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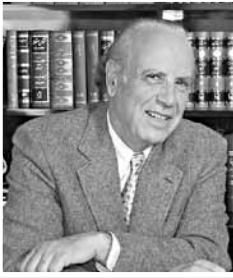
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IMPORTANT NOTICE

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Dear Readers:

Yet another year has passed and I am given another opportunity to wish all of you, along with my staff, the happiest of holidays. My wish, for you and the world is, for a new year filled with joy, happiness, peace, freedom and void of terrorism in any form. When I begin the final editorial of 2012, I hope these wishes have been granted.

I will continue to hope and pray that the end of 2012 finds Iran rising to its former level of glory. I will continue to hope and pray that the oppression, now in place, is replaced with freedom and equality. I will continue to pray that bloodshed and tears end. I will continue to hope and pray that 2012 is the year when Iran's present regime ends. I wish this with caution and hope that when this happens, Iran will have a true government that understands and respects its citizens and knows their past, present and future greatness. Until this becomes a reality, I will continue to wonder how long our children and grandchildren will endure the repercussions resulting from the mistakes of their grandparents.

Yesterday, I received an email. I cannot vouch for its veracity, but can tell you that it was written with great thought and logic. It goes like this: Khalkhali, the hanging judge, went to visit Hoveyda (former Prime Minister), in his prison cell a few days after Hoveyda was incarcerated. While there, he asked Hoveyda, how he was doing. Hoveyda responded "all is fine except that the cell is a bit too small." Khalkhali answered, "But these cells were built to your speculations and were built to hold the revolutionaries. Now they are your home." Hoveyda answered, "I know that and that is why I am telling you this. If you build new cells you should build them bigger for your future."

Again, whether this is true or false is not as important as the impact of its meaning. It raises serious questions on the fate of the dictators. Will the end of the leadership in Iran be the same as the dictators in Iraq? Do we wish the same events for Iran? Do we want a coup d'etat after coup d'etat for Iran and its citizens? Do we wish to see Iranian citizens fight citizens? Do we wish to see bullets and bombs flying across Iran killing, Iranians and destroying its history? Do we want to see Iran's present leaders hanging at the end of a rope, or like Gadhafi, be slaughtered by their enemies and then buried in an unmarked grave?

Is this the right thing to do? Is it fair for a dictator to chain in his people and make them so dependant on himself that when the time for separation and change comes they are

without any direction? This allows not for a real government to take over, but for a new one with its own agenda.

It is with great pride that we place the picture of the tomb and cylinder of Cyrus the Great on the cover of this issue. Cyrus the Great is considered to be the founder of the first governmental system which he used as his model to govern. In reading the words on the cylinder it is obvious that he promoted respect, equality, justice and fraternity. He also sheltered the homeless, refugees and prisoners of war. We picked this subject for the cover because of the present movement to destroy his works and Iran's history. The present regime, through statements, orders and writings is attempting to deny, ignore and change the facts of recorded historical events. They are insisting to record and rewrite the history of Iran from the beginning of Islam. This movement and the forces behind it are creating real fear and anxiety in cultural and historical circles in Iran and around the world. The fear is that with the pouring in of billions of petro-dollars this movement will take root and destroy the ancient culture and history of Iran.

I recently returned from a trip to Greece and Turkey. The Greeks' attachment to Christianity and religion was obvious. On every corner there is a place of worship. While they are proud of their religion, they are prouder of their history and culture, the legacy of Zeus, their philosophers and their contributions to humanity, math and science. Because of their unquestionable pride in their heritage, culture and history, Greece's greatness is known worldwide.

The visits to their historical sites came with history lectures. Throughout the tour they spoke with great pride about their churches and the miracles of Jesus, Mother Mary and Christianity. With the same pride they spoke of their history. Despite multiple invasions by the Romans, Persians, Arabs, Turks, Nazis and Italians, the Greeks rarely hold a grudge except when it comes to the Turks. Their animosity for the Turks, however, remains because of their deliberate destruction of their monuments and attempts to change Greek culture. The Greeks are most proud of the fact that despite the invasions and occupations, they have saved and remained true to their language, culture and the Christian Greek Orthodox religion.

After Greece, we visited Turkey. I was surprised to see ruins in Turkey. I was equally amazed to hear them talk about their invaders. To the Turks it was part of their history. They are now spending millions of dollars to restore these historical sites and their country. Though churches were

turned into mosques, the Turks kept the holy and religious center of the Greek Orthodox religion in Istanbul. Despite the Muslim Turks, who throughout history slaughtered over a million Armenians, the Turks believe today that they must keep an open mind and be tolerant of other religions. In spite of their attachment to Islam, the Turks do not make attempts to ignore Asia Minor and the Eastern Roman Empires. They acknowledge the Christian belief that Mother Mary lived the last years of her life in Turkey and have turned that area into an historical site.

While we were passing through Bosphores, a woman from New Zealand, explained how Herodotus, (the Greek historian who hated Persians, even though he spent most of his life in Persia), spoke about the military importance and stature of Dardanelles. "Persian King Darius I the Great, in an attempt to subdue the Scythian horseman north of Black sea, crossed over at the Bosphorus, and then marched up to the Danube. His army crossed the Bosphorus over an enormous bridge made by connecting Achaemenid boats. This bridge essentially, connected the farthest most geographic tip of Asia, to Europe, encompassing at least some 1000 meters of open water if not more. Years later, a similar boat bridge would be constructed by Xerxes I, in his invasion of Greece." (wikipedia)

Xerxes I, ordered the building of two bridges that passed over Bosphores. Using these bridges he was able to bring four hundred thousand soldiers onto Greek soil. For some reason the bridges were destroyed. Angered by this, Xerxes I ordered the execution of the engineers, who had designed and built the bridge and punished the water by having his soldiers hit it with their whips.

From these narrations it was clear to me the pride people from all over the world have for their country's history and culture. Regardless of its goodness, badness and ugliness, they struggle to keep it alive for the next generation. They know they cannot live in the past, but use its lessons to build their future.

My thoughts now turn to Iran. Unlike Turkey and Greece, whose course is to protect their history and culture, Iran's present government is trying to destroy and rewrite its history and culture. I am ashamed and saddened by these actions. Every Iranian, in Iran or abroad, should be. Is this movement necessary? Why would they want to erase from view everything that resembles historical Iran and Persia and replace it with erroneous labels and facts?

Iran, as a nation, must change its direction. It must find solutions to live and work with their neighbors, rather than place themselves and their people under sanctions and be hated by the world. If a solution is not found, I fear the media frenzy will lead to their destruction. Like Pasargard, the Tomb of Cyrus, which will soon be under water because of the rise in the water level, I fear this fate for Iran; not by water but by the inner destruction of Iran's rich culture and history. The treasures of Iran should not be auctioned off to another nation to be part of their museums. Under the display of these arti-

facts we should be able to read: on loan by the nation of Iran.

A totally Islamic Iran, characterized by anger, death, oppression, theft and corruption, has no future, or its future will follow the path of surrounding countries. Is an Iran that fails to recognize the greatness of its past that includes: Cyrus the Great, the Zoraste, Persepolis and on and on, worth saving? A country with those characteristics would be a country of falsehood and the exact opposite of its citizens' wishes.

We, the people of Iranian/Persian ethnicity should go forward and stop this movement with the same fortitude as the words on the inscription of the New York Post Office, supplied by William Mitchell Kendall from the architectural firm McKim, Mead & White, who designed the building:

"Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds."

According to Kendall the sentence appears in the works of Herodotus and describes the expedition of the Greeks against the Persians under Cyrus, about 500 B.C. The Persians operated a system of mounted postal couriers, and the sentence describes the fidelity with which their work was done.

Shahrokh Alavi

*The Persian Heritage staff
wishes all of you
a very Happy Holiday Season and
a Healthy, Peaceful and Prosperous
New Year!*



A RARE GEM

Thank you again for extending such distinguished courtesies.

