muslims all worship the same god. They just call him by a different name (Yahweh, Jehovah, Allah) and worship him in different ways. They all have the Old Testament (from the Bible) in common. The Jews call it the Torah. The Christians also follow the New Testament because they believe Jesus was the messiah (the Jews and Muslims do not—they think Jesus was just a great rabbi and prophet). The Muslims also follow the Koran—which was dictated by Muhammad (whom they believe was the LAST prophet). With all this in common, the conflicts arise because each group believes the other two are wrong and the "Holy Land" in the Middle East is holy to ALL three groups and all three groups want to have control of it.

The Koran —650 AD—(pages 576-580)—completely written down within 50 years of Muhammad's death. Koran means recitation. Islam means submit to the will of God. The Koran and the Torah are both believed to be the actual embodiment of God on earth—completely sacred. Islam discourages the depiction of living forms—so the Koran is decorated with geometric shapes, lines and shadings-instead of people, animals.

Central Concept of Islam is that there is only one God and although he is merciful and compassionate, he still requires everyone submit to his will. The Koran is full of moral teaching such as the Importance of Daily Prayer, Repenting of Sins, and Practicing Generosity to Poor/Orphans/Widows. Other morals: faith, work, love, respect for elders, kindness to animals, honesty, humility, bravery, justice, cleanliness and moderation.

Five Pillars of Islam: profess faith, daily prayer, giving charity, fasting during Ramadan, pilgrimage to Mecca.

Exordium—Calling upon God

Faith in God-God knows everything, controls everything and is everywhere. God is supreme in power, he created everything. Have faith and give to the poor, follow the words of the Apostle (Muhammad).

Night-At the end of each day, your actions are weighed by God. If you have done good things, he makes the path to salvation smooth for you. If you have done bad things, he makes the path to damnation smooth for you. God goes on to warn the listeners of the "fires of hell" that will burn the people who chose to sin instead of repent. Those who give alms (charity) will be blessed, as will those who do God's work without seeking any reward.

Daylight-Whether night or day, God knows you, he hasn't forgotten you and he loves you. God promises a better life in Heaven that you will be grateful for. Hasn't God taken care of you, so now you must take care of others (orphans, beggars). Tell everyone about the goodness of God. (addressed to Muhammad)

Persia: Shahname—1000 AD The Epic of Persia was written to preserve the stories of the Persians after the Arabs had taken over Iran. It took many years to write down all the various bits and pieces of their stories.

Ferdowsi-the poet who wrote down the Shahname saved the Persian language and culture. Many Iranians still attribute their sense of identity to the Shahname.

The Epic of Persia traces dynasties, some real, some mythological, going back to the beginning of time. The Shahname also includes a creation of the world story. After the world was created, a line of kings called Shahs fought against the forces of darkness to bring about the Persian culture. Much of the Shahname focuses on wars between Iran and Turan (Central Asia). Turkish invaders came into Iran many times causing war and strife. The main hero in this portion of the Shahname is Rostam, a supernatural hero who comes back again and again over a 300 year period to drive back the Turks.

The Tragedy of Sohrab and Rostam—this section of the Shahname traces the battle between Rostam (the Iranian hero) and Sohrab (a young Turkish warrior). Sohrab is actually Rostam's son, due to a one-night encounter with Tamine (a Turkish princess). Tamine gave a seal to Sohrab as proof that Rostam is his father.

Tamine told Rostam that the child is a girl, so Rostam does not know that Sohrab is his son.

Sohrab challenges Rostam to one-on-one combat. The first day ends in a tie, the second time, Sohrab wins but Rostam tricks him and gets away. The third time is described in the selection.

Sohrab and Rostam meet on the battle field and Rostam is able to grab Sohrab and throw him to the ground. He then takes his knife and stabs him in the chest. Sohrab tells Rostam that it was FATE that decided he should fail today and die. Sohrab tells Rostam that his father will avenge his death (Sohrab doesn't realize that Rostam is his father). He shows Rostam the seal and tells him that it belonged to his father. Rostam nearly faints when he realizes that Sohrab is his son. Sohrab tells him not to weep, that it was his FATE to die. The armies don't realize what has happened and they get restless. Sohrab asks Rostam to let the Turks return home without more fighting because it was Sohrab who raised the army and brought it to Iran. Rostam returns to his army and tells them to let the Turks go home, he is devastated that he has killed his son.

Mediterranean

Introduction to Greece pgs 162-175.

The Western Epics (Greek and Roman) are similar to the Eastern Epics (Indian, Sumerian, Persian) in that they tell stories about heroes. The Hero in the Iliad, Achilles, is a demi-god. In both the Iliad and the Aeneid, HONOR is a main theme and the heroes behave to defend their honor and to restore their honor. Another major element in Western Epics (Iliad and Aeneid) is the concept of FATE. Achilles fights his FATE and many people die as a result. Aeneas accepts his FATE and becomes the founder of Rome.

