

An Iranian “Scholar” On the “Virus” of Western Liberal Democracy

by Hugh Fitzgerald



MEMRI.org recently posted excerpts from [a lecture](#) given by “scholar” Alireza Ebadi, the representative of the Supreme Leader in Southern Khorasan Province. The summary below is followed by those excerpts:

Iranian scholar Alireza Ebadi, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei’s representative in the Southern Khorasan Province, said in a lecture that aired on Khorasan Jonoobi TV (Iran) on April 10, 2020 that the “virus” of Western liberal democracy is even worse than the coronavirus since it has caused the deaths and displacement of millions of people, two world wars, coups in various countries such as Iraq, the spread of cholera in Yemen, and Western intervention in Syria, Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, and elsewhere. Ebadi expressed

hope that once humanity defeats the “pest” of the coronavirus, it will “make sure the greatest pests of all do not escape.” He added: “May God [save] humanity from [the] two-legged viruses.”

Alireza Ebadi: “The whole world has united. Ultimately, it will defeat the menacing coronavirus. Such ‘heroes’ they are... if you gathered all the viruses together, they would not weigh more than one gram. Now they want to fight and defeat it. Inshallah... But are losses, damage, death, and killing unique to the coronavirus, or cholera, or the Plague? Isn’t the virus of Western liberal democracy... Examine its records in the past 80 years, and you shall see what they have done to people. [They have engaged] in world wars, intervened in over 50 countries, staged coups... This was the case 40 years ago with Saddam, and it is still the case today. Look at what they are doing in Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan. They hatch huge plots in various countries from the Far East to the Horn of Africa. They have killed millions of people under various names and pretexts. They have turned millions of people into refugees, orphans, and widows. They have destroyed millions of homes.

Alireza Ebadi claims that the “whole world has united” (because of the coronavirus). But his own spewing of virulent hatred at “Western liberal democracy” undermines his very point: clearly Iran, and other Muslim countries whose clerics have claimed the coronavirus was deliberately caused by the Americans, or the Zionists, demonstrate that the “whole world” has NOT united. And if the “menacing coronavirus” is “defeated,” as he assures us will happen, where does he think the vaccines and improved therapeutics will come from? Not from the Muslim lands, but from one or more of the “Western liberal democracies,” very likely including America and Israel. Hard work by research scientists in the Western world – and not the Inshallah fatalism of Islam – will ultimately “defeat the menacing coronavirus.”

He is wrong, too, in claiming that the “Western liberal democracies” caused the two world wars.

It was Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, both very far from being “liberal democracies,” that started World War I. It was the German dictator Adolf Hitler who started World War II, joined by two other dictators, Benito Mussolini of Italy and Hideki Tojo of Japan. The liberal democracies were the victims, not the instigators, of World War II.

Alireza Ebadi claims that the “Western liberal democracies” have intervened in “50 countries.” What is he thinking of? Fewer than ten such interventions since World War II come to mind; all but one were legitimate. The British – and at the very end of the conflict, the Americans – intervened to help put down Communist guerillas in Greece. The British similarly helped to suppress a Communist rebellion in Malaya. These interventions were prompted by the laudable desire to keep the Communists from taking still more territory, after their success in China, and the Red Army’s move into Eastern Europe, which led to the imposition of Communist regimes in seven countries – East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and Albania.

The most important successful intervention by the “Western liberal democracies” was in Korea, where a major war was fought to prevent North Korea, together with Communist China, from conquering South Korea. Does Ebadi regret that intervention? Is he sorry South Korea is free and democratic? The Americans fought a long war, too, to help South Vietnam from being conquered by North Vietnam; this time they lost. The intervention in Vietnam was a mistake, but not a crime.

The intervention that Alireza Ebadi surely has in the forefront of his mind is that by the Americans and British who helped in 1953 to orchestrate a coup by Iran’s military against Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh, who had tried to nationalize the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and thereby aroused

the British government's fury. This is the single example where the intervention by "Western liberal democracies" was illegitimate. Yet strangely, Ebadi doesn't mention this coup. Why not? Does he think he would be perceived as engaging in special pleading if he were to include the overthrow of Mossadegh in Iran?