Persian Heritage is a fantastic publication-its a rare gem that attracts the attention of generations of Iranians (between my grandmother, mother and I, there was always a showdown as to who got to read it first). If there is any contributions I can make to it, it would be my honor.

SB

YOUR EDITORIAL IN FALL ISSUE

I read, with great interest, your editorial in this issue, article referenced above. I must say that for the first time, I see you have dropped your guard and

have real emotion showing in this editorial. It was quite exemplary and by far this has been one of your best editorials ever. As for the contents of it, you don't have to worry about the people who either came over from or escaped from that Government and all of us, particularly myself, are in constant pain, not because of this poor child but because of our entire nation there.

Here Ahmadinejad who fills up a suitcase with money and takes it to Afghanistan and gives it to Karzaie, remember that?

Not to mention between 5 to 750 million which is totally wasted on Hezbollah, Hamas and Islam jihad.

This Government, if you can call it that, has left an indelible ugly mark on Iran's

beautiful history.

Persian culture was the greatest in the world and all you have to do is look at any volume of history and you will see, since this government took over, the country has gone down hill.

Regretfully, there are still people in this country who are sycophants of that Government and are working for them. How do you explain that?

*Very truly your,
David Yazdan*

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for your support of
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Three Iranians Among President's Award Winners



Dr. Ali Khademhosseini is a graduate of University of Toronto and MIT, and is currently Associate Professor at Harvard Medical School.



Dr. Yasamin Mostofi is a 1997 graduate of Sharif University of Technology in Electrical Engineering, currently Assistant Professor at the University on New Mexico.



Dr. Amir Salman Avestimehr is a 2003 graduate of Sharif University of Technology in Electrical Engineering, currently Assistant Professor at Cornell University.

The White House, Office of the Press Secretary For Immediate Release, September 26, 2011

President Obama Honours Outstanding Early-Career Scientists

President Obama today named 94 researchers as recipients of the Presidential Early Career Awards for Scientists and Engineers, the highest honor bestowed by the United States government on science and engineering professionals in the early stages of their independent research careers.

The Presidential early career awards embody the high priority the Obama Administration places on producing outstanding scientists and engineers to advance the Nation's goals, tackle grand challenges, and contribute to the American economy. Sixteen Federal departments and agencies join together annually to nominate the most meritorious scientists and engineers whose early accomplishments show the greatest promise for assuring America's preeminence in science and engineering and contributing to the awarding agencies' missions.

"It is inspiring to see the innovative work being done by these scientists and engineers as they ramp up their careers—careers that I know will be not only personally rewarding but also invaluable to the Nation," President Obama said. "That so many of them are also devoting time to mentoring and other forms of community service speaks volumes about their potential for leadership, not only as scientists but as model citizens."

The awards, established by President Clinton in 1996, are coordinated by the Office of Science and Technology Policy within the Executive Office of the President. Awardees are selected for their pursuit of innovative research at the frontiers of science and technology and their commitment to community service as demonstrated through scientific leadership, public education, or community outreach.

— Among this year's recipients in National Science Foundation are: Dr. Amir S. Avestimehr, Cornell University, Dr. Yasamin C. Mostofi, University of New Mexico, and Dr. Ali Khademhosseini, Harvard Medical School and Brigham and Women's Hospital.

PRESIDENT OBAMA NOMINATES

Cyrus Amir-Mokri

TO KEY ADMINISTRATIVE POST

SEPTEMBER 8, 2011, WASHINGTON, D.C.



The Public Affairs Alliance for Iranian Americans (PAAIA) would like to congratulate Cyrus Amir-Mokri on his nomination for Assistant Secretary for Financial Institutions, Department of the Treasury and Nominee for Member, Board of Directors of the National Consumer Cooperative Bank.

Most recently, Mr. Amir-Mokri was a senior legal and policy advisor to the Chairman of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. He participated in the legislative process that led to the passage of the Dodd-Frank Act and the subsequent implementation through rulemaking. He also served as the agency's deputy representative to the Financial Stability Oversight Council and as liaison for inter-agency affairs. Mr. Amir-Mokri's previous experience in government was to serve as law clerk to the Honorable Bruce M. Selya of the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit.

Before serving in government, Mr. Amir-Mokri was a part-

ner at the law firm of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher&Flom LLP, resident in its New York office. He concentrated in complex commercial litigation. He participated in many of the firm's high-profile litigation matters.

Mr. Amir-Mokri has devoted substantial time to community service and pro bono matters. He has represented inmates on death row, prisoners with civil rights claims and political asylum applicants. He has also been active in matters affecting the Iranian-American community. Mr. Amir-Mokri was one of the original trustees and board members of PAAIA. He was also a two-term director and supporter of the Iranian American Bar Association and a founding member and supporter of the Iranian American Political Action Committee.

Mr. Amir-Mokri received a J.D. from the University of Chicago Law School, a Ph.D. in History from the University of Chicago, and an A.B. in Biochemistry from Harvard College.

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IRANIAN CITY RANKED WORLD'S MOST POLLUTED

September 26, 2011
(www.ft.com)

Cities in Iran, India, Pakistan and the capital of Mongolia rank among the worst on the planet for air pollution, while those in the U.S. and Canada are among the best, according to the first global survey, released by the World Health Organization. The southwest Iranian city of Ahvaz has with the unfortunate distinction of having the highest measured level of airborne particles smaller than 10 micrometers. WHO released the list to highlight the need to reduce outdoor air pollution, which is estimated to cause 1.34m premature deaths each year? The global body said investments to lower pollution levels quickly pay off due to lower disease rates and, therefore, lower healthcare costs. WHO recommends an upper limit of 20 micrograms for PM10s, which can cause serious respiratory problems in humans? They are mostly sulfur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide from power plants, auto exhausts and industry. Ahvaz's annual average of PM10s was 372 micrograms per cubic meter. Cities in Pakistan and India, such as Quetta and Kanpur, as well as Botswana's capital Gaborone, also ranked high on the pollution scale.

DIGITIZATION PROJECT BRINGS ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN INSCRIPTIONS INTO 21ST CENTURY

Digital Images Provide Access to Rare Paper Squeezes



The Freer Gallery of Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives announces a new 3-D digital resource that will enable scholars and the public to learn more about the ancient Near East through a unique group of pressed-paper molds called squeezes. This resource provides unparalleled access to the archives' collection of squeezes from ancient Near Eastern archaeological sites.

The squeezes were created in the early 20th century by the German archaeologist Ernst Herzfeld (1879-1948), a prominent scholar on the ancient Near East, as a way to record intricate inscriptions on monuments and other stone buildings. They were formed by pressing layered, wet, moldable paper into an inscription and leaving it to dry, creating a 3-D mirror-image representation of the original. Created to serve as temporary reference materials, the squeezes have become vital to continued research for archaeological sites that are no longer accessible.

The squeezes contain Arabic script, Middle Persian and Cuneiform impressions from archaeological sites such as Pasargadae, Persepolis, Naqsh-e Rostam and Paikuli. The captured inscriptions were often carved on commissioned temples, civic buildings and statues to record battles won, titles acquired or the lineage of kings. Scholars have used the squeezes to chronicle the reigns of local rulers and discover the nature of otherwise unidentifiable structures. More recently, scholars have used microscopic traces of pigments retained from the original surface to provide a unique and exceptional journal of the color and decoration used at the time of the monument's creation.

"These digital images offer extraordinary access to inscriptions from the cradle of civilization," said Alex Nagel, assistant curator of ancient Near East art. "By making them available to scholars and enthusiasts worldwide, we're ensuring that new discoveries can come from these remarkable artifacts."

In 2010, the archives received a grant from the Smithsonian's Collections Care and Preservation Fund to aid in the preservation of the squeezes. The Archives, in collaboration with the Smithsonian's Museum Conservation Institute, created a digital version of each squeeze using a new imaging technique called Reflectance Transformation Imaging. RTI allows users to manipulate the image and enhance a squeeze's readability, while protecting the fragile original objects from further damage.