The Iliad—Greece

Written by a man from Asia Minor (Turkish) who heard the tales of the ten-year war the Greeks fought against Troy (Ilium) that probably happened around 1200 BC. The Iliad was possibly written down around 700 BC—500 years after the battle. The story had been preserved through songs and poems that Homer combined into the Iliad.

How the war started: A Goddess, Eris, brings a golden apple to a wedding and says it is a gift for the fairest woman there. Hera, Athena and Aphrodite, all Goddesses, each claim the prize. Paris, a young prince of Troy is chosen to be the judge. He chooses Aphrodite because she promises to give him Helen, the most beautiful woman in the world.

Helen is already married to Menelaus, the Spartan king. Paris goes to Sparta and takes Helen back to Troy with him (this was very rude as a guest, as well as the whole adultery thing). Menelaus and his brother Agamemnon gather the Greeks and lay siege to Troy to get Helen back. The siege lasts for 10 years.

Achilles, although the hero of the story, isn't perfect. He argues with Agamemnon (the commander of the Greek army) and refuses to fight the Trojans. His friend, Patroclus, dies at the hand of the Trojans. Only then does Achilles come out to fight. Achilles kills everyone he sees until he meets Hector, the Trojan prince (brother to Paris), who he fights one-on-one.

Characters

Aphrodite, Apollo—both favor the Trojans

Athena, Hera—both favor the Greeks

Hermes is the messenger of the Gods

Thetis is a sea Goddess, the mother of Achilles

Zeus—king of the Gods, father of Aphrodite, Apollo, Athena and Hermes—doesn't really take sides in the war.

Greeks

Achilles—invincible because his mother dipped him in the river Styx as a baby

Agamemnon—King of Mycenae, commander of the Greek Army

Menelaus—King of Sparta and husband to Helen

Helen—daughter of Zeus and a mortal woman

Patroclus—friend to Achilles who dies in battle with the Trojans

Trojans

Andromache—wife of Hector

Hector—Prince of Troy and leader of its army

Hecuba—Queen of Troy, mother of Hector and Paris

Paris—Prince of Troy

Priam—King of Troy

Book One: The Rage of Achilles

Apollo has sent a plague down on the Greeks because Agamemnon desecrated his temple and stole the daughter of a priest. Her father begs for her life and offers a ransom, but Agamemnon taunts her father saying she will die an old maid in his home and will be forced to share his bed (intends to rape her). All the Greeks ask Agamemnon to change his mind but he won't. The priest prays to Apollo for help and Apollo sends the plague and shoots his arrows at the Greeks. This goes on for 10 days, finally Achilles asks a prophet why it is happening and the Greeks force Agamemnon to let the captive her go. Agamemnon agrees but only if he can take Achilles' prize. This upsets Achilles and Achilles threatens to kill Agamemnon and take his armies away. Athena tells Achilles not to kill Agamemnon, and he reluctantly obeys her, but he insults Agamemnon and refuses to find for the Greek Army anymore. Nestor and the other Greek Kings have to try to make peace between them. Achilles gives up his prize to Agamemnon, but he won't fight.

Book Six: Hector Returns to Troy

With Achilles sitting out, the Greeks and Trojans resume fighting. The Greeks seem to be winning so Hector goes to the Trojans and tells them to pray for help. Hector's wife begs him to stay in the city since he is all she has left and she is afraid of what will happen to her and their young son if Hector is killed. Hector tells her that he must fight, even though he feels like Troy is doomed. It is FATE and so it cannot be avoided. He has to defend his honor and the honor of Troy. He prays that his son will grow strong and be honorable, just as he is.

Book Twenty-Two: The Death of Hector

When Hector returns to battle, the Trojans begin to win. They drive the Greeks back to their ships. The Greek leaders beg Achilles to return to the fighting, but he refuses. His friend Patroclus comes and asks him to fight, but Achilles refuses, so Patroclus puts on Achilles' armor and leads his men into battle. Patroclus is being victorious until Apollo helps Hector to kill him. When Hector kills Patroclus, he takes the armor (Achilles') and puts it on as a sign of his victory. Achilles becomes angry (again) and decides to re-enter the war. He tells him mom (the sea goddess) and she tells him that if he kills Hector, he will also die. Achilles accepts his FATE and re-enter the war. Achilles chases the Trojans back into their city. Only Hector remains outside and the two men meet in hand-to-hand battle. As the Gods and Goddess watch, Zeus says that he is sad to see Hector and Achilles fighting. Athena steps in and says he is going to deliver Hector's FATE (death) and Zeus

allows her to. Athena tricks Hector into facing Achilles (she appears as a man, his brother). Hector stops running and faces Achilles. Hector tells Achilles that if Achilles dies, he will send his body to the Greeks (they had strict rules about burial in order to get to heaven). Achilles refuses to make a pact with Hector. During their fight Athena gives Achilles a second chance and Hector realizes his time is up. Achilles stabs him and as he dies Hector begs for a proper burial but Achilles refuses and defiles Hector's body. All of Troy watches helplessly as Achilles mistreats Hector's corpse, refusing to allow him a proper burial.

