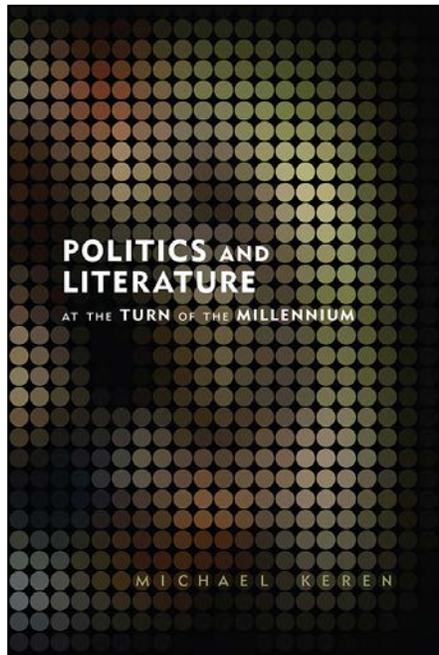




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Politics and Literature at the Turn of the Millennium

Michael Keren



Once again, Michael Keren brings his remarkable literary readings to his compelling theorizing of the political. His breadth of knowledge, his eye for detail, and his sensitivity to nuance mark him out as one of the most skilled practitioners of this approach to political theory. This is an excellent book.

– Simon Stow, Department of Government, The College of William and Mary; Author of *Republic of Readers? The Literary Turn in Political Thought and Analysis*

In this wide-ranging, very erudite and readable book, Michael Keren convincingly argues that imaginative literature has a valuable role to play in understanding political deliberation and enhancing political discussion. As a thoughtful and strongly critical reader of both primary and secondary literature, Keren brings to his study his profound knowledge not only of the texts but also of the social and political context of each novel.

– Glenda Abramson, Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Oxford

Novels are known to provide readers with the chance to view the world through the eyes of others. In this fascinating and important new book, Michael Keren demonstrates that in doing so novels

also offer us crucial alternative insights into the dilemmas that make up global politics. Drawing on an impressively wide array of historical and cultural examples, Keren reveals how conflict, poverty, genocide and a range of other political phenomena appear differently when scrutinised through literary texts.

– Roland Bleiker, Professor of International Relations, University of Queensland

Keren is a passionate advocate for an “aesthetic turn” in political science. He broadens our horizons and teaches us to extract from great novels not only literary enjoyment but a fresh view of the world, a new praxis of critical thinking. For him, literature is both an enchantment and disenchantment: a terrible beauty.”

– Yvon Grenier, Department of Political Science, St. Francis Xavier University

Politics and Literature at the Turn of the Millennium analyzes well-known contemporary novels by José Saramago, Cormac McCarthy, Gil Courtemanche, Anosh Irani, Haruki Murakami, Günter Grass, André Brink, John Le Carré, Sayed Kashua, David Grossman, Margaret Atwood, and Yann Martel. It shows how these novelists provide us with new perspectives on genocide, poverty, state violence, world terrorism, and other phenomena haunting the world at the turn of the millennium.

MICHAEL KEREN is a professor in the Departments of Political Science and Communication, Media and Film at the University of Calgary.



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The goal of structural-demographic theory is to mathematically model political instability by finding quantitative proxies for a range of socio-economic features and aggregating them by means of χ^2 . What's the deal with the figure of the precocious narrator in turn of the millennium fiction? Well, here's an answer: it's a cultural trace of the structural-demographic fact of elite overproduction. Recall what happens: people aspire to elite status, they get expensive degrees to facilitate their aspirations, but many are locked out.