Music on Stage

Series by **Sussan Deyhim**

Stands for **Human Rights**



October 27th, the National Geographic presented in Washington D.C. the *Music on Stage Series* featuring Sussan Deyhim. The Persian artist tendered a memorable night. Regrettably, the program was not well advertised. Many in the Persian community regretted missing it.

The Iranian singer/composer electrifies admirers globally with music sodden in sacrament and anonymity. Her soundtracks tender a blend of artists, such as DJ Spooky and Bill Laswell. According to Bobby McFerrin "Her rich and complex vocals are warm, beautifully sung, and always surprising." The artist is also a follower of Rumi, and stands for human rights.

As you remember in the beginning of The History of Terrorism we indicated that a creation of Mojahedins during the invasion of the Russians to Afghanistan was perpetrated by western alliance primarily by the United States. At this time the help and assistance to the Mojahedins, which were the various groups, was done by both the CIA, MIA, which is a military intelligence agency and by MI6 as well as minor assistance by Saudi Arabia.

In fact, Saudi Arabia's help in this situation was not really minor, it was in the form of billions of dollars every year, but in addition, the creation of the drug lords including cocaine and heroin was also perpetrated by the CIA to create money for supplying arms and other means to the so called Mojahedins. The CIA through various roots supplied the shoulder firing missiles, which was eventually the deciding factor of the war. Some of these roots were through Pakistan and also direct delivery by the sorties of helicopters through the carriers both in the Arabian Sea and the Persian Gulf. Russian satellites were watching all these activities and on one occasion they realized where the Pakistani assistance was coming from and they bombed the border cities of Pakistan and Afghanistan. But they weren't aware of how the Iranian assistance was working.

The carrier in the Persian Gulf can take many Hercules helicopters, which were making sorties once or twice a week to the deserts in Iran within few miles off the coast of Afghanistan. This was done when the Russian satellite had gone over the Iran and Pakistan and they had a short time to deliver their ammunition in the desert of Toose and Tabas to be delivered by messengers to the border. However, the Russians eventually found out about this and in one of these occasions several migs from the border flew over and shot down the C-131 transport carrier of the United States plus the helicopters. This was sometime in April of 1980, which I remember Jimmy Carter went on television and clearly said, "our rescue mission had failed." I have already mentioned this rescue mission, which was phony and there was no way that Jimmy Carter was able to tell the truth, that the Russians were responsible for the killing our special forces plus 2% dozen helicopters.

One of these Mojahedin groups was under the Bin Ladens control. Another very important group was the Northern Alliance under the Chairmanship of Ahmad Shah Masood, his real name was Akhamaood Ashad Masood.

Eventually, after eight years the Russians, what was left of them, departed from Afghanistan but the United States and allies made the biggest mistake and left the region. By leaving the region, they left the well-trained warriors plus all kinds of ammunition in Afghanistan. The head of the Taliban was the one eyed Mullah Mohammad Omar, he had lost one of his eyes during the war he was quite brave and famous that after losing the eye he continued fighting. Needless to say the Taliban gradually dismantled the Central Government and took over Afghanistan. By itself, it was the beginning of the disaster.

Another war was going on at the same time, if you recall, between Iraq and Iran, which eventually came to a standstill again after almost eight years with millions of casualties. This was strictly the fault of Saddam Hussein, who used Khomeini's atrocities by dismantling the Persian Armed Forces to take advantage of it. During this period, practically all the Allied Forces were helping Saddam Hussein except for one country and that was Israel. Israel, in direct assistance with the United States, was helping Khomeini's armies. This is what led to the Iran-Contra Affair, which you are all aware of. The Allied assistance of Saddam Hussein created and uneven situation in the Middle East where Saddam, who was somewhat a megalomaniac got the idea that he could do anything and get away with it. This led to the invasion of Kuwait in 1990, which really was a lot more than that. Once he did that, President George Bush Sr. was reluctant to do anything about it until Margaret Thatcher called and insisted that we go there and push him out. Considering that the United States Foreign Policy is heavily directed by the British this was done by convincing Saudi Arabia to allow us to have our armed force bases in the soil, which was against their religious beliefs.

Saudis however, had another problem, at this time Osama Bin laden was quite established and strong and asked the Saudi Government to allow him to go a kick Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait but get rid of all the foreign soldiers out of the Holy sites in Saudi Arabia. This of course, did not work out because the Saudi Government is heavily protected by the United States and British and they indeed were threatened by Saddam's boldness to invade Kuwait and Saudi would be next. By denying Bin laden the opportunity to do this created such a friction that Bin laden was absolutely furious, which started the campaign both with against the Saudi Government and the United States. Eventually

Saudi Arabia disowned Bin laden and took his citizenship away. Considering that was Bin laden's father and the family of almost 20 plus sons and daughters who built most of the construction in Saudi Arabia. Herbert Bushes lackadaisical campaign in 1992 eventually led to the election of Bill Clinton. The infiltration of the United States by these terrorists AI-Qaeda, started to the extent that by 1993, using the various mosques particularly the one in Brooklyn, under the tootaloque of the blind Shiek Abdoul Rahman, planned the first attack to the World Trade Center. In 1993, 2 cars full of explosives were driven by several of these Islamic Terrorists, to the basement of the World Trade Center, they were hoping that one would topple over the other and destroy both buildings. This of course failed, because they underestimated the strength of those buildings but it still managed to cause a great deal of damage to the basement and kill 6 people. Eventually, these individuals were discovered and one by one were tried and jailed. their freedom in the However, again the United States together with this ally, if we could call him that, failed to see the threat. This was only the top of the iceberg, which was mushrooming and infiltrating everywhere.

It wasn't until 1996 during the Olympic time that 2 alleged

Heart of Darkness

"Osama Bin laden and the creation of Al-Qaeda"

part two

David Yazdan

*One kills a man, one is an assassin, one kills millions,
One is a conqueror, one kills everybody and one is
a God.*

Written by: Jean Rostand

terroristic incidences happened in the United States in Atlanta. One was the bomb, which was not really related to the terrorist organization and the second was TWA flight 800. This will be a subject of another article because it takes several pages. Some believe that it was in fact an act of terrorism or friendly fire that was covered with the conclusion that the plane was brought because of an overheated fuel tank.

Regardless Bill Clinton was re-elected and following his re-election there were several other big terrorist attacks to the United States, the bombing our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, which again was orchestrated by Bin Laden. President Clinton allegedly did nothing about this. It is further alleged that President Clinton was informed that Bin Laden's location was known but neglected to kill him because it was against the law.

He instead, drew several cruise missiles into a couple of the camps in Afghanistan where Bin Laden was staying in. However the mistake that they made was to alert ISI, which is the Pakistani Intelligence that these bombs were going to Afghanistan. By doing that Bin Laden was alerted and left the camp and as a result these cruise missiles did nothing. One of them wound up in a drug factory in Sudan.

As if that was not bad enough, in the year 2000 they attacked our big missile carrier, The Destroyer, in the Gulf Fort Yamen. At this time, John O'Neil who was the head of contra terrorism of the FBI station in New York was assigned to go there and find out what was going on however, the ambassador in Yamen, prevented him from interrogating all of these people. This was something else that I just don't understand. In any event, John O'Neil a distinguished gentleman eventually perished in 9/11 because he was in charge of security of the two buildings. We will get to that much later. Unbeknown to the rest of the alliance starting in 1996, Bin Laden through a very strict security created a small group to gradually penetrate the United States for the future attack. This will lead eventually to the 9/11 attacks. However, the failure of our intelligence organization and misinformation that they gave both to the congress and to the people on one hand, and also misinformation by the British, did not help the matter rather strengthened the terrorist organization.

The other problem with this entire discussion is the fact that we all think that Bin Laden is the only reason for all these problems. Well this is not so, we are not dealing with a one-man organization, it is a lot more complicated than that. It was the infectious disease namely the radical ideology, which was spread like the plaque throughout the World. The cause of these spreads was the fact that the Islamic Countries by and large are undereducated and poor by any kind of definition and a great majority of these individuals live in poverty. All of them are the fertile place for religious propaganda, which was done perfectly by Bin Laden and his group.