Book Twenty-Four: Achilles and Priam

After Achilles returns to camp with Hector's corpse, the Greeks conduct a burial for Patroclus. Whenever Achilles is overcome with grief for his friend, he drives his chariot around and drags Hector's corpse. The Gods are displeased by this act and Apollo is able to protect Hector's body from decaying. Zeus tells Achilles that he has to give the body back to Troy. Zeus then tells Priam to go to Achilles with a ransom to collect Hector's body. Priam enters the Greek camp and goes to Achilles' tent. He is very humble when asking for his son's body and reminds Achilles of his own father. Together they both mourn for their dead loved ones. Achilles gets angry again and threatens to kill Priam unless Priam leaves (Priam leaves because he doesn't want to die). Achilles agrees to return the body but doesn't want Priam to see it yet. Achilles has it cleansed and wrapped and put on a wagon. Achilles then delivers the body back to Priam and the Trojans. Priam kneels and thanks Achilles, this shocks the Trojans because it was Achilles who killed Hector and Priam is a king (shouldn't be kneeling to anyone).

The Aeneid—Rome

Written by Virgil, the most beloved poet of Rome, so famous that Medieval Monks focused on his works more than any other ancient author. Virgil also appears in Dante's Divine Comedy where he escorts Dante through his journey to hell. Virgil wrote books of poetry that got him attention in the Roman power structure. He wrote about simple rural life and values. In 30 BC Virgil was asked to create a poem to honor all of Rome. Virgil spent 10 years working on the Aeneid but died after only making his rough draft.

The Aeneid retells the story of the fall of Troy in order to trace the lineage of Aeneas, a prince of Troy, who became the founder of Rome. The emperor, Augustus, traced his family to Aeneas, so part of the reason the Aeneid was

written was to make the emperor happy. But at its core, the Aeneid conveys Roman ethics and values through the actions of the hero, Aeneas.

In the First Half of the Aeneid: Aeneas, his father and his son, along with some other survivors flee Troy and sail west. While at sea Aeneas gets separated from the rest and ends up in Africa where he falls in love with Dido, the Queen of Carthage. Aeneas, following his FATE, leaves Dido and continues on his mission. Dido commits suicide out of grief of losing him. Later Aeneas goes on a tour of the underworld, where he meets his father (who has died on their journey) and his father shows Aeneas how, by following his FATE, Aeneas will create a vast empire (Rome) and his line will be traced to Augustus (the current Emperor of Rome).

In the Second Half of the Aeneid: Aeneas and his followers arrive in Latium, the future site of Rome. King Latinus gives Aeneas his daughter (Lavinia) in marriage. Turnus attacks the Trojans and kills Pallas, a young warrior. Aeneas becomes angry and challenges Turnus to hand-to-hand combat in front of both armies.

Characters

Juno (Hera) queen of the gods

Mars (Ares) god of war

Neptune (Poseidon) god of the sea

Pallas/Minerva (Athena) goddess of wisdom

Venus (Aphrodite) goddess of love—Aeneas' mother

Greeks

Menelaus—King of Sparta, husband of Helen

Neoptolmeus/Pyrrhus—son of Achilles, a mighty warrior

Sinon—a Greek left behind when the fleet sailed away

Ulysses—a cunning leader

Trojans

Aeneas—Son of Venus, and Anchises

Cassandra—Daughter of Priam, a prophetess that is always right, but no one ever believes her

Hecuba—Queen of Troy

Priam—King of Troy

Helen—wife of Menelaus, Queen of Sparta, who runs off with Paris, prince of Troy

Iulus/Ascanius—Aeneas' son

Aeneas is telling Dido, the Queen of Carthage, about the end of the Trojan war. He describes the Trojan horse, supposedly an offering to the gods for a safe journey home. Inside is hiding a company of the Greek warriors. At first the Trojans want to toss it in the ocean or burn it, they do not trust the "gift of the Greeks." Laocoon, a priest, even throws a spear at it and says they must destroy it. But before they can destroy it they find Sinon, a Greek spy left behind, and he tells the Trojans a lie that the Greeks left it as an offering to the gods and that he was supposed to be a human sacrifice.

