- Exegesis (noun) /ˌɛksəˈdʒiːsəs/ from the Greek *ἐξηγεῖσθαι* 'to lead out' -

(Exegesis = a critical explanation or interpretation of a text)

I.)   Description of the Project

In this project students will engage in the 'deep reading' of a seminal, influential or otherwise significant text related to the humanities, social sciences, or natural sciences. The notion of 'deep reading' refers to a process of slow, thoughtful and deliberate reading through which the reader actively works to critically contemplate, understand and ultimately enjoy a particular text to the fullest extent possible. A deep approach to reading is a method whereby the reader uses higher-order cognitive skills, such as the ability to analyze, synthesize, solve problems, in order to negotiate meanings with the author and to construct new meaning from the text. Deep reading is a rejection of fast 'surface' reading which tends toward a limited engagement with the ideas and information presented to us within a text so as to maximize the efficiency and speed at which we cognitively digest and retain information.

Rather than selectively skimming for facts or speed-reading for summaries, the process of deep reading means slowing down, re-reading passages, taking notes as we read, and even periodically stopping to think so as to more fully consider the ensemble of ideas presented to us by an author. Deep reading relies heavily on critical thinking. This means taking up an in-depth, purposeful and reasoned examination of the structures, elements and agendas through which meaning and knowledge 'about the world' are generated. It also entails serious contemplation of the significance and particular kinds of consequences that such meaning and knowledge can generate 'within the world'. In other words, having considered and recognized what we think a text is trying to tell us, the process of deep reading asks us to go a step further by reflecting upon the broader intellectual, scientific, social, cultural or political implications of the text; i.e. what does this book 'do'?

Although deep reading is a profoundly personal experience, within the educational context of problem-based learning at UCM, it also rests on the premise that comprehensive understanding and appreciation of a text can only emerge through collaborative processes of group-based discussion and deliberation. Hence, while deep reading is a highly subjective endeavor, it can only reach its full potential through a dedication to inter-subjective communication and dialogue with others around us.

The main objectives of this course are:

- To undertake a highly personalized in-depth and critical reflection on a seminal text linked to the humanities, social sciences or natural sciences, and to formulate this personalized reflection through a committed collaborative discussion with a select group of peers and teaching faculty at UCM.

- To craft a critical book review that establishes direct linkages with a student's individual course of study and concentration(s).

- To gain familiarity with the principle of deep reading and to learn how to write critical book reviews.

II.) Schedule and Assignments

Week 1	
	Mandatory Introductory Lecture (pass/fail) !!!!!!!!!! IT IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL THAT STUDENTS HAVE A COPY OF THE BOOK IN THEIR POSSESSION <u>PRIOR</u> TO THE FIRST TUTORIAL !!!!!!!!!!
First Tutorial	Meet with your tutor to talk about why s/he has chosen a particular text. During this time the tutor may provide the class with an initial short text to get the discussion going about the author and/or topic. During this meeting, the logic and details of the reading schedule will be established. Ideally, the text should be divided into segments that correspond with the tutorials. It is at the discretion of the tutor whether students will be assigned to the role of discussion leaders for specific segments. During this meeting, students should take time to discuss thoughts generated by the initial 'pre-reading' that they have accomplished prior to the tutorial, i.e. looking over the back flap, table of contents, introduction and skimming through chapters. What do they anticipate from the book? What issues seem especially interesting and attractive? Why? What themes seem controversial or uncertain? Why? Systematic attention should also be given during this meeting and others to consider how the text fits with the student's broader curriculum and course of study at UCM.