In 1998 the US State Department reports on terrorism outlined the advantages of state support for militant groups. With State sponsorship a group often receives a safe haven, money, weapons, training, logistic support or the use of diplomatic facilities. Some of the most violent terrorist attacks on record would not have been possible without such a sponsorship. Here the hardcore of Al-Qaeda outlined above plays the role of the state for these diverse organizations. By late 2001 Bin Laden and the men around him had access to huge resources, both symbolic and material, which they could use to project their power and influence internationally. They even had a country they could virtually call their own. They were thus able to offer everything a state could offer to a militant group by way of support. Al-Qaeda then became very similar as a ven-

ture of capitalist firm, sponsoring projects submitted by a variety of groups or individuals in hopes that they would be profitable, or viewed as commissioning editor, providing funds and expertise to enable the production of the ideas of someone else.

Indeed, this is not in Al-Qaeda mode of opperenda. It's the way of describing those elements within the broad movement of Islamic militancy that have some connection to Al-Qaeda's hardcore, however, varied and indistinct they may be.

It's a third element: The idea, the worldview, ideology of Al-Qaeda and those who subscribe to it.

Bin Laden does not have the power to issue orders that are instantly obeyed. He is not the commander in chief of an army. In fact, any military analogies, despite the Marshall sounding names assumed by many Islamic groups are unhelpful in understanding their nature. Bin Laden does not kidnap young men and brain wash them. Both the young men flock to Afghanistan to see military and terrorist training and the leaders of the more established groups who are happy to link themselves did so under their own volition. As is clear from the testimony of recruits in the training camps run by the Al-Qaeda's hardcore in Afghanistan between 1996 and 2001, nobody was kept against their will. In fact, most of these voluntaries overcame considerable obstacles to reach the camps. In the last years of the 20th century Bin Laden's associates spent much of their time selecting which of the myriads requests for assistance they would grant. They came from everywhere, from Morocco to Malaysia. These were not requests for money, refuge camps or new mosques; they were requests for help with bomb attacks, assassinations and murders on a horrific scale.

Indeed, what is it that makes the young individual, if I can use the term loosely, to go and explode himself for a cause? This is generally attributed erroneously to Al-Qaeda. It is not being a part of the group; it's a way of thinking about the world, a way of understanding events, of interpreting and behaving. It is a composite of common elements to all the various strands of modern Islamic radical thought and currently it is the most wide spread, and the fastest growing of the various element that makes up the phenomenon currently and largely called and labeled as Al-Qaeda. The so-called brain washing of these individuals is relatively easy, once they volunteer to devote their lives to a cause the rest is done by the experts within the group with two courses, classes and reviewing video. By the time the training is finished the individuals hatred reaches to the maxim level to the extent that he is not going to stop from doing anything to complete his mission.

During the autumn of 2001, Al-Qaeda sails, previously undetected were discovered in scores of countries. Tashkent suddenly branded the Islamic movement of Uzbekistan, a group who is linked to Bin Laden are tenuous as Al-Qaeda.

For Beijing it was Uighur Muslims who were designated as a local branch of Bin Laden's network, despite the fact, though some individuals in some of the various Muslim groups resisting the Chinese rule in the Southeast of China may have one time or another have spent time in Afghan training camps. In Thailand, local group chiefs tried to blame the series of bomb explosions in the South of the country to Al-Qaeda. In fact they were part of a long running turf battle between the police and military over the protection and smuggling racket in which local Islamic groups were sometimes involved. In Macedonia, in March 2002, 8 Pakistani men were shot dead by police. The minister of interior was swift to proclaim a victory of his fairly unsavory Government in the war against Bin Laden. The men were merely illegal economic migrants. Abu Sayaf group in Southern Philippines was formed by

a radical returning from the war in Afghanistan as an off shoot of a far older Islamic movement that has roots in the struggle of local Muslims against Christian dominance that resulted from colonial rule. Its links to Bin Laden are definite but tangential. Its complete unsubstantiated that its founder namely Abdurajak Janjalani died in 1998 and since then the group has largely abandon militant slum in favor of the crime particularly kidnapping of the wealthy westerner. This does not help the Philippine Government labeling the group Al-Qaeda in Washington deploying hundreds of troops to the country to help eradicate it. It is not quite clear that this guy Abu Sayaf really died. But in any event, it shows the misinformation, which is spread all over the place by western alliance.

The first reason is that it is convenient and reassuring. It is erroneously difficult to conceive of the nature of a modern radical Islamic militant with a simple idea that makes sense of the hugely varied and shifting phenomenon. Blaming Bin Laden implies that his removal will end any problem.

To be continued

CONCERN OVER ANTI-IRANIAN POSTER IN KATY TEXAS

The poster ‘Let’s Play Cowboys and Iranians,’ which depicts a lynching scene of an Iranian, has garnered criticism from across the country after one customer took a picture and posted it on Facebook.

The owner, John Nonmacher, has said that he hung the poster up thirty years ago around the time of the Iranian hostage crisis and that it is meant to be humorous. When asked by local reporters about an entire ethnicity being singled out in the poster, Nonmacher replied, “I don’t find it that way. I don’t find that discriminatory,” and indicated that he will not take down the poster.

While PAAIA and all Iranian Americans hold dear the value of freedom of expression, we are concerned that the poster, given its recent publicity, has the potential to encourage xenophobia and hatred towards Americans of Iranian descent. Such unintended consequences are not only damaging to the image of Iranian Americans but also insulting to those living in Iran who welcome democratic reform.

LEILA HELLER GALLERY.



ART PLATFORM - LOS ANGELES 2011

Leila Heller Gallery presented a group exhibition of contemporary Middle Eastern artists living in the Diaspora at the first edition of Art Platform - Los Angeles, a new contemporary and modern art fair at the LA Mart . the exhibit ran from October 1-3. The exhibition featured new and recent work by Shiva Ahmadi, Negar Ahkami, Ayad Alkadhi, Shoja Azari & Shahram Karimi, Reza Derakshani, Amir H. Fallah, Poursan Jinch, Soody Sharifi, and Firooz Zahedi. In addition to this group exhibition, there was a solo presentation of recent work by American artist Rachel Lee Hovnanian. A site-specific installation of Hovnanian’s Fun House Dressing Room, 2009, that was exhibited in the fair’s public space on the lower level.

By exhibiting these nine contemporary Middle Eastern artists together for the first time, the gallery generated a rich and dynamic dialogue that challenges conceptions of art coming from the region and its Diasporas. The work - including painting, sculpture, photography and video-painting - explores the tension between tradition and modernity that is very much at the heart of contemporary Middle Eastern art, as well as the life of the expatriate. While these artists have naturally inherited the artistic language of their culture, they have each successfully integrated it in ways that offer a unique expression and individual style. Ultimately, they have created work that can be experienced and appreciated by the contemporary art audience internationally.

Los Angeles is a city booming with Middle Eastern culture due to its large expatriate community, and has become an important influence on the production of contemporary Middle Eastern art today. Four of the artists being exhibition – Ayad Alkadhi, Amir H. Fallah, Poursan Jinch, and Firooz Zahedi – have strong ties to the city of Los Angeles, allowing for the opportunity to also explore the influence of Southern California on their working practices, as well as the similarities and differences therein.

Highlights from the exhibition included a new series of never-before exhibited mixed media paintings by the Iraqi born artist Ayad Alkadhi. Alkadhi’s Story Teller series employs traditional and stylized forms of Arabic calligraphy.

Another highlight was the photographs from Firooz Zahedi’s Elizabeth Taylor in Iran series, which was recently on view at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA). The photographs reveal an insider look at Zahedi’s experience of traveling with Elizabeth Taylor to Iran in 1976, and include images of the late icon posing in odalisque costume and fashionable chadors.

