The Rafto Human Rights Series

Since 1987, The Rafto Human Rights Foundation has each year awarded the Rafto Prize to prominent advocates for human rights, democracy and peace. This prize commemorates Professor Thorolf Rafto, who devoted his life promoting democracy and respect for human rights. The prize-winners are individuals from different parts of the world, but their struggle is basically the same: They fight for democracy, freedom, human rights and peace in their respective countries. Previous recipients include Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma, Leyla Zana of Kurdistan, Turkey, José Ramos-Horta of East-Timor, and President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea.

The purpose of the Rafto Human Rights Series is to provide an increased awareness of the human rights issues in the global context. This knowledge and understanding can serve as a bridge linking people around the world. These insights will be valuable to the international community, since human rights, democracy and peace have to be interpreted and implemented within different cultural contexts and social realities. By discussing and analyzing these issues in their respective political, social and cultural context, the insights and understanding can be deepened and could lead people to concerted action.
Ebadi argues that the current government does not fully respect human rights and achieving democracy in Iran. This chapter reviews the structure of Iranian government, Shirin Ebadi (Tehran University)

Chapter 5: Rights of women and children in Iran
Shirin Ebadi (Tehran University) & Henriette Sinding Aasen (University of Bergen, Norway)
This chapter reviews current Islamic laws dealing with women and children and argues that some of these laws are in violation of Islamic and international principle of justice, fairness and equality.

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Chapter 8: Education in Iran
Shiva Daulatabadi (Allameh Tabatabai University of Iran), Hassan Ashayeri (Iran University of Medical Sciences) & Morteza Majdfar (Iran Ministry of Education)
The authors review the educational system and curriculum in Iran and the government’s attempts to integrate Islamic teaching with modern curriculum.

Chapter 9: Political economy of poverty in Iran
Fariborz Raisdana (University of Social Welfare, Iran)
Raisdana reviews the economic situation in Iran and points out that poverty and corruption are pervasive because of the government’s support of monopolies in which only a few and powerful individuals benefit.

Chapter 10: Universal and Islamic conception of human rights and justice
Henriette Sinding Aasen (University of Bergen, Norway)
The author examines the basic values and principles of Islam and Islamic philosophy, in light of the cultural roots of modern human rights law and the contemporary human rights discourse.

Chapter 11: Dialogue among civilizations as a new challenge in the era of globalization
Krzysztof Gawlikowski (Warsaw School of Advanced Social Psychology, Poland)
The author outlines the importance of dialogue among civilizations initiated by President Khatami of Iran. Only through dialogue existing differences can be understood and common goals can be achieved.

Chapter 12: Clash, co-existence, or cooperation among cultures and civilization: Understanding the human potential for destructiveness and creativity
Uichol Kim (Chung-Ang University, Korea)
The author outlines how cultures, religions and science have become vehicles of both creativity and destructiveness. He discusses the need to understand and cooperate among cultures and civilizations to achieve enlightened globalization.

About the volume
This book brings together leading scholars to provide an in-depth analysis of family, education, economy, democracy, human rights and Islam in Iran. This volume provides a comprehensive and critical analysis of the current situation in Iran both by Iranian and international scholars. The goal of this volume is to provide an in-depth understanding of various facets of Iranian society that could serve as a basis for promoting democracy, human rights and peace in Iran and beyond its borders.

The Nobel Peace Prize for 2003 was awarded to Shirin Ebadi for her efforts for democracy and human rights. In 2001 The Rafto Prize for Human Rights was awarded to Shirin Ebadi for her lifelong struggle for democracy, peace and human rights in Iran and for her work on the protection and rights of women and children.

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