Week 2	
Second Tutorial	This tutorial will consist of a substantive discussion of the first segment of the text. The group (or selected discussion leaders) will pick key themes for discussion, and all students have a responsibility to stimulate an in-depth exploration of these themes. All students must bring to class a selection of 4-6 specific passages (1-3 sentences each) from the text that they are ready and willing to talk about with the group. One set should consist of 'sharp' statements that illuminate key points. The other half should consist of 'fuzzy' statements that are interesting but yet opaque or confusing. A personalized comment (4-6 sentences each) reflecting on each selected quote must be included. A hard copy must be printed out and provided to the tutor at the end of class (pass/fail). This will be repeated in subsequent tutorials.
Third Tutorial	This tutorial will consist of a substantive discussion of the second segment of the text. The group or selected discussion leaders will select key themes for discussion, and all students have a responsibility to stimulate an in-depth exploration of these themes. All students must bring to class a selection of 4-6 specific passages (~1-4 sentences each) from the text that they are ready and willing to talk about with the group. A hard copy must be printed out and provided to the tutor (pass/fail).
Fourth Tutorial	This tutorial will consist of a substantive discussion of the third segment of the text. The group or selected discussion leaders will select key themes for discussion, and all students have a responsibility to stimulate an in-depth exploration of these themes. All students must bring to class a selection of 4-6 specific passages (~1-4 sentences each) from the text that they are ready and willing to talk about with the group. A hard copy must be printed out and provided to the tutor (pass/fail).

Due →	At the end of Week Two (no later than 5pm Friday), ALL students must submit a short reflection to their tutor (~750-800 words @ 15pts). In this reflection you should [i] explain what themes you find especially compelling in the book thus far and [ii] establish a link to specific issues/questions in the academic literature. This will serve as the initial beginnings of your final book review.
Week 3	
Fifth Tutorial	The entire tutorial should consist of a substantive discussion of the fourth segment of the text. The group or selected discussion leaders will select key themes for discussion, and all students have a responsibility to stimulate an in-depth exploration of these themes. All students must bring to class a selection of 4-6 specific passages (~1-4 sentences each) from the text that they are ready and willing to talk about with the group. A hard copy must be printed out and provided to the tutor (pass/fail).
Sixth Tutorial	The tutorial should consist of a substantive discussion of the fifth chosen segment of the text. The group or selected discussion leaders will select key themes for discussion, and all students have a responsibility to stimulate an in-depth exploration of these themes. All students must bring to class a selection of 4-6 specific passages (~1-4 sentences each) from the text that they are ready and willing to talk about with the group. A hard copy must be printed out and provided to the tutor (pass/fail).
Seventh Tutorial	The tutorial should consist of a substantive discussion of the sixth segment of the text. The group or selected discussion leaders will select key themes for discussion, and all students have a responsibility to stimulate an in-depth exploration of these themes. All students must bring to class a selection of 4-6 specific passages (~1-4 sentences each) from the text that they are ready and willing to talk about with the group. A hard copy must be printed out and provided to the tutor (pass/fail).
Week 4	
Eighth Tutorial	The tutorial should consist of a concluding discussion about the text as a whole. The group or selected discussion leaders will select key themes for discussion, and all students have a responsibility to stimulate an in-depth exploration of these themes.
Ninth (Final) Tutorial	This final tutorial will entail short (10-12min.) student presentations of their individual book reviews (pass/fail). Presentations should focus on the particular theme or angle which the student has decided to focus on in their review, rather than on simple summary of the book. FINAL DRAFT OF BOOK REVIEWS ARE DUE NO LATER THAN 5PM FRIDAY FEBRUARY 2nd Both 'Hard' and 'Soft' copies are to be turned in.

III.) Assessments

1.) Every student must write an original critical book review (85%). This review must consist of three main parts. These parts can be mixed and arranged in any creative manner that the student feels works best. One part must clearly identify and provide a comprehensive summary of the main ideas/arguments presented in the text. This segment should consist of no more than roughly 20% of the total word count. A second part must elaborate upon a particular 'frame' or 'angle of telling' whereby a specific set of ideas/arguments from the book are scrutinized and explicitly linked up to other academic debates and discussions. This segment should consist of around 50% of your total word count. A third part must say something about how the book helps us to understand a given set of problems, issues or debates occurring in the contemporary world. This should consist of about 30% of your total word count. At some point your book review must also integrate a substantiated assessment of the ideas and claims presented in the book.

The length of your review should be ~2500 words (+/- 10%). Direct quotations should be used sparingly and generally not exceed three sentences in length.