In addition to the group exhibition, Leila Heller Gallery featured a solo presentation by American artist Rachel Lee Hovnanian. Growing up in Texas informed Hovnanian’s abiding concern with our culture’s obsession with physical beauty. The pressure of conforming to conventional beauty, which is judged and valued by society, and the search for inner meaning, has provided a foundation and energy for her work. The city of Los Angeles and Hollywood have been sources of particular influence. For Art Platform – Los Angeles, Hovnanian will present recent paintings, sculpture, photography and installation that explore these themes. Exhibited outside of Leila Heller Gallery’s booth, and in the public space of Art Platform – Los Angeles, will be a site-specific installation of Hovnanian’s 2009 Fun House Dressing Room, a life size dressing room in which a distorting mirror magnifies the experience of trying on a bathing suit in public. ■

President Obama: Do Always What Is Right for Iran!

AKBAR MONTASER

From The noble 13th Century Persian Sufi Poet Rumi:

“I go to a synagogue, church, and mosque, and I see the same spirit and the same altar”.

Dear President Obama:

I watched this morning your elegant speech after the victory in 2008. It brought tears to my eyes.

(<http://my.barackobama.com/Three-Years-Ago>)

I am a Lincoln Republican who borrowed \$5 K to support you in 2008. Yet, I deem this \$5 K is my most vital gift to world peace.

You made me honored as a Persian American after President Bush uprooted me and millions.

The citizens of Iran are the admirers of America more than any nation. The reason is patent. Our history defined and granted America the Preamble that Franklin inscribed expressing the poetry of Saadi in Iran. Saadi is the language of the Force above.

The citizens of Iran never take harsh words from anyone. Most of those in power in Iran are ruffians.

Those who suffer from sanctions are Iranian citizens. My friends and I recognize that your words are addressed to the Rulers. Yet, your action, the doomed and distasteful words of Mr. Biden and Congress deeds only bring more agony to Persians. Please do not make it harder for Persians to bout the current Rule.

In the past, America has made many deals with Devils such as Stalin who murdered 20 million.

America is the staunch friend of Saudi Arabiya who is ruled by the King of Idiocy and Injustice!

America must make a “sweet” treaty with the Iranian

Rulers. If this is not achieved soon the Snakes will transform into Dragons.

Bombing Iran or its Rulers is certainly thoughtless and inhumane. You would lose all Persians in the world in a second and in a permanent fashion.

Please maintain the big picture in mind. You must not, under any context, yield to an alien power that America does not need, Israel. Congressmen and Senators, funded by mysterious sources, owe their life to the Israeli government/proxies to get reelected for being our opponents in America in the fight with Wall Street! Further, it is Israel that needs America, not America. It is the world that craves for America.

On August 8th, I inscribed, “You catch us when we fall, serve us medicine when we are under par, assist us readily and patiently, and aid wounded birds, allowing us to fly. You are a dreamer with goals, hallowed with a wealthy soul, ready to unwrap brains, prepared to unknot hearts, and forever more selfless than is essential...”

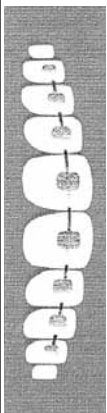
Mr. President:

You need no one on earth if you are tied to the Heavens above.

Please stay on the path of righteousness.

Importantly, do always what is right as counseled by King of the Kings, Dr. Martin Luther King.

Respectfully,
Akbar Montaser



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Gifts to Mankind from Persians, the Citizens of Iran and Beyond

AKBAR MONTASER

I deem my parents served their community well for you to arrive in my world. When you enter my home, you sit at the head of the dais. I am humbled by your ingress.

I fully understand the throbbing, attempting to graciously query my departure from Iran. Likewise, my blessed parents suffered when I made tracks to America. Before departure, my mother, having only a first grade education, counseled me as a philosopher. I have applied her teaching in my journey in life. She stated "Never put behind the mind your roots as human beings are akin to the trees. No tree plunks, unless it is tied to its starting place". She added "Do look at the two apple trees. The one with extra apples is more humble. Thus, never be "proud" and pump your chest as this act is the sign of ego, that is, the snake in your soul. Freeze the snake before it renovates to a dragon. It is an honor to be endowed with knowledge or suit as a

Professor, yet a "proud" scientist or Professor is a Devil in disguise".

Indeed, "proud" scientists and engineers in the service of madness created World War I and II. This statement reminds me of my father, speaking before my departure to Shiraz to attend Pahlavi University for pursuing my BS degree. He said "There are two types of Professors at universities. The first group stores the books in their heads. The second faction carts the books on their back, as donkeys. Do not turn into a donkey to serve the wealthy the and brutal rulers. Speak, but only for the deprived, and stand up for their rights otherwise you are not a human being."

I am bonded to my birth land, perhaps more than some who reside in Iran. A study of history reveals a teaching: Even the prophets sally forth at the time of distress as they were being stoned in the alleys. Yet, they returned as their numbers increased. Here I train students to become a human being in

this world, not just in America, before they graduate as scientists or engineers for the world, not just America. My guidance to my scholars is undemanding: It is effortless to befall as a scientist or engineer, yet it is challenging to turn into a decent human being.

I conclude my remarks by reciting the infinite wisdom of Rumi:

*No one knows what makes the soul wake,
Up so happy! May be a dawn breeze has
Unveiled the face of God.*

Your letter was the morning breeze for me although it arrived at dusk. You made me wealthy tonight. I hope and trust that you keep in touch and encourage your cohorts to humble me by their own mails and amity.

As One We Remain on Earth and the Heavens, my Yar.

Akbar Montaser

The Wisdom of Rumi Avers:

*"Mind does its tweaking curls crack.
Yet, no toil or doodle arises
Or lengthens lacking a Master"*

The presence of numerous Poets in our land defines this good sense or the wisdom of Rumi. It is fit to remind our **daughters and sons** about the wealth of our soil which has bred and continues to raise bounteous crops of Poet unparalleled in the globe. It is right to appreciate the bequests.

The Persian Poets represent gifts from the firmament to our land which has indeed submitted to the sky. Is the earth or any country lessened to give in to have peace? Certainly not! It is **an honor, not pride**, to grow on the Cyrus land, in exile or not, and cultivate the

world. It is proper to serve the mankind as humbles anywhere.

Humility has been the mark of Persians. Becoming ZERO is the symbol of our Character! On our ending day, our creation, machineries, buildings, arts, books, materials, and wealth are immaterial. Yet, it is Character that remains. For members of my team or yours only one principle is prized and considered an honor wherever we are and whatever we do. My function as a teacher is to build Character in the **sons and daughters** of mankind to craft a better world. Without Character, I would be training Thieves with Brightness that are prepared to vend their souls to Evils in creating wars after another feud under the mask of religion, which I consider the venom of human mind to lead him to slavery and graves.

Again, I started the day with my usual ritual, attempting to turn into ZERO. I admit, it is challenging, yet it is healthy to try. I know my strength is enhanced through this process allowing this man or anyone to reach the summit. This is what we must do at this University. It is a holy mission that is easily replicated anywhere, be it in our synagogue, churches, mosques, houses of worship, schools and universities and or the Holy City of Qum which is the largest center for Shi'a scholarship in the world. This is the only path to rectitude. This is the only corridor to prosperity in America, Iran, and the entire world (By the way, I prefer the name *Kum* for the city which is ancient name from fifth millennium before the incoming 7th century Arabs called it *Qom* during the invasion of Iran).■

Picking Zereshk

(DRIED FRUIT OF BERBERIS VULGARIS)

IN BIRJAND, IRAN



Photos by Amir Hosein Heidari, ISNA

Zereshk is the Kurdish and Persian name for the dried fruit of *Berberis vulgaris*, which are widely cultivated in Iran. Iran is the largest producer of Zereshk and saffron in the world. Zereshk and saffron are produced on the same land and the harvest is at the same time. The South Khorasan province in Iran is the main area of Zereshk and saffron production in the world.

