ENG 2205, World Literature 1

Term 2, 2017

Paper Length: 6-8 pages, double-spaced, approximately 1800-2400 words

Format: MLA-style documentation

Due: 12.16.17—If you submit a draft before December 13th, you will receive back from me via email a graded draft with comments—you may then revise for a full grade replacement until the 16th. Drafts received between December 14 and 16 will be graded without comments and can be revised until the end of the day on the 16th again for a full grade replacement. No papers or revisions accepted after the 16th except in cases of emergencies, work/service requirements, and the like. Please contact me as needed about the deadline.

For the paper in this class, you will create a close reading of three texts that explicates and interprets both texts through a common theme. Your goal is not simply to show how they differ; in a survey of World Literature, there are very few texts that are going to be similar in style or language. Rather, the goal of this paper is to create an interpretive argument about the works that is both unified and illuminating through careful study of a theme that develops over the course of the works.

For example, one could look at role of leadership in *The Illiad*, *Gilgamesh*,and *The Art of War* or the images of women and femininity in *Metamorphoses*, *1001 Nights*, *Tales of the Genji*, and *Gilgamesh*, or the role of imagination and stories in *Don Quixote*, *Metamorphoses*, and *The Thousand and One Nights*. Please check with me regarding your theme before you begin the paper.

Your goal in examining a theme is to: 1) Identify the theme and 2) Show how exploring this theme allows the reader to gain a deeper understanding of the two works.

A thesis for this paper should show your familiarity with the works and that your thoughts go beyond the surface and into the themes and issues raised by the works. No matter your choice, you want to approach the work as if there is deeper meaning beyond what is on the page.

Two external sources must be used in this paper, and these sources must be drawn from the MLA International Bibliography, accessed through the Troy Library [here](http://trojan.troy.edu/library/). From that link, scroll down to ‘Select a Database’ and go into the MLA Bibliography or JSTOR (check both for your research). There will be more information forthcoming on doing literary research on the discussion boards. DO NOT just go to the Internet and do a Google search; there are countless on-line papers on these works. Using them will generally be a detriment to your work as they are generally awful papers and can lead you into a plagiarism case. Literary criticism is not history—it may be historical, but the goal of this paper is to explicate the texts in question, not examine their histories or the histories of the peoples and places that may have existed in antiquity.

The argument should be entirely your own response to the ideas in play. In other words, you do have to do research for this paper, but you will need to contribute ideas and arguments BEYOND what we have covered in our classroom discussions and use the outside sources to give background, add information/interpretations, or support your ideas.

The most important aspect of this paper will be the use of direct quotations from the books. You MUST be sure to support your claims about the text with specific examples from the book. A good rule of thumb is one quote or specific example per body paragraph.

**Basic Guidelines**:

* Double space your essay; include your name, the course number and section at the top of the first page.
* Avoid the use of the second person as it is conversational and too direct. Use the first person to describe your own thoughts, but better to use the third person in most of your analysis.
* **Do not** focus on the writing process—your reader does not need to know why you chose the topic or what you’re going to write about. Instead of telling your reader what you are going to do, do it.
* Write in the present tense unless specifically describing past events.

**How it will be graded**:

* A failing paper, either a “D” or an “F,” will either be completely off-topic, so short as to be negligible, and/or be so marred by mechanical errors that meaning is lost. Further, the argument may not be grounded in a thesis or else lack examples or explain why the examples given mean for the interpretation.
* A “C” paper is one that manages to competently convey information to the reader—each part has a logical organization with clear thesis statements, contains coherent and complete sentences, appropriately answers the essay prompt, and does not have so many mechanical flaws that legibility suffers.
* A “B” paper has all the characteristics of a “C,” and in addition displays effective insights into the essay prompt (possibly acknowledging multiple perspectives on the issues, or making particularly good choices about what material to address), has fewer mechanical flaws, and has an organizational scheme and general tone appropriate to the material.
* An “A” paper has all the characteristics of a “B,” and in addition displays few or no mechanical flaws, pays attention to appropriateness of word choice and shifting tonality through the essays, displays a command of pacing and sentence variety appropriate to the varied content of the essays, and may display particularly thoughtful insights, of contain stylistic devices which illuminate the material.

After you turn the paper in through the Assignment on Blackboard, I will grade and return it to you via email as a Word or OpenOffice file (if submitted before October 7th). I will make comments throughout the paper to offer guidance on how to improve the paper and your writing in general. If you choose, you may revise the paper once for a new grade—I am a big believer in revision, so I urge you to take advantage of this option. You will have until the end of the term to re-submit the essay for a full replacement grade.