



Independent Study IN IDAHO

Engl 257
Survey of World Literature I

Independent Study in Idaho
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Study Guide

Independent

Study IN IDAHO

PO Box 443225

Moscow ID 83844-3225

Self-paced study. Anytime. Anywhere!

English 257 Survey World Literature I

Idaho State University
3 Semester-Hour Credits

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Idaho State University

Engl 257
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Independent Study in Idaho

This course is offered by the University of Idaho.


Survey of World Literature I

3 Semester-Hour Credits: UI

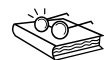
Welcome!

Whether you are a new or returning student, welcome to the Independent Study in Idaho (ISI) program. Before beginning this course, read the information provided below, including course description, prerequisites, required materials, course objectives, and information about lessons, exams, and grading.

Important!

As you read this section, you will see the following icon: 

Use this icon to direct yourself to the **Appendix** in the back of this study guide for essential registration information, Independent Study in Idaho policies and procedures, and forms you will need to successfully complete this course. You are responsible for understanding and following ISI policies and procedures.



Turn to the **Appendix** now. Familiarize yourself with the information in the *Registration* section, student responsibilities in *Academic Integrity*, and the necessary forms. If there is anything you do not understand, please contact the ISI office for clarification before starting your course.

Course Description

Examination of major works and authors in historical perspective, with emphasis upon literary and cultural backgrounds.

Course Materials

Required Course Materials

- Hamilton, Edith. *Mythology*. Boston: Back Bay Books, 1998. ISBN: 0-316-34151-7.
- Hurt, James and Brian Wilkie, eds. *Literature of the Western World*. Vol. I. 4th ed. Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1997. ISBN: 0-13-220872-5.

Independent Study in Idaho course materials are available for purchase at the University of Idaho Bookstore. Visit the UI Bookstore's Web site, <http://www.uidahobookstore.com>, select *Textbook, Independent Study* for a list of course materials. You may order online, by telephone, (208) 885-7334, or by e-mail to uibooks@uidaho.edu.

Independent Study in Idaho courses are updated and revised periodically. Ordering course materials from the UI Bookstore at the time of registration allows you to purchase the correct edition(s) of textbooks, study guides, and supplemental materials. If purchasing textbooks from another source, refer to the ISBN(s) for the textbook(s) listed for this course to ensure that you obtain the correct edition(s). If you have questions regarding the course materials you have ordered and received, contact the UI Bookstore.

Course Introduction

“Mythological criticism is an interdisciplinary approach that combines the insights of anthropology, psychology, history and comparative religion. . .mythological criticism explores the artists’ common humanity by tracing how the individual imagination uses myths and symbols, common to different cultures and epochs.”

(*Literature*, X.J. Kennedy and Dana Gioia)

“Everything is merely a phase of the same history, or perhaps the same history constantly repeating itself...” (Arturo Perez-Reverte) Whether this is a vast generalization doesn’t really matter for we are looking at a vast sea of words that reach back to a time before words were even written down. We are seeking to understand periods of literature that were handed down from one person (inherited from others before: oral tradition) to another or to a group of people who constituted a group, a tribe, or even a nation. Where the individual interpretation meets the collected consciousness and how and why it does so is the subject matter of the many diverse approaches that the reader will encounter on his/her journey through Western world literature.

History, as it is recorded, is what humankind was, and literature is what humankind thought it was, wishes it were, and sometimes wished it were not. The reason for this ambivalence is the very nature it seems to me or the quintessence of humanness.

Moving through these ancient chartered waters to the period known as the re-birth or the Renaissance, in Europe, is a process that causes us to select and delete somewhat arbitrarily, at times, our choice of what to study and what to include or exclude, but it is a journey well worth taking. There is a confluence that constitutes our culture. These giant rivers are what the English Victorian writer, Matthew Arnold, called “Hebraism and Hellenism.” Geographically, they emanate from the same room, if not corner of our world. One part is Asian or Middle Eastern (the Hebrew *Bible*) and the other may have some of its origins in Asia too, but comes to us through the bronze age of Classical Greece. These two vast rivers then are not independent of one another and frequently become ensnarled, so much so that a Mesopotamian scholar states, “Today, ancient Mesopotamian stores are used less to bolster fundamentalism, but more to provide comparative material for Biblical and early Greek traditions, as well as for wider studies in the cultural development of mankind. Few would now deny that ancient Mesopotamia lies at the roots of our own civilization, but only as part of widespread contributory factors.” (*Myths From Mesopotamia*, S.M. Dalley)

