

The Importance of LaRouche's Ideas for the Arab World

by Hussein Askary

Mr. Askary is the Southwest Asia Coordinator for the Schiller Institute. We present here his edited remarks on Nov. 17, 2019 to the Schiller Institute Conference, "The Future of Humanity as a Creative Species in the Universe," in Bad Soden, Germany. Subheads and links have been added.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Mrs. Helga Zepp-LaRouche,

It is a great honor for me to be speaking at this conference.

Lyndon LaRouche and Helga Zepp-LaRouche have a special place in the hearts and minds of the people of Yemen, as you heard from our friend Fouad. He could not come to this conference or previous conferences because the Saudis have been bombing the airport, forcing it to remain shut down. Thousands of people have died because they cannot travel abroad for medical treatment, as he was saying.

In spite of all this suffering, we have people in Yemen, especially young people, schoolchildren, studying the ideas of Lyndon LaRouche.

This photograph [Figure 1] is from our last physical meeting with Lyn, actually here in this same venue last year. In this photo we have a message from children in a school in Yemen who sent us these things as a greeting to Lyn and Helga. As part of their school program they are studying the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030, whose 17 goals are depicted in the color boxes. But some of the parents and teachers insisted on superimposing at the top what they call "LaRouche's Five Metrics of Progress," because, without these, they say, we would not be able to fulfill the goals of development. This is a fascinating thing going on in Yemen, right in the middle of the worst



Johanna Clerc

Hussein Askary

humanitarian crisis in the world.

The prophet of Islam, Mohammed (God's blessings be upon him), whose birthday was celebrated last week across the Muslim world, says:

When the son of Adam [a human being] dies, his or her actions in and upon this world cease, except for three:

1. A flowing (continuing) charity, such as a school, a mosque you built; helping the poor; making sure there is financing after you die; or
2. Useful knowledge/science; or
3. A good posterity who pray for you, in their continuing physical existence.

Lyndon LaRouche's soul enjoys all three of these ties to this material world and to immortality. How?

First, through his international organization which is helping people around the world to create a better

FIGURE 1



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Helga Zepp-LaRouche and Hussein Askary display greetings received from Yemeni schoolchildren in 2018.

future. This is the charity.

Second, through his scientific, economic and philosophical ideas that have given the world a New Silk Road that is evolving right now into a World Land-Bridge, revolutionizing the world economy. We heard a fantastic description of that knowledge in yesterday's presentations, which is being continued by the LaRouche Youth Movement.

And third, through all the young people in many countries around the world whom Lyndon adopted as his own children, making them his posterity who are now thinking about him and praying for him. It's not the kind of prayer you have in church; it's like what we saw yesterday.

I have worked with Lyn since 1995. My first meeting with him was in that year, when I attended a conference of the Schiller Institute here in Germany. It was the most shocking encounter for a young, Arab-Muslim man. In one of the breaks at the conference, Paul Rasmussen, one of our members in Denmark, literally pulled me by my hand and dragged me to Lyndon. He told him: "This is Hussein from Iraq. He knows a lot about Islamic philosophy" (which was not true). [laughter]

Lyn lit up. He always like to meet young people. We started talking. Suddenly, he said, "Islam is a synthetic religion!" So, it's not original? I thought. And then, in his typical manner, Lyn came closer to me and, in his famous pause, with his finger pointing upward he said to my face: "And, God does not speak Arabic!" (Meaning that the *Quran*, the Muslims' holiest scripture, cannot be the literal word of God/Allah.) What?

I needed some backing here. Is what this old man is saying, true? I had brought along another Muslim guy from Eritrea, so I turned around. But he had disappeared. He had left us. I never saw him again. Maybe he thought that Allah would send a thunderbolt right through the roof of the conference hall and strike LaRouche and everyone around him, for saying these kinds of blasphemies. That did not happen, of course. Allah is not Zeus. He does not have thunderbolts to shoot at people. As we know, Allah is Truth, Justice and Mercy.

Did Lyndon say he knew more about Islam than me or anyone else? No! He did not say that. He never claimed that. He was using his rational mind, and, obviously, the lessons he has learned from dealing with Christian fundamentalists.

Concerning the first point, that Islam is a synthetic religion: It is not difficult to prove. It's correct. Lyn was right. Prophet Mohammed himself never claimed he

had come with something new or original. He said that he was continuing the work of Abraham, Moses, Jesus the Christ and all the saints. Islam was a synthesis of all the previous monotheistic religions. And that is not a bad thing!

