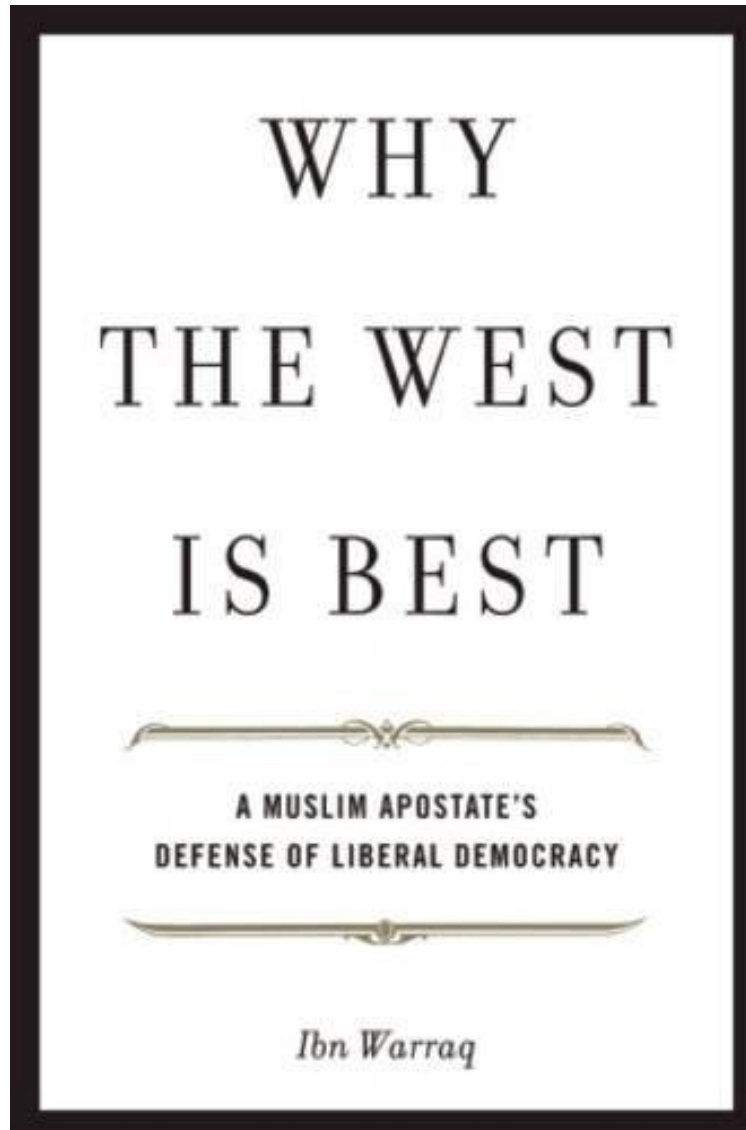


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Why the West is Best: A Muslim Apostate's Defense of Liberal Democracy

Ibn Warraq

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0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Highly thought-provoking. Very readable, and a must for ...By DPopHighly thought-provoking. Very readable, and a must for anyone doubting the value of freedom. We read this for

