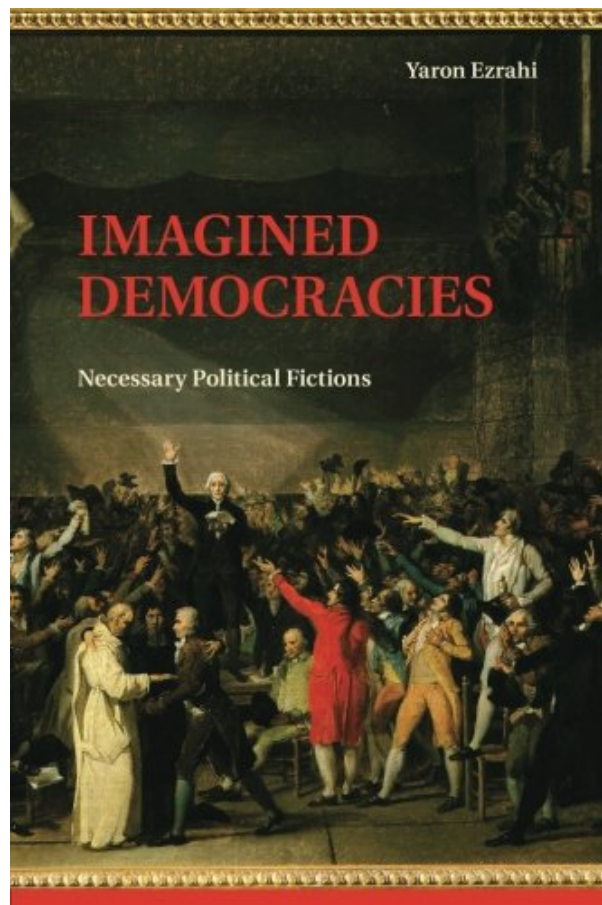
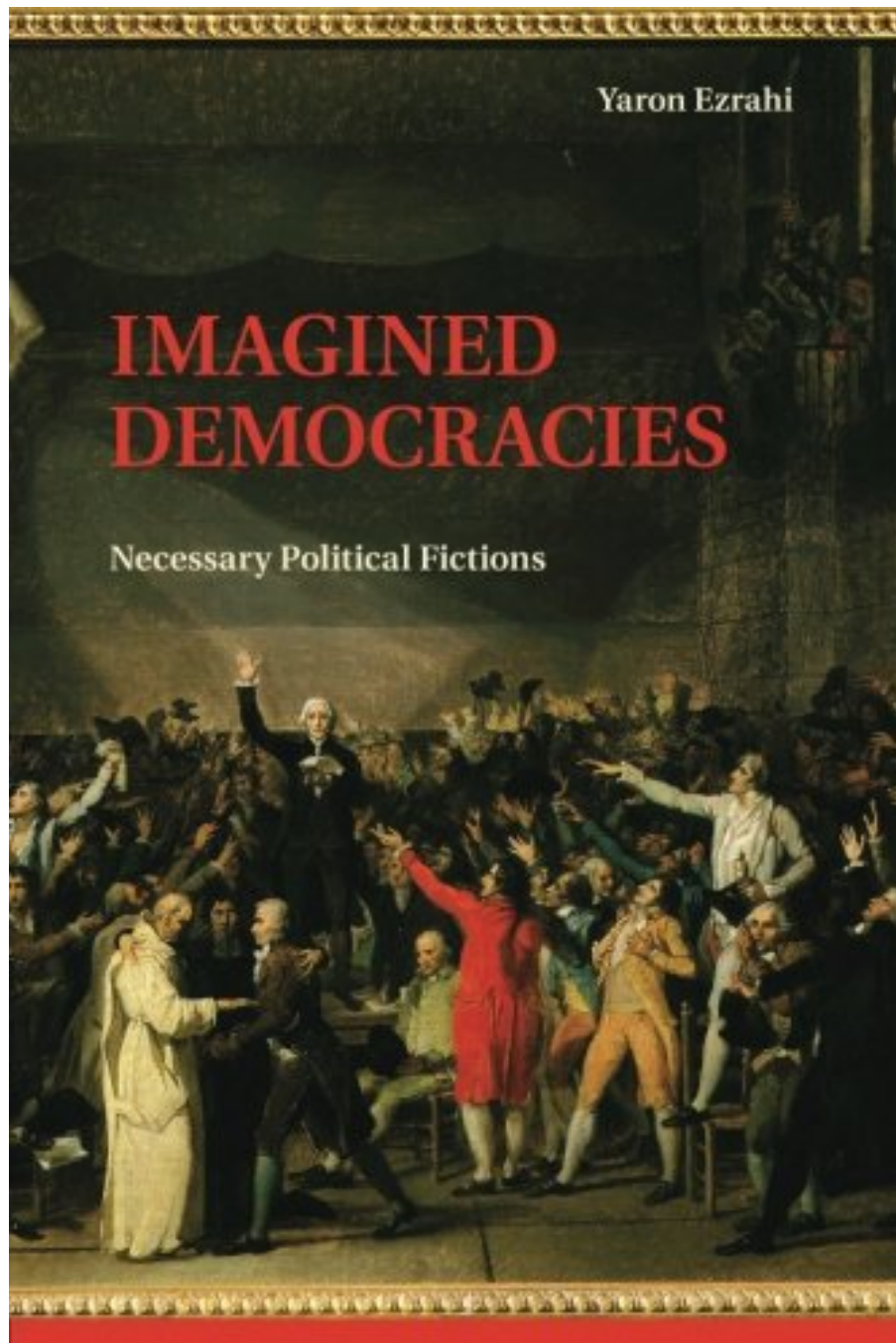


