A ROUGH LIST OF EPICS

Africa
Sundiata (Mali)
Mwindo (Congo)
Tambuka (Kenya)

Asia
Gilgamesh (Mesopotamia)
Enuma Elish (Mesopotamia)
Iliad (Asia Minor)
Odyssey (Asia Minor)
Mahabharata (India)
Ramayana (India)
Shahnameh (Persia)
Book of Genesis (Palestine)
Book of Exodus (Palestine)
The Tale of the Heike (Japan)
The Journey to the West, or Monkey (China)
The Three Kingdoms (China)
King Dongmyeong of Goguryeo (Korea)
King Gesar (Tibet)
Silappathikaram (Tamil India/Sri Lanka)
Manimekalai (Tamil India/Sri Lanka)
David of Sassoun (Armenia)
Manas (Kyrgyz Turkey)
The Secret History of the Mongols (Mongolia)

Europe
Oresteia (Greece)
Aeneid (Italy)
The Divine Comedy (Italy)
The Liberation of Jerusalem (Italy)
Orlando Furioso (Italy)
The Song of Roland (France)
The Song of the Nibelungs (Burgundy)
The Saga of the Volsungs (Norway)
Njal's Saga (Iceland)
Laxdala Saga (Iceland)
The Peril of Sziget (Hungary)
Kalevala (Finland)

The Poem of My Cid (Spain)
Don Quixote (Spain)
The Cattle Raid of Cooley (Ireland)
Beowulf (England)
Sir Gawaine and the Green Knight
The Faerie Queene (England)
The Henriad (Shakespeare's Richard II, Henry IV parts 1 and 2, Henry V) (England)
Parzifal (Germany)
Hamlet (England)
Paradise Lost (England)
The Prelude (England)
The Kossovo Epic (Kossovo)
The Lusiads (Portugal)
Hamlet (England)
Lacpleisis (Latvia)
Faust (Germany)

Americas
Popol Vuh (Mesoamerica)
Omeros (St. Lucia, West Indies)
The Gaucho Martín Fierro (Argentina)
Hiawatha (USA)
Moby Dick (USA)
The Cantos (USA)
Paterson (USA)
Davenport's Version (USA)
The Gardens of Flora Baum (USA)
The Alamo (USA)
Genesis, an Epic Poem (USA)
The New World (USA)
EPIC ELEMENTS

1. The epic storyteller
   The prayer or invocation
   The appeal to tradition
   Frame tales
   Blindness and memory
   The retrieval of the story as itself an epic theme

2. The Creation Myth
   Does it need to be explicit?
   The dividing of the primal unity
   Creation by word
   The rules of recombination
   False starts
   The great flood

3. The Hero
   Miraculous birth
   Obscure origins
   Blazing the trail: the hero as representing but transcending the cultural norm
   The heroic code
   Heroic leadership and its dangers

4. The Quest
   The question
   The journey
   Obstacles and enemies
   Monsters, natural and divine; our own monsterhood
   Magical helpers, weapons, and talismans
   Games, rituals and trials
   The great battle
   The noble death or return

5. Kinship and Kinship Troubles
   Kinship in human evolution
   Succession and nepotism
   Adultery
   Youthful rebellion and oedipal conflicts
   Hero twins and male bonding
   The dangerous woman
   In-law troubles, bad gifts and bloody feasts
   The burning house and tragic kin-slaying

6. Definitions of the Relationship Among the Three Worlds
   Nature
   Culture
   The divine and the covenant
   Introduction to the divine personalities, their history, relations and conflicts

7. The Fall of Natural Man
   The beast-man
   The Fall: awareness of death, moral knowledge and self-consciousness
   Sex
   Clothes and shame
   Drugs
   Technology, invention or shamanic revelation of new technology
   Mobility, the loss of the home place
   Loss of one kind of strength, gain of another
   Domestication of animals
   Agriculture

8. The Descent into and Return from the Underworld
   The dead companion and the need for funeral
   Funeral games
   The hero, the shaman, and the animal spirit guide
   The guardians and lords of the realm of death
   The protecting talisman
   The conversation with the dead
   The prophecy
   The commission: the assignment of the task or duty
   The return to the land of the living
   Time anomalies
9. The Founding of the City
The idea of home
The building of the walls and gates
Sacrifice and commutation of sacrifice
Origin of present rituals, food laws, taboos, mutilations, etc., distinguishing ingroup from others
Genealogies of gods and humans
The establishment of a civic language
Orientation in space and time:
placenames, the cosmological center,
boundary markers, the calendar
The code of laws

10. The History of the People
From myth to history
War
Singled out by the gods
Faults and flaws of epic nations: epic hero versus epic ruler
National destiny

11. Setting an Example—Definitions of Core Values
Building a value language
Good-bad
Right-wrong
Elevated-base
Admirable-despicable
Firstness-secondness
Meso-meta
Pure-impure
Playful-serious
Natural-artificial
Wise-foolish
Sacred-profane
Venerable-ridiculous
Tragic-comic
Honest dealing-trickery
Beautiful-ugly
Contradictions and choices in the application of these values

12. The New Medium of Communication
From mute to spoken
From oral to written
From written to printed
From print to new media
New record-keeping institutions
Unification and fixing of national language
Economic changes in the media of exchange
A new religion

13. Formal Markers
Meter and mnemonics: the epic lyre
Formulae and mnemonics
Story-tunes and mnemonics
Formalization of meter in written works to preserve the human voice
In prose, the challenge of finding a substitute for verse
Mnemonic equivalents in other forms: prose fiction, drama, film, etc
Epic Magnitude
Lists and comprehensiveness
Boundary conditions