He does mention a "coup in Iraq." I don't think he means the coup of 1958, which was a purely Iraqi affair, leading to the end of the monarchy, which was replaced by a military dictatorship. No Western powers were then involved. Ebadi must mean the overthrow of the homicidal tyrant, Saddam Hussein. America made many mistakes in Iraq, but the overthrow of Saddam Hussein was not one of them.

Then Alireza Ebadi fast forwards to the present: "Look at what they [the Western liberal democracies] are doing in Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan. They hatch huge plots in various countries from the Far East to the Horn of Africa."

Now let's see. What are they doing, those terrible Western democracies, in Yemen? Nothing. If Saudi Arabia chooses to use some weaponry it has bought from the West in Yemen, that is its affair. The major intervention in the Yemeni civil war, from outside the immediate neighborhood, has been that by Iran. Similarly, in Syria, the Americans were involved only for a short period, not in order to intervene in the civil war, but to fight ISIS. As in Yemen, the main foreign intervention has been that of Iran. In Iraq, the Americans overthrew a monstrous dictator and tried to create a functioning democracy; sectarian strife has made that more difficult than they anticipated. They spent two trillion dollars trying to help the Iraqis; the "intervention" that Ebadi deplores was, though in many ways mistaken, admirable in its selflessness. As in Yemen and Syria, in Iraq the main intervening power has been Iran, backing Shi'a militias in the south, thereby creating a center of power independent of the

central government.

In Afghanistan, again, the American intervention was intended only to help, not exploit, the Afghans. Two trillion dollars was spent by the Americans in what was an attempt to defeat the Taliban, but the attempt failed; almost twenty years after the Americans first arrived, the Taliban still control more than half of the country. Washington is trying to find a way out of what has turned out to be a colossal, and colossally expensive, error.

When Ebadi mentions the intervention by Western liberal democracies in India, I have no idea what he has in mind. There has been no intervention, military or political, in Indian affairs, by America or any other democratic state. Or does he suspect, as an anti-Infidel conspiracy theorist, that behind the rise of Hindu nationalism, the Americans must somehow be involved?

Finally, Alireza Ebadi mentions Pakistan as a country where such intervention has taken place, but the only intervention that comes to mind is that which lasted for a few hours, when the Navy Seals found and killed Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad. Does Ebadi consider that killing wrong? I have the sinking feeling that he does.

He then says that "they [the Western liberal democracies] hatch huge plots in various countries from the Far East to the Horn of Africa." Which "huge plots" are these? Those democracies have not plotted in China, Indonesia, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan. They did not hatch "huge plots," but went to war, in order to rescue from Communism the South Koreans and South Vietnamese; they aided the governments in Malaya and Greece to fight Communist insurgents. The Americans were in Somalia (the Horn of Africa) for all of five months, attempting mainly to keep the various Somali factions from fighting so that humanitarian aid, including food, could be delivered to the Somali people. They "plotted" only as to how

best to deliver food and water to the people who needed it. Would Ebadi dare to deny it?

Alireza Ebadi then ends his bill of particulars against the “Western liberal democracies” with this demented peroration: “They have killed millions of people under various names and pretexts. They have turned millions of people into refugees, orphans, and widows. They have destroyed millions of homes.”

Which “millions” were killed by liberal democracies? Hitler, Tojo, Stalin, Mao Tse-tung between them were responsible for the deaths of as many as one hundred million people. But the liberal democracies killed fewer than seven million German, Italian, and Japanese soldiers, in a world war of self-defense. The civilian “refugees, orphans and widows” Ebadi refers to were created overwhelmingly by Hitler, Stalin, and Tojo, not by the leaders of “liberal democracies.” Millions of refugees fled – first from the Nazis in Occupied Europe, and later, from the Red Army when it took over Eastern Europe. There were no refugees from Western liberal democracies.

If he can spare the time from his busy schedule as a representative of the Supreme Leader, Alireza Ebadi should do some more research on “Western liberal democracies” and their interventions in other lands. If he did, he would discover those interventions – with one exception – were justified, selfless, costly, admirable. That one exception is, as he well knows, the Anglo-American intervention in Iran in 1953. And if he unflinchingly studies the present, he will discover that it is his own country, Iran, that is currently most deeply involved in wars abroad – in Yemen, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon. Is Alireza Ebadi merely emulating Muhammad, who declared that “war is deceit,” or does he really believe what he says? And which, come to think of it, would be worse?

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