Keeping this view in mind, we will examine selected Greek myths, the “Creation” stories, and the *Epic of Gilgamesh* before reading Homer’s *Odyssey* and Sophocles’ *Oedipus, the King*. The second part of the course will deal with selected representative work(s) of Latin of the Middle Ages and of the Renaissance.

Lessons

Overview

Each lesson includes the following components:

- Lesson objectives
- A reading assignment
- A lesson overview
- Important terms
- Self -study questions
- A written assignment

Study Hints

- Complete all assigned readings.
- Set a schedule allowing for completion of the course one month prior to your desired deadline. (An *Assignment Submission Log* is provided for this purpose.)

Self-study questions are for your learning, do not hand in the self- study questions with your written assignment.



See the **Appendix** at the back of this study guide for essential *ISI policies on submitting lessons to your instructor*. See the letter sent in your registration packet for *your instructor's requirements: how to format and submit lessons, number of lessons you may submit at one time, and lesson guidelines*.

Exams

Overview

There are three examinations, which are noted throughout the study guide. The exams are comprehensive. Remember when answering the exam questions to use as much detail as possible. The exams are worth 75% of your grade.

See *Grading* for specific information on exams, points, and percentages.

Choosing a Proctor/Scheduling Exams

All exams require a proctor unless an exam is self-administered.



See the **Appendix** for guidelines on *how to choose a proctor and schedule exams*.

Grading

The final course grade will be based upon the following considerations.

Lessons: 25% of the total grade.

Exams: 75% of the total grade.

The final course grade is issued after **all** lessons and exams have been graded.



See the **Appendix** for information about *confidentiality of student grades, course completion and time considerations, and requesting a transcript*.

About the Course Developer

First, my life story would not be accurate because I have a poor memory. I could tell some intriguing scenes that flock and flutter against memory's grid, but I'd prefer not to, for various reasons. I could tell you about school days in Idaho and my subsequent struggle to achieve my goal(s) in spite of them, but it might sound fishy, so I'd prefer not to. I could tell you about simple moments of joy like watching the steam come off of a log after a rainstorm on the Snake River bottoms, or the intense anger I felt while wading waist deep down a snowy mountainside only to have the sheer joy of that white and blue-black photography torn into pieces by the buzzing done of a snowmobile, but I'd prefer not to. No one has had the same experiences as I. I am unique, but aren't you unique too? Nature did not break the mold when she made either one of us, as in Rousseau's case, do let us be unique together and share the experiences of this course together. That I would prefer to do.

I was born and bred in Southeastern Idaho where, for the most part, I called ranches my home until 18 years-of-age. Some of that time was on an island in the Snake River where we raised sheep. (A sheep station) After high school and one largely failed semester of college, I enlisted in the United States Marine Corps, where I learned the vast difference between officers and gentlemen and the troops. I was not of the gentry. To partially mend my ways and to forward my career, I left the Corps and went back to college (Idaho State University in Pocatello). I received a BA and an MA in English there; I drove down the highway to the University of Utah in Salt Lake City where I took a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature with a doctoral minor in German.

I taught seven years at Idaho State; took many post-doctoral courses in counseling psychology, worked for some years in the field of mental health, taught two years at the Sho-Ban Tribal School in Fort Hall, Idaho, and then returned to ISU (1989 to present). I am a family man (I think), an avid outdoors person, and a gourmet cook (hot dogs, etc.) I love teaching—especially western world literature, Shakespeare and critical thinking. Someday, I hope to write my story on the flip-side of the “great American novel.”

Contacting Your Instructor

You will receive *course and instructor contact information* in your registration packet.



See the **Appendix** for detailed information on *contacting your instructor*.