For general tips, see: https://apps.carleton.edu/curricular/history/resources/study/criticalbookreview/

A rubric will be discussed in the lecture and made available on-line during the first week.

2.) At the end of Weeks 2, students will submit a personalized reflection essay to the tutor.

> This reflection should serve as your initial attempt to structure the final book review. The essay shall be evaluated by the tutor. The assignment is worth 15% of your final grade.

> This reflection is a concise and substantive piece of writing that must identify and elaborate on a specific theme of interest in a manner that [i] draws on specific ideas and passages in the text, and [ii] establishes a clear link to an external set of scholarly literature. This reflection should be 800 words (+/- 10%).

> This reflection must demonstrate originality and creativity and should be written with as much clarity, cohesion, depth and precision as possible. Direct quotations should be minimalized and never exceed 2 sentences.

3.) For tutorials 2,3,4,5,6 and 7 students must select a series of 4-6 quotes from the designated reading sections. Half should consist of 'sharp' statements that illuminate key points. The other half should consist of 'fuzzy' statements that are interesting but yet opaque or confusing. A personalized comment reflecting on the meaning or significance of each quote (4-6 sentences each) must be included. A hard copy will be printed out and provided to the tutor at the end of class (pass/fail).

4.) Active participation is an absolutely essential aspect of this project. As in all classes at UCM, students are expected to bring a high level of participation and engagement to each and every tutorial. Nonetheless, each individual tutor has the right to dock *up to two full points* from a student's final grade if that student has failed to persistently demonstrate substantive participation during the group discussions. Free-riding on the labor and commitment of other students will not be tolerated.

5.) As with all Project courses at UCM 100% attendance in tutorials and lecture is mandatory.

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Suggestions for having a good discussion:

- **Each person must formulate questions linked to specific passages.**

- **Avoid an overly simplistic "like" or "don't like" approach. Instead, focus on what themes are more or less compelling and persuasive.**

- **Turn personal opinions about the book into provocative lines of questioning through which the group can generate stimulating discussion.**

- **Differentiate intellectual from emotional responses.**

- **Discuss how the author uses language to express claims and ideas.**

- **Slowly read passages out loud and then allow a brief pause to allow people to think before thinking.**

- **Formulate questions that do not have 'yes' or 'no' answers.**

- **Use the whiteboard to capture some of the key questions, concerns, themes and ideas as they emerge from the discussion.**

- **Probe for depth and examples from others around us.**

- **Periodically work as a group to think about the bigger issues or problems that the book is either explicitly or implicitly pointing to.**

- **Create opportunities to ensure that everyone can participate.**

Appendix #1 (General Grading Rubric for Final Book Review)

Clarity and Precision (25pts) How well does the paper clearly identify and explain the main arguments/ideas of the text ? How well does the student author of the review establish and explain a focused and thematic 'frame' or 'angle of telling'? How well does the writing avoid ambiguous thinking, fuzzy language, superficial statements, and un-supported or contradictory claims?	
Depth and Engagement (25pts) How often and how well does the review use specific examples and information from the text so as to effectively illustrate the angle of telling? How thoroughly and effectively does the review link specific examples or passages from the text to broader-level claims that are compelling and substantive? How well does the angle of telling create a compelling discussion of issues that extend beyond the book? How effectively does the review make clear and explicit linkages to specific themes or problems in the humanities, social sciences, or sciences?	
Cohesion and Structure (25pts) How consistently are the main claims/ideas in the paper presented in an organized manner? How well do the ensemble of particular ideas and claims fit together to create a comprehensive review of the text? How well do individual sentences fit with one another to create paragraphs? How well do paragraphs flow into one another to create the overall discussion? Does the paper have a clear introduction and conclusion? Does the paper avoid problems of jumbled language, disjointed thinking, free-floating thoughts, and information overload?	
Style/Grammar (10pts) Overall, does the paper avoid awkward and incorrect usages of English language and grammar? To what extent does the grammar and spelling utilized in the paper either strengthen or weaken all of the above criteria?	
TOTAL (85pts)	

Appendix #2 (Topics)

TOPIC #1

Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protest by Zeynep Tufekci (2017) Yale University Press.