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Review

"While the author states that the question guiding the work is 'how we got here', in fact this 320-page volume - which is no less than a contemporary masterpiece - offers far more than an answer to this question. It reframes the history of politics and political thought from ancient Greece through modernity, the enlightenment and its critics, to contemporary postmodernity, adding perspective and leaving readers with an interpretative mechanism which renders far less of today's political reality new than we might otherwise have suspected."

Meirav Jones, Contemporary Political Theory

"This book offers an original revisionist, theoretically eclectic approach that takes on the postmodern problematisations of contemporary democracy. In the vein of other contemporary theorists of social imaginaries like Charles Taylor and Benedict Anderson, Ezrahi's book ... moves beyond these thinkers to offer a unique approach."

Bryant W. Sculos, Political Studies Review

About the Author

Yaron Ezrahi studied political science and philosophy at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and holds a PhD from Harvard University. He has served as an advisor on science policy to the White House, the US National Academy of Science, the OECD (1969-70), the Israeli Academy of Science and Humanities (1973-83) and the Carnegie Commission on Science (1992). He is the recipient of a National Jewish Book award and of the Israeli Political Science Association's Prize for Life Work (2009). He has been a member of the Hebrew University faculty since 1972. Other appointments include a fellowship at the Center of Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University and visiting professorships at the University of Pennsylvania, Duke University, Harvard University, Princeton University, ETH Zurich and Brown University. His works include *The Descent of Icarus: Science and the Transformation of Contemporary Democracy; Technology, Pessimism, and Postmodernism* (edited with Everett Mendelsohn and Howard Segal); *Rubber Bullets: Power and Conscience in Modern Israel*; and *Israel Towards a Constitutional Democracy* (with M. Kremnitzer). He is a co-founder and board member of *The Seventh Eye*, Israel's leading journal of press criticism in Hebrew. His work has also appeared in *Minerva*, *Science Studies*, *Social*

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This book proposes a revisionist approach to democratic politics. Yaron Ezrahi focuses on the creative unconscious collective imagination that generates ever-changing visions of legitimate power and authority, which compete for enactment and institutionalization in the political arena. If, in the past, political authority was grounded in fictions such as the divine right of kings, the laws of nature, historical determinism, and scientism, today the space of democratic politics is filled with multiple alternative social imaginaries of the desirable political order. Exposure to electronic mass media has made contemporary democratic publics more aware that credible popular fictions have greater impact on shaping our political realities than do rational social choices or moral arguments. The pressing political question in contemporary democracy is, therefore, how to select and enact political fictions that promote peace, not violence, and how to found the political order on checks and balances between alternative political imaginaries of freedom and justice.

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