Zereshk is widely used in cooking, imparting a tart flavor to chicken dishes. It is usually cooked with rice, called Zereshk polo, and provides a nice meal with chicken.

Birjand is the provincial capital of South Khorasan province in eastern Iran. The city of Birjand had a population of 157,848 people at the time of the last official census in 2006.

South Khorasan Province consists of 7 counties: Birjand, Ferdows, Qaen, Sarayan, Nehbandan, Darmian and Sarbisheh. South Khorasan is one of the three provinces that were created after the division of Khorasan in 2004.

Iran, World's Only Seedless Barberry Producer

About 500 kinds of seeded barberries grow in various parts of the world,

but the Islamic Republic is the only seedless barberry producer in the world, the head of agricultural research center in South Khorasan province said on Sunday, reported Mehr News Agency from Tehran.

Qolam-Reza Hadarbadhi said about 14,000 hectares of land is used for growing barberry in South Khorasan Province.

Most of the seedless barberry is produced in South Khorasan Province, he added.

The main agricultural products of South Khorasan province are Zereshk, saffron, pistachio, and almond, Hadarbadhi noted, adding that "seedless barberry is resistant to cold weather and grows well in mountain areas" with cold winters.

Best cultivated in areas over 1500 meters above sea level, seedless barberry (*Berberis vulgaris*) is the fruit of a shrub which is 3-6 meters high with reddish fragile branches that tend brown.

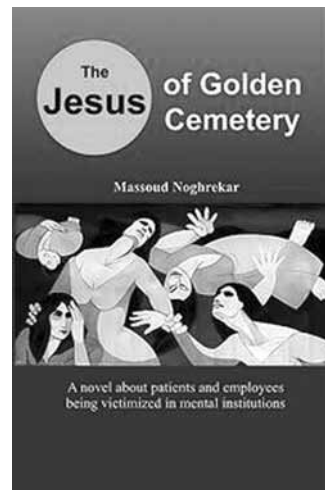
It has leathery leaves that are egg-shaped and little red fruits in the form of clusters hanging from the branches.

Barberries contain organic acids and phenol compounds that contain anthocyanin an

The Jesus of Golden Cemetery

Massoud Noghrekar

(Publish America 2010)



All too often our loved ones are born or develop mental conditions that result in their institutionalization. All too often these patients become lost in the system and their title turns from patient to victim. They are victims as a result of treatment, needed or experimental and the lack of quality of care. This book is the result of many hours of experience and research, the author has taken it upon himself to expose the alleged shortcomings in the psychiatric field. It is his hope that through the characters and their stories in this book there can be corrections and improvements to the problems faced in this field of medicine.

He does not take the path of whistle blowing. His thoughts and actions are more about empowering the care givers (healthcare professionals and family) with the weapons necessary to have the courage to take on the system that is so lacking. After reading the book one will certainly feel the violation that has occurred on these people, human beings. People who have been dealt a bad card, who in lieu of compassion are treated with less respect than any other human being.

THE ATTACK AGAINST THE HISTORY OF CYRUS THE GREAT (1979-2011)

Kaveh Farrokh

INTRODUCTION

Ever since 1979, the history of Cyrus the Great (576-529 BC) has been increasingly questioned. This has been occurring inside Iran since 1979 with the overthrow of the Pahlavi regime. In tandem with developments inside Iran, Western outlets in academia, the media and now increasingly in the internet have been working actively in re-writing the history of Cyrus the Great. The first section of this discussion concentrates on anti-Cyrus developments within Iran from 1979 to present with the second section discussing parallel anti-Cyrus developments in the West.

THE RELIGIOUS RIGHT AND THE IRANIAN LEFT (1979-2011)

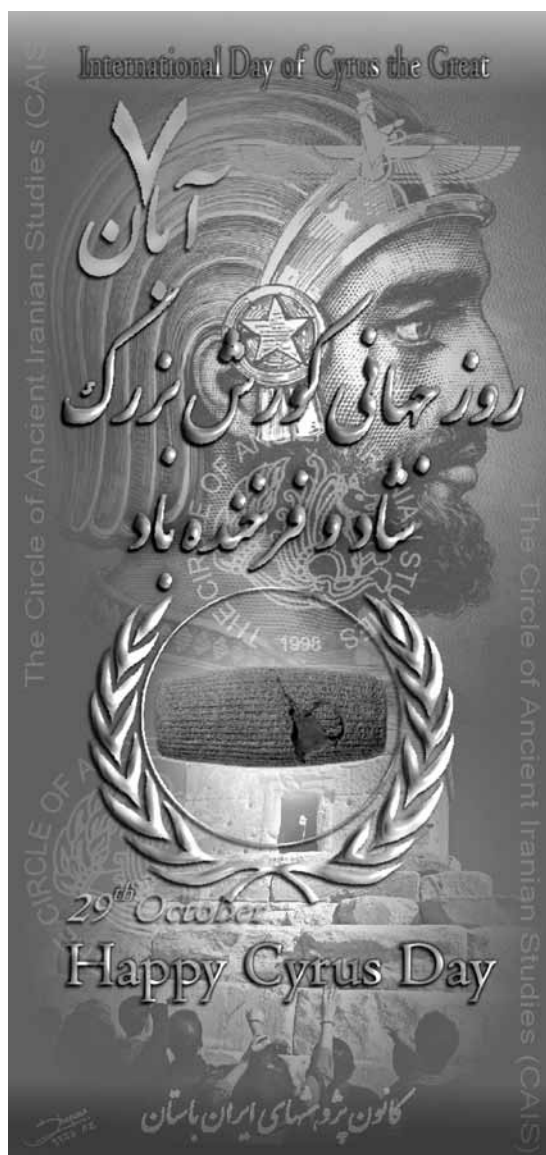
The phenomenon of anti-Cyrus historiography in Iran can be traced back to 1979. While most analysts often attribute this to the extreme religious right, this phenomenon is also attributable to the Iranian left and Tudeh movements. Many of the members of the extreme religious right originate from pan-Islamic Muslim Brotherhood movement (known as the *Ikhwan al Moslemeen*), and today many are in control of Iran's political machinery, educational system and media outlets. However it is important to note that leftist elements have often been intertwined among the religious right. Nevertheless, the process is not as simply as described, as many splinter groups broke off from the mainstream political processes in 1979-1980 are also dissidents, most notably the Marxist-Islamist MEK (or Mujaheddin Khalq movement).

What is perhaps most remarkable is how elements within Iran's official political establishment has been working to re-write, distort and even erase the history of Cyrus the Great. To understand the mind-

set one is obliged to briefly examine the Persophobic underpinnings of the *Ikhwan al Moslemeens* (Muslim Brotherhood) movement which generally are traced to the 19th century. As noted by Allen, Ibn Taymiyya and many others who followed the Hanbali code of Sunnism viewed the Persian influence on Islamic civilization as "...an offense to God". (Allen, 2006, p.44). Imperial Britain was keen to seek and to promote those "Muslims" who disliked the legacy of Iran in Islam and Islamic civilization. As noted by Dreyfuss and

LeMarc, it was from 1809 when the British colonial offices in India began to selectively promote those Muslim orders that "...demanded that all Muslims safeguard themselves from the penetration of Persian traditions ..." (Dreyfuss & LeMarc, 1980, p.119). British efforts certainly achieved success a century later when in 1910 Ibn Saud told William Shakespear (British political agent in Arabia at the time) that "*We Wahhabis hate the Turks only less than we hate the Persians...*" (Allen, 2006, p.245).