Concerning the second point, that God doesn't speak Arabic: That was a tough one. I had to go and do my homework, studying a lot of Islamic philosophy. I discovered that the issue of the *Quran* being "the literal word of God" was hotly disputed by Muslim scholars and philosophers during the Islamic Renaissance, in the 8th through the 11th centuries. Especially by philosophers such as Ibn Sina. I read a lot of Ibn Sina and found that he agreed with this viewpoint. Because God does not talk to our ears with words, but through our creative minds. "Revelation"—which in Arabic, *Al-wahi*, also means "inspiration"—is the attempt, according to Ibn Sina, by the human creative philosophical mind to reach out to the stars in heaven and grasp and bring back the divine knowledge. Not receiving it passively through Archangel Gabriel, as the priests have told us.

This is Lyn's method. He was sometimes very irritating for people, just as Socrates was irritating to people, because he didn't accept axioms and beliefs at face value. You have to prove them.

You Must Prove Your Beliefs to be True

All my subsequent work with LaRouche, and all my personal work, whether in writing or organizing other people, has been based on the scientific method of figuring out if what one believes in, is true or not, and can be proven.

Lyn's ability to forecast strategic and economic developments was based on this and a profound understanding of both human nature and historical developments. The man knew a lot about history.

Another important thing we learned from Lyn is how to intervene to *change* things. Not just *describe* them. If you rely on previous experiences, or the current situation, the world looks hopeless. You need to bring something back from the future to be able to determine what direction you or your nation needs to move. It is the future, or our *vision* of the future, which should determine our actions today. So, the whole time, his and our mind is in the future, looking at the present and the past.

And therefore, my continued relationship to Lyndon is situated in the future; everything I do now is part of *his* future. In this sense, he is in the simultaneity of eternity. Everything we do with his ideas is an extension of

his life into the future, into immortality.

We have been through many great moments and terrible crises during the past 24 years I have been working with the LaRouche movement and the Schiller Institute. LaRouche warned, for example, that the Israeli-Palestinian peace process would collapse if economic development on a large scale was not prioritized. But the worst of these crises, from my standpoint, was the invasion and destruction of my home country Iraq by a combination of U.S. and British forces. We stood against the invasion before it happened, and we have continued to propose solutions after the fact. We have never given up on the Iraqi people.

‘The LaRouche Doctrine for Southwest Asia’

“The LaRouche Doctrine: Southwest Asia,” which was formulated by Lyn in 2004, and also in an [interview](#) I conducted with him for *EIR* on April 24, 2004, was an attempt to make the best of the situation after the invasion of Iraq in 2003, and not let things slide into total disaster. Unfortunately, the worse disaster came in 2006 when U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney declared the coming sectarian conflict. He actually *announced* it, that it was coming.

‘Operation Phoenix’ for Syria

Then came the invasion of Libya in 2011, and right after that, the attack on Syria. But even in the darkest moments of that situation we proposed [Operation Phoenix](#) for the reconstruction of Syria and to connect it with the New Silk Road. Phoenix is the mythical bird that rises from the ashes, as Syria is rising from the ashes today.

In 2014, Syria was on the verge of total destruction. My colleague, Ulf Sandmark, took a personal risk traveling to Syria, twice, in the heat of that crisis, to present LaRouche’s and our organization’s ideas to the highest levels of the Syrian government. He met [Figure 2] with Dr. Bouthaina Shaaban, the chief advisor to Presi-

FIGURE 2



The Schiller Institute’s Ulf Sandmark met with several high-level officials in Syria. In the left photo is Dr. Bouthaina Shaaban, (center) chief advisor to Syria’s President Bashir Al-Assad; and in the right photo, Prime Minister Imad Khamis, (left) receiving a copy of the Arab-language edition of *The Silk Road Becomes the World Land-Bridge*.

FIGURE 3



dent Bashir Al-Assad. Imad Khamis, the Prime Minister of Syria [Figure 3] was given a copy of the Arab-language edition of *The Silk Road Becomes the World Land-Bridge*, by Ulf. Many ministers now have this book. I know this from third-party sources.

The Syrian government is not saying that they will do exactly what we have proposed, but it’s in the same direction: joining the New Silk

Road, rebuilding the infrastructure, and investing in industrial and agricultural production.

‘Operation Felix’ for Yemen

Last year, I helped draw up a Yemen reconstruction plan, [Operation Felix](#).

The word “Felix” we took from the name *Arabia Felix*, the Roman name for Yemen: “The Happy Arabia,” because it was so prosperous at the time. Therefore, we wanted to inspire the Yemenis, that even in the moment of darkness, they should think about and rebuild the “Happy Yemen.”

Operation Felix has now been adopted by the

Yemeni General Investment Authority, and it's a hot topic of debate among the many different parties fighting each other. Even the Saudi-backed government people are studying our reconstruction plan.

While everybody else was talking only about how the Yemeni crisis is the worst humanitarian catastrophe on the planet—which it is, a crime against humanity—I and my friends in Yemen are focussing on planning the road to peace. Because, without a vision of the beautiful future the Yemenis and their children can have, it is difficult to motivate them to sit down at the negotiation table.