Recent years have been witness to a dramatic wave of contentious mobilization and progressive social movements surging across various corners of the world. From Iceland, Spain and Turkey to Hong Kong, Argentina and the United States many of the people engaged in these movements are protesting the entrenched forms of systematic exclusion and inequality generated by decades of neoliberal globalization and the affiliated deterioration of democratic institutions and human rights policies. Moreover, the increasingly illiberal and authoritarian turn emerging within many of the nations where protests erupted seriously questions the influence of progressive social movements in contemporary global politics. What have these movements achieved?

While many of the claims, resources and strategies that were mobilized in the recent wave of progressive social movements are very familiar, one of the key novelties of recent social movements is linked to the presence of new digital and information technologies. In her latest book, the Turkish sociologist Zeynep Tufekci takes an in-depth look at the promises and pitfalls generated by the availability of these new tools for contemporary social movements and activists. Drawing on years of qualitative and quantitative research, Tukekci contemplates whether the availability to organize massive protests quickly on digital communication platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, for example, is making social movements more powerful and effective, or more vulnerable to repression and control? If new technologies are so empowering, she asks, then why are so many social movements failing to combat the rise of authoritarianism and the spread of massive economic inequalities? In order to contemplate these questions, Tufecki draws on years of 'on the ground' ethnographic research as well as statistical 'big data' research so as to examine a multitude of social movements, including the Zapatista movement in Mexico, the Occupy movement in North America, the Arab Spring movements across the North Africa and the Middle East as well as the infamous Gezi Park protests in her home country of Turkey.

This topic is especially well-suited for students interested in the study of social movements and contentious politics as well as the socio-political dimensions of information technology. The topic is open to anyone, but students with a concentration in sociology, political science, and cultural/media studies are especially welcomed.

TOPIC #2

Orlando: A Biography by Virginia Woolf. (Vintage Classics, Penguin Random House, 2016; [Hogarth Press, 1928])

Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) is known to be a witty and outspoken critic of art and literature and writer of fiction. A core figure within literary modernism, she has pioneered stylistic and narrative techniques that enable fresh perspectives on reality and how it may be approached through fiction and theory. As a political and active theorist on women's rights, she led an unconventional life herself and inspired others to question traditional gender boundaries. And while Woolf's mental health problems align with the tensions and struggles presented by modernity, these personal circumstances should not dominate the discussion of her work entirely, since there are many more themes to be considered in her work.

For this course we will be reading the 'biographical' account of our novel's eponymous main character, Orlando: "*As his tale begins, Orlando is a passionate young nobleman whose days are spent in rowdy revelry, filled with the colorful delights of Queen Elizabeth's court. By the close, he will have transformed into a modern, thirty-six-year-old woman and three centuries will have passed. Orlando will witness the making of history from its edge, dressing in flamboyant fashions of each era, following passing customs, and socializing with celebrated artists and writers*" (excerpt from the book's cover).

Through deep-reading and discussion, we will investigate, among others, the themes of writing and specifically writing fiction, negotiating gender and identity, and also how to conceptualize modernist forms of racism, prejudice, and historical limitations. By drawing on conceptual frameworks from literature, philosophy, art, and other fields, we will approach the novel from different perspectives to establish a fruitful dialogue of theory and fiction. Students from all concentrations and disciplines are welcome.

TOPIC #3

Brainwashed: The Seductive Appeal of Mindless Neuroscience by Sally Satel and Scott Lilienfeld (2013) Basic Books.