Disability Support Services



See the **Appendix** for *information on Disability Support Services (DSS)*.

Assignment Submission Log

Lesson	Reading	Written Assignment
1	Hurt & Wilkie pp. 1 - 14 Hamilton pp. 3 - 49	Essay
2	Hurt & Wilkie pp. 16 - 17 pp. 19 - 69	Essay
3	Hamilton pp. 77 - 94 Hurt & Wilkie pp. 67 - 79 pp. 1103 - 1107 pp. 1143 - 1153	Outline
4	Hamilton pp. 105 - 111; 255 - 290 Hurt & Wilkie pp. 129 - 133; 275 - 596	Essay
It is time to make arrangements with your proctor to take Exam 1.		
5	Hurt & Wilkie pp. 10 - 13 pp. 735 - 785	Essay
6	Hurt & Wilkie pp. 69 pp. 93 - 122	Essay
7	Hurt & Wilkie pp. 991 - 995 pp. 997 - 1103	Essay
8	Hurt & Wilkie pp. 1163 - 1171 pp. 1721 - 1745	Outline
9	Hurt & Wilkie pp. 1551 - 1608 pp. 1313 - 1343	Essay
It is time to make arrangements with your proctor to take Exam 2.		
10	Hurt & Wilkie pp. 1747 - 1773	Essay
11	Hurt & Wilkie pp. 2093 - 2104	Analysis
12	Hurt & Wilkie pp. 2014 - 2093	Essay
It is time to make arrangements with your proctor to take the Final Exam.		

Lesson 1

Mythology

Very deep is the well of the past. Should we not call it bottomless?

Bottomless indeed, if--and perhaps only if--the past we mean is the past merely of the life of mankind, that riddling essence of which our own normally unsatisfied and quite abnormally wretched existences form a part; whose mystery, of course, includes our own and is the alpha and omega of all our questions, lending burning immediacy to all we say, and significance to all our striving. For the deeper we sound, the further down into the lower world of the past we probe and press, and more do we find that the earliest foundations of humanity, its history and culture, reveal themselves unfathomable. No matter to what hazardous lengths we let out our line they still withdraw again, and further, into the depths.

Joseph and His Brothers, Thomas Mann

Lesson 1

Mythology

Lesson Objectives

A careful reading of this assignment will give you a mythical framework from which to study the Greek as well as the literature of the Western world that derives its meaning and content from it.

Reading Assignments

Hurt and Wilkie, Vol. I, Read the Introduction to the text, "The Ancient World", pp. 1-14 *Mythology*, Edith Hamilton, pp. 3-49

Note: I have chosen Edith Hamilton's well-traveled, but also well-written book *Mythology* because of its heavy emphasis on the classical Greeks. Another equally well-written book, if you can find it is, *The Classic Myths in English Literature and in Art* (published for the first time in 1893) by Charles M. Gayley. It is now out-of-print, so we will read Hamilton's book wherever it is appropriate to do so.

Lesson Overview

The study of each work in isolation without the perspective of mythology and/or history leads to an idiosyncratic analysis if it is seen through modern eyes only.

Important Terms

- Mythology
- Myths
- Legends
- Fable

MYTHOLOGY: The study of stories about real and unreal people that we have brought with us, bag and baggage, from ancient times, but even that is a too simplistic answer.

MYTHS: Tales, transmitted from generation to generation, which project underlying psychological truths of the human race. There is a great deal of uniformity in mythic themes and symbols throughout all cultures and ethnic groups.

The Art of Being Human, Janaro and Altshuler

Myth in its traditional sense is an anonymous, non-literary, essentially religious formulation of the cosmic view of a people who approach its formulations not as representations of truth but as truth itself; much in the sophisticated literary sense in which it is currently used is the intelligible and often self-conscious use of such primitive methods to express something deeply felt by the individual artist which will, he hopes, prove to have universal responses.

