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| Nota di contenuto | Front matter -- Contents -- A Note on Transliteration -- Preface -- Chapter 1. Islamic Cultural Relativism in Human Rights Discourse -- Chapter 2. The Shiite Theocracy -- Chapter 3. The Right to Life -- Chapter 4. The Right to Freedom from Torture -- Chapter 5. The Right to Liberty and Security of Person and to Freedom from Arbitrary Arrest -- Chapter 6. The Right to a Fair Trial -- Chapter 7. The Right to Freedom of Conscience, Thought, and Religion -- Chapter 8. Renounce Your Conscience or Face Death -- Chapter 9. The Right to Freedom of Thought, Conscience, and Religion -- Chapter 10. Official Responses to the United Nations -- Chapter 11. Change of Tactics After Ayatollah Khomeini's Death -- Chapter 12. The Special Representative's Meetings with the Judiciary and Security Officials -- Chapter 13. The Right to Freedom of Opinion, Expression, and the Press -- Chapter 14. The Most Revealing Cases of Violations of the Right to Freedom of Expression and the Press -- Chapter 15. The Rights to Participate in the Political Life of the Country and to Peaceful Assembly and Association -- Chapter 16. The Rights of Women -- Chapter 17. UN Monitoring, 1984-2000 -- Conclusion -- Afterword -- Notes -- Selected Bibliography -- Index -- Acknowledgments |
| Sommario/riassunto | Selected by Choice magazine as an Outstanding Academic TitleAre the principles set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights truly |

universal? Or, as some have argued, are they derived exclusively from Western philosophic traditions and therefore irrelevant to many non-Western cultures? Should a state's claims to indigenous traditions, and not international covenants, determine the scope of rights granted to its citizens? In his strong defense of the Declaration, Reza Afshari contends that the moral vision embodied in this and other agreements is a proper response to the abuses of the modern state. Asserting that the most serious violations of human rights by state rulers are motivated by political and economic factors rather than the purported concern for cultural authenticity, Afshari examines one particular state that has claimed cultural exception to the universality of human rights, the Islamic Republic of Iran. In his revealing case study, Afshari investigates how Islamic culture and Iranian politics since the fall of the Shah have affected human rights policy in that state. He exposes the human rights violations committed by ruling clerics in Iran since the Revolution, showing that Iran has behaved remarkably like other authoritarian governments in its human rights abuses. For more than two decades, Iran has systematically jailed, tortured, and executed dissidents without due process of law and assassinated political opponents outside state borders. Furthermore, like other oppressive states, Iran has regularly denied and countered the charges made by United Nations human rights monitors, defending its acts as authentic cultural practices. Throughout his study, Afshari addresses Iran's claims of cultural relativism, a controversial thesis in the intense ongoing debate over the universality of human rights. In prison memoirs he uncovers the actual human rights abuses committed by the Islamic Republic and the sociopolitical conditions that cause or permit them. Finally, Afshari turns to little-read UN reports that reveal that the dynamics of power between UN human rights monitors and Iranian leaders have proven ineffective at enforcing human rights policy in Iran. Critically analyzing the state's responses, Afshari shows that the Islamic Republic, like other oppressive states, has regularly denied and countered the charges made by UN human rights monitors, and when denials were patently implausible, it defended its acts as authentic cultural practices. This defense is equally unconvincing, since it lacked domestic cultural consensus.
