(revised syllabus) LITERATURE AND THE SCIENTIFIC IMAGINATION

Prof. John Freccero

11:00 AM-12:15 PM MW
V55.-0400001
Casa Italiana Auditorium
24 West 12th Street

RECITATIONS:

Sara Díaz: ???
V55.-0400002 TH 8:00 – 9:15 ???
V55.-0400003 TH 9:15 – 10:45 ???

Paola Ureni: ???
V55.-0400004 F 9:30 – 10:45 ???
V55.-0400005 F11:00 – 12:15 ???

INTRODUCTION

Wednesday, January 23:

Paradigms of Order and Disorder in
the Macrocosm, the Microcosm and the State

* No recitations Thursday or Friday.

THE MACROCOSM

"In the beginning..."

Monday, January 28: Plato, Timaeus

Wednesday, January 30: Lucretius, De Rerum Natura; Ovid, Metamorphoses

Required reading:
Genesis 1 & 2
Ovid, Metamorphoses I & II
Plato, Timaeus (excerpt)
Lucretius, On the Nature of Things Bk. I-II

Suggested further reading:
Steven Weinberg, The First Three Minutes
* First recitations meet Thursday 31 and Friday February 1.

**Ancient Astronomy: Center, Circumference, Sphere**

Monday, February 4: *Genesis*

Wednesday, February 6: Dante's Cosmos - Hell, Paradise

**Required reading:**
- Dante, *Inferno*, 3, 11, 34
- *Paradiso*, 1, 2, 10, 23

**Suggested further reading:**
- Liba Chaia Taub, *Ptolemy's Universe*

Monday, February 11: John Donne, *The Anniversary I*

Wednesday, February 13: Giordano Bruno, *The Ash Wednesday Supper*

**Required reading:**
- John Donne, *The Anniversary I*
- Giordano Bruno, *The Ash Wednesday Supper*

**Suggested further reading:**
- Alexander Koyre', *From the Closed World To the Infinite Universe*
- T. Kuhn, *The Copernican Revolution*

**Monday, February 18: Presidents' Day – NO CLASS**

**From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe**

Wednesday, February 20: Galileo, *Sidereus Nuncius*

**Required reading:**
- Galileo, *Sidereus Nuncius*

**THE MICROCOSM**

**The Cycle of Time, The Arrow of Time**

Monday, February 25: Augustine, *Confessions* (The unquiet heart)
Wednesday, February 27: *The Confessions of Zeno* (The last cigarette)

**Required reading:**
Augustine, *Confessions*, Bks. VII-VIII, X-XI
Italo Svevo, *The Confessions of Zeno*, first and last chapter

**Suggested further reading:**

Thursday, February 28, "Macrocosm" papers due sections 002, 003
Friday, February 29: "Macrocosm" papers due sections 004, 005

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**The Great Chain and a Missing Link**

Monday, March 3: Pico Della Mirandola, *Oration on the Dignity of Man*


**Required reading:**
Pico Della Mirandola, *Oration on the Dignity of Man*
Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Man*

Monday, March 10: Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species*

Wednesday, March 12: Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man*

**Required reading:**
Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species*, Chp. III, IV (p. 51-107), Chp. VI, VII (pp.140-198) & chp. XIV (pp. 371-396)
*The Descent Of Man - Intro., Chap. III & IV, Summary and Conclusion.*

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**March 17-22: Spring Break. NO CLASS**

**The Possible and the Actual**

Monday, March 24: Matthew Arnold, "Dover Beach"; Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein or the Modern Prometheus*
Wednesday, March 26: Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein or the Modern Prometheus*

**Required reading:**
Matthew Arnold, “Dover Beach"
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* (excerpts)

**Suggested further reading:**
Francois Jacob, *The Possible and the Actual*

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Monday, March 31: George Eliot, *The Lifted Veil*

**THE STATE**

*Utopia*

Wednesday, April 2: Plato’s *Republic*

**Required reading:**
George Eliot, *The Lifted Veil*
Plato, *Republic* Bks. VII & X

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Monday, April 7: Thomas More, *Utopia*; Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*

**Required reading:**
Thomas More, *Utopia*, Introduction, Bk. II,
Selections: "of their traffic," "of their slaves and marriages," "of their religions"

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*Order out of Chaos*

Wednesday, April 9: Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince* and *Discourses*

**Required reading:**
Machiavelli’s *The Prince*: chap. 1 to 3, 5 to 10, 15 to 21, 23 to 26
*Discourses*: Bk. I, chap. 1 to 5, 11 to 15, 29, 58;
Bk. II, intro., chap. 1 & 2; Bk. III, chap. 1 to 3

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Thursday, April 10: “Microcosm” papers due recitations 002, 003
Friday, April 11: “Microcosm” papers due recitations 004, 005
Monday, April 14: Rene' Girard: *Violence and the Sacred*

**Required reading:**

Rene' Girard, "Mimesis and Violence"
Chap. I of *The Girard Reader*, ed. James G. Williams

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**Monster or Patriot**

Wednesday, April 16: Antonio Gramsci, *The Modern Prince*

Monday, April 21: William Shakespeare, *Richard III*

Wednesday, April 23: William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*

Monday, April 28: William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*

**Required reading:**

William Shakespeare, *Richard III, Macbeth*
Antonio Gramsci, *The Modern Prince*

Wednesday, April 30: *Summary and Conclusions*

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Thursday, May 1: “State” unit papers due sections 002, 003
Friday, May 2: “State” unit papers due sections 004, 005