Pan-Muslim ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood variety was introduced into Iran from 1979 following the overthrow of the Pahlavi regime. From the outset, hostility against ancient Persia and its founder, Cyrus the Great, was expressed at the highest levels by the political leadership. The late Ayatollah Sadegh Khalkhali (1926-2003) who unsuccessfully attempted to bulldoze Persepolis in 1979 made a speech at the site declaring that Cyrus was a "... tyrant, a liar..." (Molavi, 2005, pp.14) and that all history pertaining to Cyrus the Great was all simply invented by the late Shah. Mr. Ali Larejani (who has served as the Chairman of the Iranian parliament), stated the following: in a speech in Tehran's prestigious Sharif University, May



2003: “*Sadly, much lies are told today of Iranians before Islam, the extent of their culture and civilization...Before Islam Iranians were an illiterate, uncivilized and barbaric people...*” Dr. Sadegh Zibakalam (political science professor in Iran) declared on June 14, 2011 in Qazvin University that “*I would not give/exchange a single hair...for hundreds of Cyrus’, Darius’, Xerxes’, Iran’s past [history]... and Persepolis!*”

It is often challenging to clearly distinguish between members of the Iranian left who now serve with the current establishment versus government and education members with wholly pan-Islamic backgrounds. This is mainly due to the striking similarity of their views against ancient Iran. Dr. Parviz Rajabi, one of Iran’s key academics for example, is on record for having insulted Iran’s ancient Zoroastrian community, criticized Iranians for having protested against the Persophobic movie 300 and Spiegel Magazine’s assault against Cyrus the Great (discussed further below). Dr. Rajabi’s father was a member of the Pishvari’s Ferqeh Democrrat pan-Turkist separatist movement, with Parviz Rajabi having himself spent years living in former Communist East Germany in the 1970s.

REVISION OF THE HISTORY AGAINST CYRUS THE WEST (1979-2011)

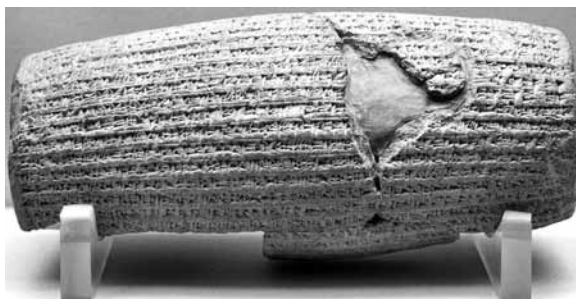
The history of Cyrus the Great is now being revised by a number of Western academic, media, and on-line venues. The main thesis for this revision is based on the notion that this history of Cyrus is simply based on propaganda of Iran’s former Pahlavi regime (1925-1979). This Western view is almost exactly identical with that already seen in the Iranian left and Iran’s extreme religious right. As in Iran, the effort to undermine the history of Cyrus the Great began in the late 1970s. The first Western academic to claim that the history of Cyrus was false and based on propaganda was Root (1979, p.311). Shortly later, Bert Van der Spek went much further by claiming that *Cyrus* introduced no human rights policies and instead engaged in plunder, murder of civilians, and the destruction of temples (1982, p.281-282). Amelie Kuhrt set the standard of anti-Cyrus historiography by claiming that Persian under Cyrus was as brutal and despotic as it was under the Assyrians and that the history it was the Jews who promoted the “...*blatant propaganda*...” of Cyrus’ humanistic benevolence towards conquered nations (1983, p. 94-95). Kuhrt’s claim of an alleged Jewish conspiracy to promote Cyrus is surprisingly parallel to the ideas of former Tudeh (Iranian Communist) member and current Iranian conspiracy theorist Nasser Pourpirar who also claims that the history of Cyrus (and indeed all of pre-Islamic Persia) is based on Jewish propaganda. Kuhrt’s ideas with respect to Cyrus the Great are now in the Western academic mainstream. Smith-Christopher (2002, p.36-

37) and Sherwin for example, dismiss the historicity of Cyrus’ constructive policies as “...*pre-conquest Persian propaganda*” (Sherwin, 2007, p.122).

A key internet venue for the promotion of anti-Cyrus philosophy on behalf of Western-based academia at present is Dutch archivist Jona Lendering who hosts the Livius.org website. Lendering’s Livius.org link on the Cyrus Cylinder, which rejects Cyrus the Great as an enlightened ruler of ancient times, cites the human rights history of Cyrus as “*imperial propaganda of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi...*” Note that the Livius.org article is signed by a number of prominent scholars including Bert van der Spek (Vrije University, Amsterdam), and Matt Stolper (University of Chicago and the Persepolis Fortification Archive project). Lendering’s blog posting of his book review of May 2008 also attacked Farrokh’s view the human rights legacy of Cyrus the Great – this was first promoted by Matt Stolper’s Persepolis Fortification Archive website in May 2008, followed five months later in September 2008 by the University of Pennsylvania’s Bryn Mawr site which re-printed Lendering’s blog that the history of Cyrus is derived from “*the government of Mohammad Reza Shah*”.

Following the promotion of these views in 2008, Germany’s Spiegel Magazine published an article on July 15th 2008 by Matthias Schulz entitled “*Falling for Ancient Propaganda: UN Treasure Honours Persian Despot*”. Schulz labeled Cyrus as “...*a Persian despot...upstart king...no humanist...no evidence of moral reforms or humane commandments...*”. Just a few days later on July 21st 2008 England’s Harry de Quetteville published an article in the Daily Telegraph entitled “*Cyrus cylinder’s ancient bill of rights ‘is just propaganda’: A 2500 year old Persian treasure dubbed the world’s ‘first bill of human rights’ has been branded a piece of shameless ‘propaganda’ by German historians*”. The term “*German historians*” by Spiegel magazine is highly significant as it parallels statements made in June 2011 by Rexa Ravazadeh (an Iranian government official). According to Ravazadeh “...*Zionists... made Cyrus our king simply because he liberated some Jews...this has been proven scientifically and recently verified from Germany ...*”. Recall the parallels between Ravazadeh’s statements, the Spiegel magazine and Amelie Kuhrt. All agree that the history of Cyrus’ benevolence is based on ancient Jewish propaganda. The shared views against Cyrus and his human rights legacy, has led to close cooperation between academics and writers in the West and members of Iran’s

religious right and the Iranian left. Dr. John Curtis and Dr. Nigel Tallis of the British Museum for example both received prizes from President Ahmadinejad in Tehran on February 8, 2009. Note that Dr. Irving Finkel of the British Museum is cited as a supporter/reference for Lendering’s on-line article, which claims that Cyrus the Great’s



pioneering works in Human Rights is “*Shah propaganda*”. Lendering who has an office in Iran, has himself admitted that he takes people on tours of Iran’s historical sites. In addition to his activities in the West and Iran, Jona Lendering leads a massive Wikipedia campaign against Cyrus the Great on behalf of academics such as Kuhrt and Van der Spek. Lendering who is on record for making racist comments against Iranian art, also utilizes Wikipedia administrators to launch defamatory attacks against Iranian historians who disagree with anti-Cyrus theories. These actions may partly explain why Lendering has been the target of Human Rights petition since December 2008.

Lendering and anti-Cyrus Western academics are supported by the current Iranian establishment. Parviz Rajabi for example has attempted to translate Lendering’s anti- Cyrus articles into Persian. Anti-Cyrus historiography has even been promoted within Iranian Studies circles in the West (recall references to Kuhrt, Root, etc.).

At present all views and writings that portray Cyrus in a favorable light are apparently discriminated against in certain academic venues. The September 2009 conference at St. Andrews University for example did not host academics with views about Cyrus that differ from those of Kuhrt, etc). One example is the conference hosted by the University of St. Andrews in Scotland on 10-13 September 2009 entitled “*Conference: Historiography & Iran in Comparative Perspective*”. At this conference, Tel Aviv University’s Menachem Merhavy presented a paper entitled ‘*From “The Great Civilization” to “False Cyrus” – Legacy of ancient Iran as reflected in Pahlavi discourse*’. However there were no presenters that exclusively highlighted the positive role of Cyrus with respect to Biblical, Babylonian, and Greek sources. Another example is Daniel Potts who wrote in “*Birth of the Persian Empire*” that Cyrus the great was not Persian (2005, pp. 7-28). Note that Potts had attempted to re-define the Persian Gulf as “*Arab Gulf*” in the early 1990s but was officially forced to admit he was historically wrong; given this background, it is interesting that Potts was allowed to expostulate his new theories in a major publication about Iran. Will he also admit in later years that his theory of Cyrus not being Persian is wrong? As noted previously, the Wikipedia (under Jona Lendering’s leadership) already censors and manipulates any information that attest to the historicity of Cyrus the Great’s works with respect to human rights.