Just then two huge, supernatural snakes come out of the water and attack the priest (Laocoon) that tried to warn the people of Troy. He and his sons are killed and the Trojans think it is a punishment for throwing a spear at the horse. Now all the Trojans are convinced that they should bring the Horse inside and treat it with respect.

The crowd is filled with joy as they lead it in, not knowing that their enemies are sitting inside it. Even when they can hear the soldiers' armor inside the horse, they ignore it and continue to bring it in. Even Cassandra prophesies their doom, but no one will listen to her.

That night Sinon sneaks up to the horse and lets the warriors out. In the meantime the ships have returned to the shore and when the warriors open the gates, they enter the city. Aeneas sees the ghost of Hector in a dream and Hector tells him what is happening. Aeneas goes out with some Trojan warriors and starts fighting. They even disguise themselves in Greek armor, but it is too late. Many of Aeneas' men are killed. Aeneas goes to the palace to try to protect the king and the royal family. Achilles' son (Pyrrhus) manages to break down the doors, and he attacks and kills the royal family. Pyrrhus does not show any mercy and is described as an evil snake, Priam even tells him that he is not a true son of Achilles because even Achilles had respect for his enemies. Aeneas witnesses their deaths, but is unable to stop the Greeks. He worries about his own father, and wife and young son, who are all unprotected. He finds Helen and wants to kill her for bringing such misery to Troy, but Venus (his mother) reminds him that killing a woman is a dishonorable act, and he lets her go. Venus tells him that she is protecting his son so that they can flee Troy. Venus says it is the gods who are destroying the city.

Aeneas comes to his family and tries to get them out of the city. His father doesn't want to go until he gets to divine signs, a flame appears on his grandson's

head, and a crack of thunder and shooting star. Then he goes with Aeneas. As they flee the city Aeneas is terrified that they will be caught. As they flee, Aeneas is carrying his father and holding his son's hand. His wife gets lost and killed during their flight. Aeneas doesn't realize it till he sees her ghost and she tells him to sail west. She tells him to accept his FATE and take the refugees to safety and start a new kingdom. She tells him not to grieve for her. In the end, Aeneas faces the mountains and makes up his mind to do the will of the gods and follow his FATE.

West African Introduction pages 612-623

Yoruba: Praise Songs to Orishas

Praise Songs—how to worship the gods (Orisha)—Yoruba culture

Yoruba culture is now mainly Christian or Islamic, however traditional beliefs persist. Olorun is the supreme being—but he is so powerful and remote that people worship a group of lesser gods known as the Orishas. There are hundreds of Orishas and each is associated with specific forces of nature, colors and materials. To worship, people sing, dance and play drums—this causes the orisha to come and possess the believer who is praying. The Yoruba culture spread to the Caribbean and to Latin America with the Atlantic Slave Trade. Santeria, Lucumi, Candomble, Shango—New names used for old beliefs.

God of Creation (Obatala): Everywhere, Sees everything, Silently Judges, Hunchbacks are sacred (because he created them while drunk), Death is a part of life (resented when takes a child), Teaches after an initiation (baptism, ritual), Laughter and prosperity, Dancing and drums important, Children are important—Creates children out of blood, keeps children in heaven until they are ready to be born. (the singer says that god takes from the rich and gives to the poor—and asks god to take from the rich and give to him) INDIGO and RED are colors of wealth and prosperity

God of Thunder (Shango): Every morning—must praise god—if you don't bad things will happen to you (elephant, fowl, antelope)

Dog/Sheep—follow without knowledge—so do we—we have Faith and Obedience to the gods

Crabs/Parrot-Feet, Path—both crabs and parrots have “crooked feet” -we want paths to be straight and clear to follow—if not we get lost—Shango travels by paths we can't follow

You can pray to the dead in heaven for help but they don't have the power to help you

Rain is death—floods, no one can stop it—fire gives us warmth against the chill of water

Fire/Water—Lightning and Rain produce THUNDER—Power-he is the power of both

Pray to avoid death—he is strong enough

Goddess of the River (Oshun): Water is a life-force (female aspect of power)

Brings Wisdom, Healing, Children—without cost, helps bear children, clean water brings healing

Brings plenty, food, honey. Owns riches and gives gifts to people

Prayer for a child—you pray to the river to have a child—Flatter the river goddess

Fulani: How the World Was Created From a Drop of Milk

Female aspect: Life, Sustenance=MILK

Male aspect: Doondari (the god)

Doondari takes the MILK and creates the earth (STONE), the earth creates IRON (what comes out of the earth), Iron creates FIRE (oil, coal, wood, flint, lava), Fire creates WATER (opposite forces in nature), Water creates AIR (mist, fog, rain).

