

(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 F 11:00 – 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:

Stephen J. Gould, *The Cycle of Time, The Arrow of Time* chap. 1

Thursday, February 28: "Macrocosm" papers due sections 002, 003

Friday, February 29: "Macrocosm" papers due sections 004, 005

The Great Chain and a Missing Link

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

Wednesday, March 5: Alexander Pope, *Essay on Man*, Alfred, Lord Tennyson, *In Memoriam A. H. H.*

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.

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*

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

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"

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

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

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***

Thursday, May 1: "State" unit papers due sections 002, 003

Friday, May 2: "State" unit papers due sections 004, 005