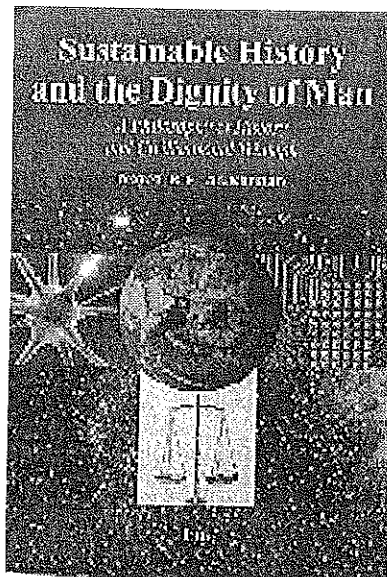


Sustainable History and the Dignity of Man

Sustainable History and the Dignity of Man (Transaction Publishers; \$39.95/softcover) by Dr. Nayef R.F. Al-Rodhan, is a new philosophy of history. This 472-page volume outlines how sustainable history is propelled by good governance, which balances the tension between the attributes of human nature - emotionality, amorality and egoisms - and human dignity needs, such as

reason, security, human rights, accountability, transparency, justice, opportunity, innovation and inclusiveness.

The author proposes minimum criteria for good governance that are sensitive to local cultures and histories but meet certain common global values to ensure maximum and sustainable moral and political cooperation. Using an ocean model of a single collective human civilization, Al-Rodhan argues that we should think in terms of a common human story that is comprised of multiple geo-cultural domains and sub-cultures with a history of mutual borrowing and synergies.



The author argues that, today, all geo-cultural domains must succeed if humanity as a whole is to triumph. This collective triumph will also depend on reason and a recognition that a great deal of knowledge is indeterminate and may be temporally, spatially and perhaps culturally constrained, as is outlined in his new theory of knowledge: "Neuro-rational Physicalism". Basically, what he is saying is that the sustainability of history is dependent on the attainment of good governance paradigms limiting the excesses of human nature and ensuring climate of happiness and productivity by the promotion of reason and dignity.

The objective of this book is the establishment of a new philosophy concerning sustainable history. He maintains that we need to develop a philosophy of history that considers human time as a means of understanding human nature and our associated needs. At the individual level, the exercise of reason is more likely to lead to a dignified life. Only then will we be able to decipher the kinds of institutions and arrangements required to ensure a sustainable history and a co-existence which helps us share basic values.

Dr. Al-Rodhan is Senior Scholar in Geostrategy and Director of the Programme on the Geopolitical Implications of Globalisation and Transnational Security at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, Geneva, Switzerland.