A Handbook to Literature, Thrall, Hibbard and Holman

Further:

Myth: Anonymous stories having their roots in the primitive folk-beliefs of races or nations and presenting supernatural episodes as a means of interpreting natural events in an effort to make concrete and particular a special perception of man or a cosmic view. Myths differ from **LEGENDS** in that they have less of historical background and more of the supernatural; they differ from the **FABLE** in that they are less concerned with moral didacticism and are the product of a racial group rather than the creation of an individual. Every country and literature has its mythology; the best known to English readers being the Greek, Roman, and Norse. But the mythology of all groups takes shape around certain common themes; they all attempt to explain the creation,

divinity, and religion, to guess at the meaning of existence and death, to account for natural phenomena, and to chronicle the adventures of racial heroes.

A Handbook to Literature, Thrall, Hibbard and Holman

And:

It might happen, if the fields around a village were not fruitful, if the corn did not spring up as it should, that one of the villagers would be killed and his--or her--blood sprinkled over the barren land. . .What is more natural then, if a beautiful boy had thus been killed, than to think when later the ground bloomed with narcissus or hyacinths that the flowers were his very self, changed and yet living again? So they would tell each other it had happened, a lovely miracle which made the cruel death seem less cruel.

This is called sympathetic magic, and it is an attempt to control humankind's environment. This leads to anthropomorphism (human-in-form) which makes sense, for if I posit human reactions to a natural and potentially dangerous phenomenon, then it only follows from the point-of-view of deductive logic that I can win this phenomenon to my benefit through prayer and offering through sympathetic magic.

Thus:

Mythology as the explainer of natural phenomena must have made the natural world an anthropomorphic place for members of any culture who believed that a god, goddess, nymph, dryad, or water sprite "resided" in a particular place. It made each act of the weather seem a sign of friendliness or terror. Sailors, hunters, and farmers could recognize a threat and request the desired change from the particular deity "in charge of" that department. Such belief proved difficult to exchange for later, scientific views.

The Art of Being Human

Thus, the myths tell the common experience of humankind. Myth represents an absolute truth, affords insight into the "indescribable realities of the soul," or, as Malinowsky says, "is not in the nature of an invention . . .but living reality."

The study of mythology is vast and multi-faceted. It is frequently studied in connection with primitive religion (i.e. William Howells, *The Heathens: Primitive Man and His Religion*; Paul Radin, *Primitive Religion*) and has many approaches and interpretations. Adolph Bastion (1826-1905) studied the aspect of the sameness of myths all over the world, and he called this "diffusionism." Leo Frobenius thought that there was a basic mythic pattern or elementary thought pattern which changed through ethnic coloration of this basic thought. He also believed in the diffusion of myths. Lévy-Bruhl felt that myth is the only ancient history we have, and as it reflects a living religion at the time, we might say that today's religion is tomorrow's mythology as has been the case. Frobenius, Bastion, Lévy-Bruhl, Mirceau Eliade, Emile Durkheim and Sigmund Freud follow this line of thinking, for to study mythology is to study primitive: psychology, science, history, religion, philosophy, and literature. Robert Graves and J.J. Bachofen saw a movement from barbarism to a matriarchy, and to a triumphant patriarchy, which might not be all that good, as they saw it.

Carl Gustav Jung talked about "depth psychology" in which the "collective unconscious" was a pool of ancestral memories and images which causes the reoccurrence of similar myths in different places and cultures. Claude Levi-Strauss represents a cold, scientific approach to mythology which he calls "structuralism", which is non-psychological and it bases its theories on the belief that structures are not collections of social relationships, nor trends in cultural history. These structures are in the brain itself; they are neurologically based hardware and all brains work the same way. Noam Chomsky believed this was so for language. This theorizing goes on and on, but one thing is certain. "The

existence of the same story in unrelated nationalities remains a perplexing fact, towards the explanation of which the theories of 'borrowing' and of 'similar historic tradition,' while plausible, are but unsubstantiated contributions." *The Classic Myths*, Gayley. One thing is certain. They do pop up all over the world, and they are similar--disturbingly so. Take your pick. They are borrowed (diffusionism); they are basic to the human mind and will occur without any direct influence or borrowing (structuralism). This is not a course in mythology, even though it is a fascinating study; we will use mythology to illuminate the works we will study and those critics--and they are many--who approach literature as myth see in it vestiges of primordial ritual and ceremony, or the repository of racial memories, or a structure of unconsciously help value systems, or an expression of the general beliefs of a race, social class or nation, or a unique embodiment of a cosmic view.