China is now interested in the Yemeni situation. They were previously very passive. But now, because our proposal involves the construction of transport corridors, developing agriculture and industry and mining, but also using Yemen as a location on the Maritime Silk Road *and* the Eurasian Land-Bridge, the Chinese understand this very well, and they have become very interested in taking part in the peace process and negotiations.

This has been advancing in a very good manner. Of course, the war has to be stopped—the bombing and the blockade on the Yemeni people.

Right now, there are young people demonstrating in the streets of Lebanon and Iraq, demanding justice, a decent life and a future. Maybe we can tell them what to do or send them a ten-page proposal. But I think that's no longer enough.

LaRouche School for Physical Economics for Arabs

And here comes the most exciting part of my collaboration with Lyndon LaRouche. I want to make an announcement. Beginning in December, I will be taking up the challenge of starting an online LaRouche school for physical economics for Arabs. [applause] I'm sorry if you feel discriminated against, but if you don't speak or read Arabic, you can blame your education system for that. [laughter]

The school will be a subscriber service, because it has to be financially sustainable. People must subscribe



The Arabic-language edition of Lyndon LaRouche's 1984 text on elementary mathematical economics, So, You Wish to Learn All About Economics?

to be members of the school, so they can receive instructional material and follow and participate in regular online classes and discussions I will give in Arabic. I will also translate classes from our associates to exchange with our subscriber members, with a focus on young people.

We will be working with individuals, but we will also attempt to engage collaboration with universities in the Arab countries, to use this material, to use LaRouche's ideas, and package it as part of their offerings. I can say that we already have some universities interested in this project, this experiment, to see whether what we are doing can fit into their curriculum.

I have already translated into Arabic, LaRouche's 1984 [book](#), *So, You Wish to Learn All About Eco-*

nomics? We will make it and the [mega-book](#), *The New Silk Road Becomes the World Land-Bridge*, published by EIR in 2014, available online to all of our school subscribers.

The most important part of *The New Silk Road Becomes the World Land-Bridge* is not all the great projects being built or otherwise described in its 400-plus pages, but the metrics of progress which LaRouche has developed.

Both physical books can also be ordered for a charge by subscribers or anyone. We have also other video material by LaRouche and his associates that will be translated and explained in the class forms.

We're going to do this for a year, maybe two. Hopefully, we will have an interesting result.

Besides, [Figure 4] I am going to give free, regular strategic and economic analysis on global developments to the Arabic-speaking audience, on YouTube and other social media, in order to motivate them to join our school.

All of it will be based on the work and thoughts of Lyndon LaRouche, of course, and as developed by his associates.

As I asked a friend about the demonstrations in Iraq and Lebanon against corruption, What will you do next when you take away the corrupt people? Where are the people with the scientific ideas who will build your

FIGURE 4



Hussein Askary explaining the Silk Road/Belt and Road concept to a Yemen audience in a classroom setting.

countries? There will be a new void that would be filled by ignorant or corrupt people. That's the risk. Every time you make a regime change, you risk getting something worse. Or, somebody might come up with the brilliant idea of getting economists from the bankrupt EU or U.S.A. to run things, so-called "technocrats"! A very nice word. People educated by the IMF or World Bank in American universities.

Therefore, we need to educate people. This should be a priority, especially young people in the Arab world (as far as I am concerned), and also replicated elsewhere, about physical economics. We can no longer and should no longer try to dictate to other people how they should run their own affairs. But we can inspire them with

knowledge and a passion for the good of humankind.

Honestly, I think LaRouche's economics should become part of the university curricula around the world.

Show Gratitude for Those Who Came Before

In conclusion, I would like to say that we should always show gratitude to those who came before us and who dedicated their lives to beautiful and great ideas. How do we pay them their due? As Friedrich Schiller emphasized, every generation receives gifts from the previous generations, and these gifts should be enriched and passed on to the next generations. This way, our having lived acquires a meaning, a lasting meaning. And we can die with a smile on our face, as Lyn always said.

I want to particularly express my gratitude to a few of the people with whom I worked directly and developed a personal relationship, who have now passed on. Their character and their work inspired me a lot, especially when I was young: Gail Billington from the U.S.; Tore Fredin from Sweden; Doug DeGroot, who dedicated his life to working on the questions of Africa; Mark Burdman, a fantastic human being with whom I worked very closely; and of course, Lyndon LaRouche. These people left a deep imprint on me and I promised them to continue my work and do my best.

Thank you for your attention, and please tell all your Arabic-speaking friends and their relatives that we will have this school starting next month, and that they should join us and educate their children.



Some LaRouche associates who have passed on, whose character and work deserve special remembrance and gratitude (l. to r.): Gail Billington, Tore Fredin, Doug DeGroot, and Mark Burdman.