Doondari takes the five elements and creates MAN—we are of the earth and everything in it. Man becomes Proud (FIRST SIN in most belief systems). Creates BLINDNESS to conquer man—helpless, rely on others. Blindness becomes proud-Creates SLEEP. Sleep invalidates blindness (don't need your eyes when you sleep). Sleep becomes proud-Creates WORRY. Worry destroys sleep (when you are anxious you can't sleep). Worry becomes proud-Creates DEATH. When you worry too much it leads to Death. Death becomes proud.

Doondari comes for the third time to conquer death as THE ETERNAL ONE=GUENO. Provides hope for an afterlife.

Mali: Sundiata

Sundiata: Epic of Old Mali—Empire that followed Ghana Empire, an Islamic Empire—1200-1500—this epic was told for generations before it was written down. It has elements of the ancient literature as well as some Islamic influences. Part true, part legend, part religious—a real king and his development of his kingdom. All epics have two elements—**Hero**-goes on journey, adventure, task; **Cultural Ideals**-things that are important to the culture

- Fate, Destiny—you can't change it or avoid it (Islamic Influence)
- Family Relationships-Jealousy, Disgrace, Shame—boys more important than girls
- Soothsayers-visionaries-fortune tellers
- Griots-Story tellers, historians-Scops in European cultures
- Coup-Political Uprising-the 1st wife takes power after the king dies—complete power—torments the 2nd wife
- Human Beings are used as bargaining chips=slavery, servants
- Mother praised god for son's healing

King had a first wife with a son who was normal/ the second wife is chosen because the king is told that she will bear him a great son who would be a great king (she is hunchbacked and not very pretty)/ the king takes a third wife who is beautiful-she bears him a son that the soothsayer says will be the right hand man of a great king (but not the king himself)

Mari Djata had a difficult childhood—slow developing—quiet and does not play much with the other children—his mother is dismayed at his developmental delay—even his father becomes discouraged—but there was a prophesy about him when he was born—his mother gets pregnant again but has a daughter and she is sent away in disgrace—the father goes to the soothsayer and is reassured that his son will be a great man—proverbs used to describe the situation (how impatient man is)—he brings back the wife and she bears another daughter—the first wife continuously mocks the second wife and her son—the king names the boy his heir just before he dies—the boy accepts his griots, a symbol that he will be king—**The Lion's Awakening (it was the first wife who first called him a lion-a beast who walks on all fours)**—when the king dies, the first wife takes over—her son is placed in

charge of the court—the 'crippled' boy is talked of with mockery and scorn—ignoring the prophesy at his birth—"if the gods love him, let them give him his legs first"—the first wife is jealous because the king had favored the second wife to her—she shames and disgraces the second wife every chance she gets—the boy 'looks ferociously' at the crowd—the eldest girl helps the mother in the household, watching the baby—the second wife needed some spices and asked the first wife for them—the first wife gives them to her calling her son superior to the other's—the second wife cries at home, hits her son for not walking, despairs—the boy questions her and tells her to cheer up, but she says she can't—he decides to walk, he asks if she wants the whole tree—she says that is what she needs to be cleared of this disgrace—the servant runs to the blacksmith to get a metal rod—the soothsayer(blacksmith) says the great day has finally come—sends the metal rod to the prince—he uses the rod to stand and bends the metal rod into the shape of a bow—the boy's griots praises god for the bow, the mother praises god—the first wife knows her rule is over, she can't stop the prince from becoming king—he walks to the tree, pulls it out, takes it to his mother and plants it in front of her hut—the prince is honored by the people

Moral—Mother's love, sacrifice, and honor to husband—She is responsible for the development of children—creates good character in children—This is the Woman's Power in their culture

HERO'S TASK—to uproot a tree for his mother—he was regarded as humble and patient and fulfilled his destiny to become KING

European Tribal Europe:

Beowulf

Hrothgar/Beowulf—GOOD/Christian/follows the new god

Grendel/Grendel's Mom—EVIL/Pagan/follows the old god/goddess

Grendel is an outcast in his society and rejected by his peers, this makes him angry and he retaliates-attacking the King and his followers.

Tribes: Geats, Danes, Celts, Swedes, Anglos, Jutes, Picts, Saxons

Timeline: about 100-400 AD The story was written down around 600-800 AD

Tribal Society: Warriors/ Thanes—loyal to the king. King—protects people, gives gifts, recognizes good deeds/heroism

Center of Society is the MEAD hall, where everyone gathers to socialize, eat

Scop-Poet/Singer/Historian—their job is to record the deeds of the heroes and pass down the stories

Poetry Terms:

Alliteration-first letter is the same, for example: Mickey Mouse Moved to Miami

Kenning- hyphenated phrases used to describe something: Whale-road=Ocean,

Gift-Giver=King

Epic-long poem that tells of a hero's deeds, represents the values of a society

*Grendel-the mead hall (herot), Danes- Hrothgar is king, his thanes are there- Grendel is described as evil, monstrous. He has been cast out and rejected by society. Only the throne has been untouched-protected by God

*Beowulf-Geat warrior shows up to save Hrothgar. Much boasting and celebration. Only 13 warriors came.