If you want to sound interesting when explaining drug addiction, give a neuro-scientific explanation. Do not stress how socio-economic status and stressful life-events are related to drug-addition. Instead use phrases like "underdeveloped pre-frontal cortex" and "overactive dopaminergic reward-circuits". If you want to increase the odds of getting a guilty-verdict from a jury based on circumstantial evidence, show them a brain scan of the defendant that shows the 'lie-centre' lighting up when he denies the crime. As such this seems to not be problematic, kind of like 'good science in practise' even. What can possibly be wrong with emphasizing brain differences as causes of behaviours such as drug-addiction or using brain-data as evidence of guilt? Well, labelling drug addiction as a brain disease often leads to unrealistic, costly, and discriminatory drug policies. Instead of putting money towards fighting poverty and inequality we spend millions (if not billions) per year on neuroscientific research which so far has not lead to useful prevention or intervention policies. Furthermore, there is no uncontested 'lie-centre' in the brain. Yet, some neuroscientist claim brain data should be used in courtrooms. These two examples are just a few of the many of neuro-exaggeration, neuro-determinism or mind-as-brain thinking that has overtaken psychology, sociology, philosophy, and even law and economics. The 'brains-are-hot' quote above comes from the introduction chapter of *Brainwashed, The Seductive Appeal of Mindless Neuroscience* (2013). In *Brainwashed* psychiatrist Sally Satel and psychologist Scott O'Lilienfeld offer a critical view on some of the claims made by neuroscientists and warns against the use of neuroscience as it is in the above mentioned examples. They reveal how many of the real-world applications of human neuroscience gloss over its limitations and intricacies, at times obscuring – rather than clarifying- the many factors that shape behaviour and identities.

This topic is particularly interesting for students of neuroscience and psychology as well as philosophy (of mind), and sociology (of science and knowledge). The topic is especially well-suited for students who have wondered if the claims put forth in the 'You are your Brain' type of books are valid, and what consequences such claims may have for society.

TOPIC #4

The Parliament of Man: The United Nations and the Quest for World Government by Paul Kennedy (Allen Lane, 2007)

The Parliament of Man by Paul Kennedy provides an impressive historical account of the United Nations (UN), its origins and evolving role in the world during the first six decades of its existence. The author is a distinguished scholar and author of the top-selling historical book *Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*. The title *The Parliament of Man* was inspired by a poem by Tennyson of 1837 that envisioned 'the future coming together of humankind into a parliament of man'. The founding of the UN in 1945 partly fulfilled this vision. The pre-amble of the UN Charter sets out the ambitious goals 'to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war', 'to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person' and 'to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom'. The author provides an assessment of the UN's functions, representativeness, capacities and effectiveness in meeting past and future problems. Each chapter of the book has a thematic focus and addresses a different aspect of UN action, including the UN Security Council, UN peacekeeping and war making, the economic agendas of the North and South, the UN's "soft" agenda and international civil society. The story of the UN is depicted as one of successes and failures. This mixed record should not come as a surprise, Kennedy notes, because the UN is 'a human-based and fallible organization so dependent upon the whims of powerful national governments and the foibles of individual UN senior administrators'.

Tragedies in Rwanda, Somalia and Cambodia are illustrative of UN failures that affected public perceptions of the UN and supplied arguments for critics that view the UN as an ineffective instrument. UN reform is seen as critical for the UN to adapt to the transformed global scene however, and for the organization to be effective in meeting today's global challenges such as climate change, international terrorism and failed states.

This book promises an enjoyable and informative read for students of all academic disciplines who have an interest in the UN. This book will be of particular relevance to students in the fields of international relations, political science, history and law.

TOPIC #5

Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty by Daron Acemoglu and John Robinson (2012) Profile Books

In their highly influential and rather provocative book, Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson argue that it is man-made political and economic institutions that underlie economic success (or the lack of it). They use historical evidence from the Roman Empire, the Mayan city-states, medieval Venice, the Soviet Union, Latin America, England, Europe, the United States, and Africa to build a new theory of long-term economic development, focused on the interaction between economic and political forces. Specifically, they argue that a distinction between inclusive and extractive political institutions is the key to understand whether nations will prosper or fail. Among the questions they ask in this book and will be analyzed and discussed in the tutorials, are the following: China has built an authoritarian growth machine; will it continue to grow at such high speed and overwhelm the West? Are America's best days behind it? And, more generally, what is the most effective way to help move billions of people move from poverty to prosperity?

This topic is especially well-suited for students interested in the study of economic development, economic history and political economy. Students with a concentration in economics or political science are especially welcomed.