A Handbook to Literature.

Nor will we study only the text itself, for

The error that is made by literary scholars when they seek for a certainty analogous with the certainty of science has been so often remarked that at this date, little more need be said of it. Up to a point the scientific study of art is legitimate and fruitful; the great thing is that we should recognize the terminal point and not try to push beyond it, that we should not expect that the scientific study of, say literature will necessarily assure us of the experience of literature; and if we wish as teachers to help others to the experience of literature, we cannot do so by imparting the fruits of our scientific study. What the partisans of the so-called New Criticism revolted against was the scientific notion of the fact as transferred in a literal way to the study of literature. They wished to restore autonomy to the work of art, to see it as the agent of power rather than as the object of knowledge.

The Liberal Imagination, Lionel Trilling

Another negative statement about this scientific approach is this one:

It is possibly a good thing for us that these stories were collected and put in print before our collectors became acquainted with, and perhaps, deterred by, such things as Comparative Folk-lore, or the Science of Mythology; they were entirely free from any pre-conceived notions and ranged widely over the field, putting down everything exactly as they heard it, asking no questions as to whether it conformed to any pattern or fitted into any classification. They possessed no formula by reference to which they might reject a story in part or in sum as being inconsistent with its strict requirements. It would have made our task easier in some cases had they rejected a few made up of bits from different stories--possibly the confused mixture of some "grey old man of the corner," whose memory was beginning to fail him, or the contribution of one who had only heard them in a truncated and mutilated form.

I do not wish my remarks to be taken as in any way a disparagement of the scholarly works of those people who have applied their vast knowledge to the study and classification of our folk-lore and folk-stories, bringing thereby order into the chaotic mass that we have inherited, and throwing so much light on the working of the primitive mind.

Welsh Legends and Fairy Lore, D. Parry-Jones

Self-Study Questions

These questions are from Edith Hamilton's *Mythology*:

1. Who became the center of the universe and the most important thing in it?
2. Why is it important in the evolution of rational thought that the Greeks first realized what man or humankind was?
3. What were the gods like before the awakening of the Greeks?
4. Why did the Greeks laugh at their gods even though they could be dangerous?

5. What does Edith Hamilton refer to as the miracle of Greek mythology?
6. How were priests and artists treated in Greece? Why is that important?
7. Were the Greek gods beautiful or ugly? What does Hamilton say about this?
8. What were the ethics of the gods like, at least in the beginning?
9. What do the epithets such as, “cow-faced” Hera and “Owl-eyed” Athena suggest from the point of view of evolution? (An *epithet*, strictly speaking, is an adjective or adjective phrase which is used to point out a characteristic of a person or thing. In Homer it is actually almost part of the name.) e.g. Odysseus, the man of many turns (*Polytropos*), wise next to Zeus in counsel, the sacker of cities.
10. How does Hamilton regard mythology in contradistinction to religion? Does she equivocate on this point?
11. What has science to do with mythology according to Edith Hamilton?
12. Does the idea of Zeus change from the beginning? Does he remain static or does he evolve? If so, in what way?

Written Assignment



Please read the **Appendix** in the back of this study guide for essential Independent Study in Idaho policies and procedures, and forms you will need to successfully complete this course. You are responsible for understanding and following ISI policies and procedures. If there is anything on these pages you do not understand, contact the ISI office for clarification. Before starting the written assignment for Lesson 1, see the letter sent in your registration packet for your instructor’s requirements: **how to format and submit lessons, number of lessons you may submit at one time, and lesson guidelines.**

“What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason, how infinite in faculty, in form and moving how express {precise, expressive} and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god—the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals.”

(*Hamlet*, 2.2, li 293-7)

Using this statement We are “. . .the heir of all ages. . .” from Alfred, Lord Tennyson’s *Locksley Hall*, interpret Hamlet’s Renaissance statement. For example, without the Greek legacy, would Shakespeare ever have been able to write those lines?

Elaborate in essay form of one to two pages.