*The Battle-the Geats sleep in Herot, Grendel comes and kills one Geat, Beowulf attacks him with his bare hands. Doesn't use Hrunting (his sword). Grendel becomes afraid. Beowulf rips off his arm/shoulder. Grendel returns to his swamp to die. Beowulf hands his 'trophy' in the rafters. Danes and Hrothgar return—much celebration.

*Grendel's mom-witch, magical creature, also rejected by society, a pagan. Kills Hrothgar's buddy and then runs back to the swamp. Much sorrow among the Danes

*Battle with mom-Beowulf goes into the swamp, underwater all day, finds the cave and attacks G.mom. Has a charm/magic that protects her from weapons. Beowulf picks up a Giant's sword and hacks off her head and makes sure Grendel is dead too. Returns to Herot-much rejoicing

50 years later Beowulf is King of the Geats, a thief woke up a dragon and now it is terrorizing the Geats. Beowulf goes to battle, all the Thanes run away except Wiglaf. Beowulf kills the dragon but is mortally wounded. Wyrð-FATE, Scop-POET. Memorial to Beowulf on the shore.

France:

Song of Roland

This literature is from the Medieval Era, not TECHNICALLY an ancient work, although it is the OLDEST surviving French Epic. It recounts the deeds of Charlemagne and his descendents. It is written in the dramatic style of its era and has many elements of courtly love, honor and heroic deeds. Charlemagne ruled the Franks (one of the Germanic Tribes in Western Europe) and was crowned emperor by the pope. He was a civilized ruler and helped to spread Christianity and the arts throughout his kingdom. He was considered an ideal ruler (and thus the focus of an EPIC).

The Song of Roland is based upon one of Charlemagne's wars with Spain. When he couldn't defeat his enemy, Charlemagne retreated. Roland was in charge of the rear guard and was overtaken by Basque warriors and he and his men were killed. In the poem, the enemy has been changed to be Muslims. This reflects the feelings of the French people who were still reeling from the Crusades (holy wars to retake Jerusalem). Roland becomes a Christian warrior fighting the enemy for Christ.

In the poem, Charlemagne is fighting Muslims in Spain. When the Muslims agree to surrender, Charlemagne suspects foul play. Roland offers to take Charlemagne's message to the Muslims but Charlemagne refuses to allow him to do this risky mission. Roland suggests that Ganelon (his father-in-law) take the message. Ganelon is upset by this and becomes a traitor, telling the Muslims to attack the rear guard. Ganelon then convinces Charlemagne to put Roland in charge of the rear guard.

As the French leave, Roland and his men become trapped in the mountains where the Saracens then move in to kill them all.

Roland is the nephew of Charlemagne. He and his friend Oliver scout out the enemy, the Saracens and return to camp. Oliver recommends that Roland blow a horn and call for help because there are too many Saracens to fight. Roland doesn't

want to because he feels it will mean he is a coward or a failure to call for help (hurts his honor). They go into battle and although they fight valiantly, they are defeated. The Archbishop convinces Roland to blow the horn, which he does, to summon King Charles to avenge the fallen French. Roland faints after blowing the horn and a Saracen tries to steal his sword. Roland awakens, kills the thief and tries to break his sword (so no one could steal it—his honor). The sword won't break so Roland hides it and the horn under his body. He dies and goes to Heaven.

81

Oliver has gone to look for a way out and sees too many Saracens to fight.

83

Oliver tells Roland to call for help but Roland refuses and says it would destroy his honor. He says his sword (Durendal—said to be Hector's sword) will drink the Saracens' blood.

87

Oliver tells Roland that they will all die, Roland scolds him and tells him they will be victorious.

91

Roland leads his men toward the Saracens, he is vicious toward them, but polite and courteous toward his own men.

105

Roland leads his men and they are killing many of the enemy. Everyone is doing well.

110

The Saracens are dying by the hundreds. King Charles does not know that his rear guard is under attack. The day turns dark and there are signs that things will soon turn against the French.

130

The battle is turning against the French and Roland thinks he should sound the horn to call King Charles. Oliver scolds him and says he should have done it before, now it is too late and they will all die (he even mentions that Roland will never marry Oliver's sister).

131

Oliver scolds Roland for giving in to his feelings instead of doing the right thing (calling for help). He blames Roland for all the Frenchmen who will die in the battle. He says that he will die next to Roland but that their deaths were wasted.

