

## 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.



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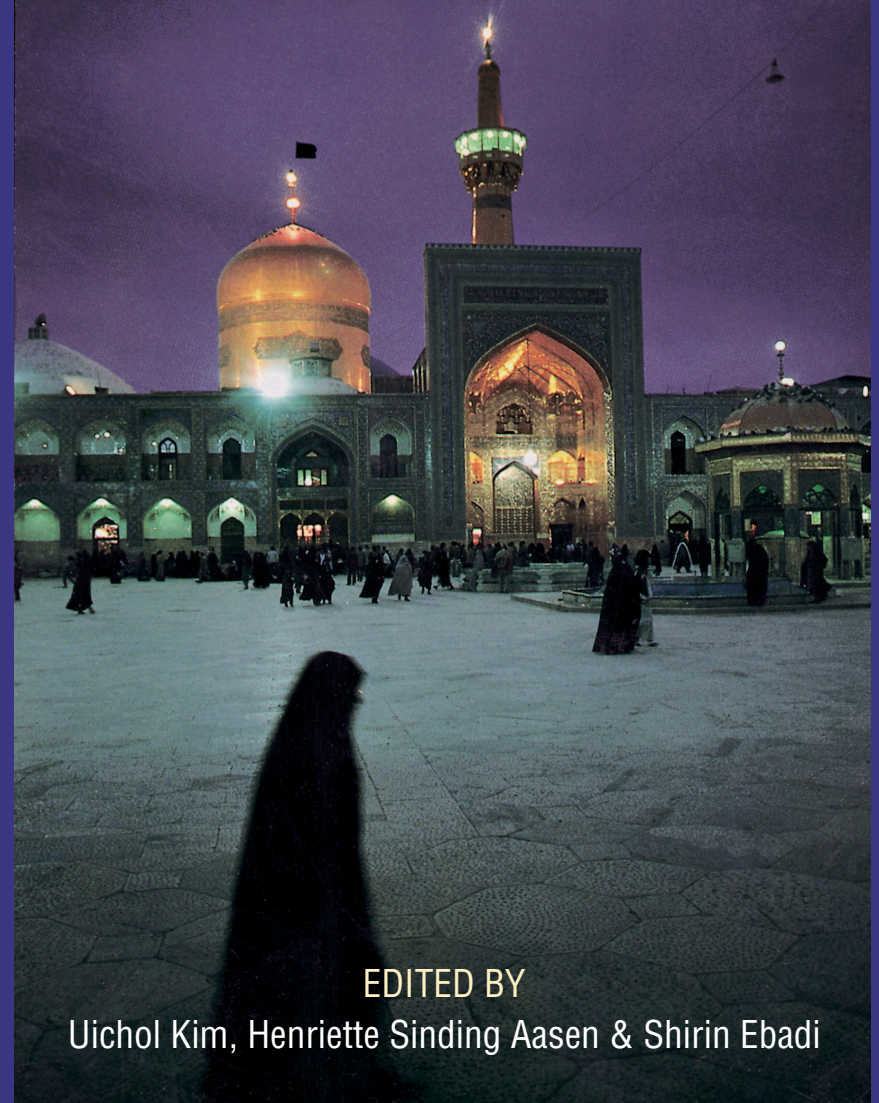


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## Democracy, human rights and Islam in modern Iran:

Psychological, social and cultural perspectives



EDITED BY

Uichol Kim, Henriette Sinding Aasen & Shirin Ebadi



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# Contents

## Opening Address: Human rights, Islam and democratic aspirations in Iran: A path towards understanding and realization

*Shirin Ebadi (Tehran University)*

The opening address presented by Shirin Ebadi at the Rafto Seminar and Award. It discusses the integrative approach of respecting human rights and achieving democracy in Iran.

## Chapter 1: The identity, struggle and aspirations of Iranian people

*Uichol Kim (Chung-Ang University, Korea), Henriette Sinding Aasen (University of Bergen, Norway) & Shirin Ebadi (Tehran University)*

This chapter provides an introduction to the volume, reviewing Iran's struggle to maintain its cultural identity and developing a democratic nation.

## Chapter 2: People and history of Iran

*Shirin Ebadi (Tehran University, Iran), Uichol Kim (Chung-Ang University, Korea) & Henriette Sinding Aasen (University of Bergen, Norway)*

This chapter reviews 2,500 years of Persian civilization and attempts to integrate various ethnic, religious, and cultural experiences.

## Chapter 3: Modern Iran: The making of the Islamic Republic

*Uichol Kim (Chung-Ang University, Korea)*  
This chapter overviews the struggle of Iranian people to create a democratic nation in the 20th century and events that led to the establishment of the Islamic Republic and a modern nation.

## Chapter 4: Islamic conception of justice, equality and social responsibility

*Shirin Ebadi (Tehran University)*

The author outlines the core values, beliefs and practice of traditional and modern Islam focusing on justice, equality and social responsibility.

## Chapter 5: Democracy, human rights, and the Iranian government

*Shirin Ebadi (Tehran University)*

This chapter reviews the structure of Iranian government, Constitution and democratic aspiration of Iranian people. Ebadi argues that the current government does not fully represent Islam and the Iranian people and their aspirations.

## Chapter 6: Family in Iran

*Shahla Ezazi (Allameh Tabatabai University, Iran)*

Ezazi reviews the modern Iranian family and argues that in spite of positive changes, the paternalistic system does not allow women to participate as equal partners in their homes, schools, and society.

## Chapter 7: 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 these laws are in violation of Islamic and international principle of justice, fairness and equality.

## 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 civilization 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.

## Appendix

[Subject Index](#)

[Author Index](#)

## About the volume

This book brings together leading scholars to provide an indepth 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 indepth 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 has been 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.



Shirin Ebadi

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