our book group and it never failed to spark discussion.95 of 97 people found the following review helpful. This may be Ibn Warraq's best book!By Geoff PuterbaughI am a long-standing fan of Ibn Warraq. I thoroughly enjoyed his ground-breaking book, *Why I Am Not a Muslim*, and especially liked one of his follow-up books, *Virgins? What Virgins?: And Other Essays*. But this may be his best book yet. I have to say, right off the bat, that it is biased. It seems to have been created as a document to refute anti-American (and anti-Western) leftists. It is quite definitely a reply to the "wets," who can find nothing wrong in the world except for "Western racism, imperialism, and genocide." And Warraq's reply is not antagonistic, in any way. It could be summed up as, "You don't know nothing yet." The book begins with a surprising, but delightful, hymn to New York City. Warraq has previously written about "how he became an Englishman," but by now he is clearly an Englishman in love with New York. He takes two separate tracks in praising the city: the first is (again, surprisingly) his love affair with Tin Pan Alley and the best of the American musicals, and the second is his visit to a place that might be called "Little India," where every imaginable Indian product is for sale to the crowds which appear every day -- delicious curries and the ingredients which go into them, Indian silks and saris -- and so on: the complete list would consume this entire review! But Ibn Warraq is most informative on subjects like slavery and imperialism. On slavery, he dispassionately points out the worst offenders in the matter of slavery (the Arabs, and perhaps the Africans themselves) and points out that the end of slavery came from the West. It certainly did not come from Medina or Marrakesh, Algiers or Tunis. There are many more interesting facts which will surprise most readers. On imperialism, he is quite astonishing. He points out, en passant, the admiration of Western scholars for the Islamic conquest of the world, while of course there is no admiration of any sort for the British Empire. Warraq goes into this in devastating detail, when he compares the Islamic "raj" in India with the British "raj" in India. The Islamic "raj" lasted 700 years and left nothing good behind it. It left only a record of destruction. It managed to destroy Buddhism in India, as well as most of the Buddhist temples, and it destroyed Hindu temples by the thousand. (It also destroyed Hindu people by the "lakh.") The "ferocious, imperialist" Britons, on the other hand, had a "raj" which lasted 200 years. And, when they left, they left behind them ports, roads, railways, the English law, English parliamentary democracy, universities, the English language, and Indians well-educated in medicine, law, science and other fields. As Dinesh D'Souza remarked, "Other than that, the British did absolutely nothing for India." As I remarked at the opening, this book is biased. Don't open it and expect to find another catalog of the sins of the West, real and imaginary. What you will find here is a robust and highly effective defense of what the West has done RIGHT, including human rights, freedom, democracy, and -- perhaps most important -- the freedom to construct your own life by your own lights. Put this one on your required reading list! 15 of 6 people found the following review helpful. very well researched and informative By dmsutto Very interesting and easy to read. Very well researched. 60 pages of bibliography. He draws information from sources as varied as Plato, Martin Luther, the Apostle Paul, Gandhi, muslim leaders, and Christopher Hitchens. He uses all of the major religious books of the world and period writers for the last 2500 years from all over the world, his own personal experiences and historians to boot.

We, in the West in general, and the United States in particular, have witnessed over the last twenty years a slow erosion of our civilizational self-confidence. Under the influence of intellectuals and academics in Western universities, intellectuals such as Gore Vidal, Susan Sontag, Edward Said, and Noam Chomsky, and destructive intellectual fashions such as post-modernism, moral relativism, and multiculturalism, the West has lost all self-confidence in its own values, and seems incapable and unwilling to defend those values. By contrast, resurgent Islam, in all its forms, is supremely confident, and is able to exploit the West's moral weakness and cultural confusion to demand ever more concessions from her. The growing political and demographic power of Muslim communities in the West, aided and abetted by Western apologists of Islam, not to mention a compliant, pro-Islamic US Administration, has resulted in an ever-increasing demand for the implementation of Islamic law-the Sharia- into the fabric of Western law, and Western constitutions. There is an urgent need to examine why the Sharia is totally incompatible with Human Rights and the US Constitution. This book, the first of its kind, proposes to examine the Sharia and its potential and actual threat to democratic principles. This book defines and defends Western values, strengths and freedoms often taken for granted. This book also tackles the taboo subjects of racism in Asian culture, Arab slavery, and Islamic Imperialism. It begins with a homage to New York City, as a metaphor for all we hold dear in Western culture- pluralism, individualism, freedom of expression and thought, the complete freedom to pursue life, liberty and happiness unhampered by totalitarian regimes, and theocratic doctrines.

About the Author Ibn Warraq, Islamic scholar and a leading figure in Koranic criticism, is a visiting fellow at the Center for Law and Counterterrorism, a project of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. Warraq's op-ed pieces have appeared in the *Wall Street Journal* in America and *The Guardian*, and he has addressed distinguished governing bodies all over the world, including the United Nations in Geneva, and Members of the Dutch Parliament, at The Hague. Mr. Ibn Warraq completed in 2007, a critical study of the thought of Edward Said, *Defending the West*, which Paul Berman, author of *Terror and Liberalism*, described as "a glorious work of scholarship, and it is going to

contribute mightily to modernising the way we think about Western civilisation and the rest of the world".