132

Turpin, the Archbishop rides over and tells Roland and Oliver to stop fighting. He urges Roland to sound the horn so that at least King Charles can come and avenge their deaths. He also wants their bodies to be found because it was a great disgrace for a knight to be left for scavengers to find and eat.

133

Roland puts the horn to his lips and blows it so hard that he bursts his own blood vessels and faints. King Charles does hear the horn and says that he has to go to help (Ganelon tries to talk him out of it).

134

Describes Roland's pain in blowing the horn, how he blew it so hard he almost killed himself. But it does alert the King to their plight. Ganelon tells King Charles to ignore the horn and scolds him for stopping the army. He tries to convince King Charles that Roland doesn't deserve to be rescued and should be ignored.

168

Roland takes his sword and his horn and walks in the direction of France. At the top of a hill he faints.

169

A Saracen was only pretending to be dead and when he sees Roland faint, he thinks that he will be able to steal his horn and sword as trophies to take back to Arabia.

170

Roland wakes up in time and kills the man for trying to steal his sword. Calls him a nobody and not one worthy of touching him.

171

Roland tries to break his sword to keep it from falling into enemy hands (dishonor). The sword won't break.

173

Roland continues to try to break the sword. Roland prays to various saints to keep his sword safe and away from pagan hands.

174

Roland feels he is dying (of a broken heart) and lays the sword and horn on the ground then covers them with his body. He dies praying to God for forgiveness.

176

As Roland is praying and dying, God forgives him and sends his angels to take Roland's soul to Heaven.

Australia: The Aborigines

Americas: North America-Cheyenne, Caddo, Haida

Animal Spirits are representations of all that species. Coyote represents all coyotes. Raven represents all ravens. These Animal Spirits help mankind who is naked and ignorant. The Animal Spirits teach and guide the humans. The Animal Spirits are called the PEOPLE. The GREAT SPIRIT represents the Creator. Other supernatural beings also exist.

How Coyote Stole Fire—Man was suffering during the winter cold and crying for the old and young who were dying. Coyote hears them crying and feels sympathy for them. He goes to the other Animal Spirits and makes a plan to help man. He decides to steal Fire for man from the SELFISH Fire Beings. He checks out their camp and then asks some Animals Spirits to help him. He grabs the fire and runs, one of the Fire Beings touches the tip of his tail-turning it white. Coyote throws the fire to Squirrel, who puts it on her back-causing her tail to turn up from the pain. Squirrel tosses the fire to Chipmunk, and as Chipmunk runs away a Fire Being scratches three long scratches down her back. Chipmunk threw fire to Frog, who grabs it and tries to jump away, one of the Fire Beings grabs his tail and rips it off. Frog throws the fire to Wood and Wood swallows it. The Fire Beings try to beat up Wood, but Wood won't give it back so they leave. Coyote goes to the village of man and shows man how to get the fire out of Wood.

How Glooskap Found Summer—Glooskap is a human hero with mighty power and magic. He was a great warrior and tribal leader. In this story it actually mentions the last ICE AGE.

Glooskap and his people were suffering through a long winter full of ice and snow. The people were complaining and asked Glooskap to save them. Glooskap goes to the North and finds the Winter Giant. Glooskap and Winter start talking but Winter's charm and speech is better than Glooskap's and Glooskap falls asleep for 6 months. When he wakes up, the Loon comes and tells him about the all powerful Summer. Glooskap heads south to find her.

He sings a magic song that brings a whale to him and he rides upon her back. They swim south for days, and soon they reach some shallow water. The Clams sing a warning song, but Glooskap lies to the whale and tells her they are saying to go quickly. Then Glooskap opens his eye, making the whale get stranded in the sand. He lets the whale go and heads inland.

Glooskap finds the beautiful Summer and convinces her to come north with him to charm the Winter Giant. Winter invites them in, thinking he will put them to sleep again, but Glooskap starts talking and his charm is better than the Giant's. The ice starts to melt. Then Summer uses her power to make everything green and growing again. Old Winter was sad to see his world of ice and snow destroyed. Summer gives him a deal: he can have winter for six months, but she will reign for six months also. And that is why we have Summer and Winter.

Iktomi's Blanket—Iktomi appears in many stories. Sometimes he is being a trickster, sometimes he is a hero, and sometimes he is being foolish. This story is about Greed (one of Iktomi's foolish moments).

Iktomi is sitting in his teepee, alone and cold and hungry. He decides to pray to Inyan, a Great-Grand-Father shrine for food. He begs for food and the Great Spirit hears him through Inyan and grants his prayer. Iktomi gives the stone his blanket as a sacrifice. On his way home Iktomi finds a wounded deer and thanks the God for his meal. He starts to cut up the deer to cook it on a fire. As Iktomi builds the fire, he starts to feel cold because the sun has gone down. Iktomi decides to TAKE BACK his sacrifice from the Stone Grandfather. Then he heads

back down to the place where he found the deer only to discover that it is GONE. Instead of repenting and realizing his Greed has cost him his meal. Iktomi declares that he should have eaten before going back for his blanket. The Great Spirit would not listen to any more of Iktomi's pleas because they were SELFISH.

How the World was Made—Cheyenne Story—Maheo, the creator, makes the water, light, sky and peoples (animals)—needs help to make the land—everyone tries but can't reach the bottom—finally the coot (little, weak) manages to bring up the mud—Maheo promises that mud will always protect the coot (tastes like mud and no one wants to eat it). Maheo places the land on the back of the turtle (which is why it walks so slow-carries the weight of the whole world, can live in the water, underground and above ground). Personification—the earth is a woman, Maheo and the Earth create the first people from Maheo's ribs (possible Christian influence on story) Significance of the number 4 and the Buffalo.

Coyote and the Origin of Death—Caddo Story—Everyone lived forever, no one wanted to die, Coyote says to the people that people must die because there won't be any space left if they don't. No one listens. They build a tent to rejuvenate the dead. When the whirlwind came (spirit) Coyote closed the door forcing the spirit to find the Spirit land. Coyote must look behind him forever for angering man.

Raven finds the first Men—Haida Story—Raven is a common figure in Aleutian Stories. He has several characteristics—he is always hungry, he is a trickster, he is always curious, and he is charming when he wants to be.

Raven is walking around after the great flood. He admires everything he made, the sea, the sky, the moon. He is bored because there is no life. Then he discovers a clamshell, and in it he finds the first men. He croons to them and convinces them to come out and play. He teaches them some tricks, but soon gets tired of their ceaseless motion. Then he looks for the women. Raven finds some Chitons clinging to the rocks and when he pries them off, he finds the women. The men were strong like the clamshell, and the women were soft like the chitons.

When he brings them together, at first they run and hide from each other. Then the men start showing off and trying to get their attention. Soon the groups start mixing and they go off as couples.

Raven has watched over them since that day and has seen many amazing things. He did many things for them, bringing them the sun, moon, stars, teaching them how to make fire, and to hunt and to fish salmon; and how to build with Cedar. And they have thrived along the storming coast of the Pacific Northwest.

**South America: Quitze People: Olmecs, Mayan, Aztec, Inca
Popol Vuh (pages 76-85) Creation Hymn and Record of Mythological Heroes-
1200BCE**

Very rhythmic, repeated phrases—used as memory devices. Written for the Quitze People, from the Quitze region.

A sense of anticipation and suspense before creation begins. In the darkness is the Plumed Serpent and Hurricane (Heart of Sky). The Sky and the Ocean exist but nothing else. The Plumed Serpent and Hurricane talk about creating beings to honor and follow the gods.

Thunderbolt Hurricane, Newborn Thunderbolt, and Sudden Thunderbolt—sky god trinity

Together they create EARTH.

Next they try to create something that will honor and follow the gods—animals come first. When they ask the animals to speak, all they can do is bark, chatter and make other sounds—the gods realize they messed up. When they realize their mistake they tell the animals they will have to make a new being and now the animals will be considered food.

The gods are working on a project—encounter setbacks and solve problems—just like we do.

Now they try to create man—first attempt—clay men, but they fall apart in the rain and water, so the gods realize they won't work. That's twice they have failed so now they call on the experts.

Xpiyacoc and Xmucane—Grandfather and Grandmother—the creators of the calendar—keep track of everything-time, events, rituals—they use solar, lunar and numerology

Now they try to create man again—start on a better day—Wooden men, they are stronger and don't dissolve in water—but they have no souls, no conscience—refuse to acknowledge the gods—so the gods SMITE them with a flood and ask all of creation to JUDGE them. Only a few are left as a reminder of what happens to us when we forget to honor the gods and lose our conscience (Monkeys—98% same as us-but without souls and conscience—when we ignore the gods, we become beasts, like them)

The gods return to Grandmother because they have tried three times to create beings to honor the gods and have failed. Grandmother takes WHITE and YELLOW corn and mashes them up with some WATER and creates four super humans: Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar. (side note—in their culture it is considered extremely rude to say NO, instead they say: Not Right Now)

When the gods tell the four men to honor the gods, the men do—thanking the gods and promising to follow their ways. Whoo hoo! The gods are excited, it finally worked. Then the men start talking about all the things they see and understand and the gods are dismayed. Man is not allowed to know as much as the gods, we would be too much like them. So the gods SMITE the four men and blind them just enough so that they can only see things that are 'close' to them. Limiting man's understanding of the universe and making certain that man can't be equal to the gods.