CONCLUSION: WHY SUCH EFFORTS TO RE-WRITE HISTORY?

What has been taking place with respect to Cyrus the Great is significant as the latter is one of the key founders of ancient Iran. It is remarkable how closely akin are the views of Western academics and writers with those of Iran’s religious right (those rooted in the Islamic Brotherhood) and the Iranian left. What is clear is that anti-Cyrus activists in Iran and the West share one goal: to re-write the history of Cyrus the Great, especially with respect to his humanistic policies. While the role of Iranian activists are politically

and ideologically motivated the motives of Western academics remains unclear if not complex. It is truly remarkable how the academics mentioned in this article have ignored archaeological data and dismiss Hebrew and Greek references as unreliable.

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The Historical Origin of the Legend of the “Three Headed Dragon”

N. M. TEJARATCHI



In Persian ancient history, there is a chapter about Zahhak, a ruthless and cruel king who ruled over 2,500 years ago. The name Zahhak is actually the Arabized version of the Persian word Azidhak meaning “dragon”. Zahhak ruled for a long time with the utmost cruelty causing a lot of hardship for and murdering of innocent people. The legend says that he had grown two snake-heads, one on each shoulder. It seems that he installed figures of two snakes on his costume, in order to further intimidate his enemies and opponents, and giving the appearance of a three-headed monster. In Shahnameh, the epic poem history book by Ferdowsi, it is written that this king’s actual name was Bivarasb, and that Azidhak was a title given to him due to his appearance and dragon personality.

There was finally a public uprising, led by a blacksmith named Kaveh, who finally killed this monstrous king. The blacksmith’s leather apron became the national Persian banner, carried by the Persian army for over a thousand years - till the Arab’s infamous conquest of Persia in seventeenth century AD.

According to the Greeks, mainly by Herodotus, many references have been made to Astyages (the Greek version of Azidhak, meaning dragon) describing the cruelty with which this king ruled. His actual name was Ishto-Vigo and Astyages was a title by which he came to be known. He was finally brought down and killed by a public uprising. This event took place before Cyrus the Great came to power, over 2,500 years ago.

Therefore, the Persian and the Greek accounts have described, independently of each other, the same historical event. On the other hand, in European folk writings there is the story of “The Three Headed Dragon,” which has appeared in different languages. It usually depicts a medieval picture of a certain national hero defeating and killing a three-headed dragon, which was threatening the public. While the three-headed Astyages (Azidhak) is a historical fact, it may well have been the origin of the folk story of the three-headed dragon!

Invasion of Authors And Books!

Mahrokh Pourzynal

In my dream, I heard myself so loud, repeating the statement of President Obama: “We are in the era of coming out of the closet!” “Who? Who? Or what is coming out of the closet?” I said the voices of military personal saying. “We are, We are coming out of the closet”.

How come? The military people consist of millions and millions of members. Are all coming out of a small closet?”

I screamed in the dark. “There is nothing to fear, but the fear itself. You can say anything you wish, speak out be brave,” I heard out of darkness. Military and closet? I don’t understand!”

Of course you don’t aren’t you Iranian, aren’t you Moslem?”

I don’t know who I am or what I am, Iranian, American or a citizen of earth. Consider me anything you want, but Moslem, Jew, and other religions ... not at all. “I don’t speak to the middle man to reach God!”

“Can you hear me? I am buried under millions and millions of books by new, amateur and immature authors of our time. I am also an author but not like them. I am different, even embarrassed to claim to be an author holding seven books of poetry, a hundred of short stories, novels, articles and so forth. I have not been an author from birth. I was trained and went to a university to learn how to write. I read hundreds of books in the fields of art and literature in the hope of being a good writer. Today every one wakes up as a writer, from the president to a maid, by writing their memoirs or life stories. Then there was a deep silence. I struggled aimlessly under millions of books which were piling upon me. I felt breathless.”

“What’s happening to the word? Is the end here? “I screamed loudly and then hid like a turtle inside of its shell. “Shut your trap and get lost. Shut your big mouth. Who are you? Where did you come from? How dare you criticize us, demand or order us what to do? Get out of here before we cut your tongue out”.

In fear, I kept my mouth shut for a while. In my dream, I tried to shape my thoughts. Was I carried away from the world of reality? Or, am I imagining the reality in my dream?” I question myself in the dream. In my dream, I felt, I knew that I was dreaming! However, writing a beautiful story in the style of old time writers is Gone With The Wind.”

Today, the art of writing has become a professional way of money making. Even my own voice I was loudly repeating” Money Making, Money Making.” These words echoed in my dream. I heard the cheers of the military again saying “We are in the era of coming out of the closet, we do what we want to do. We could have sex with anyone, man, woman and animal. This is none of your business. We are free as a bird. No one can stop us. Who are you to write or criticize our way of living when, the President himself opens up our closet!” In response I wished to say it has been said that if you want to destroy a nation, destroy their moral principle!” But, I bite my tongue. In the darkness of my dream, suddenly, the fear of invasion of those authors shattered my thoughts and I awakened.

The horrified nightmare opened the eyes of my mind and brought me into reality. I noticed an open book over my pillow! ■

On December 16, 2010, Dr Michael Deeb from University of Michigan, replaced my extremely tight aortic valve with a 27 mm unstented porcine (pig) valve. I was having some shortness of breath and a bit of chest pressure with high intensity exercises. I am glad I did not wait for this elective procedure to become an emergent one. My coronary arteries were normal which I owe to a lifetime of regular exercise, which I owe to the discovery of my aortic valve disease, which brings me to the beginning of my story.

Almost exactly 50 years ago, I was an intern at the University of Illinois Hospitals in Chicago. From early on in the year, I found a mentor in the form of Dr Karim Minhas, a Pakistani pediatric cardiologist. He was my role model in 2 different areas: his extreme skill in physical diagnosis and his Socratic memorable teaching style. I decided to go into pediatric cardiology before deciding on Pediatrics largely to emulate Dr Minhas. Additionally, he had such a debonair personal style that demanded focused attention at all times. I'll never forget one night when I had to call him in for an emergency and he shows up in black tie, tails and top hat, no less, on his way to some formal event.

He was full of tips and short cuts one of which was that a combination of bluish discoloration (cyanosis) and tachycardia suggested Ebsteins Anomaly, a very rare congenital cardiac defect. Shortly after this, I was taking call in the ER, when word came that a VIP private plane was making an emergency landing to bring in a sick patient. I walked out to the door to get some history and there was this extremely chic mom rushing in holding her teenage daughter's hand guiding her stretcher in. She was clearly in no mood to talk to a lowly intern and was not too happy to be derailed from her intended destination in Stanford University Hospital. As we were walking in, I noticed that her neck veins were jumping and she was obviously cyanotic. So I just piped in "Ma'am, have you heard the term Ebstein's Anomaly?" She stopped dead in her tracks all haughtiness wiped off her face and simply gaped at me. "How on earth did you know?" she gasped, "We have been going from doctor to doctor for years all saying it was 'nerves' until a catheterization last week made the diagnosis and you take one look and the first thing you come up with is the diagnosis?" I mumbled something about "typical findings" and neglected to say that this was my very first case. I got many Christmas cards from that family.

He took me under his wing and was constantly paging me to see this patient or that, attend his rounds and even present his cases at the main cardiac surgery conference. And this from a lowly intern!

One day during rounds we came upon a new patient.

As was his habit, he asked all present to examine the patient starting with the junior-most attendees. As was also his habit, he asked me to summarize the findings after every one was done. Except that I was in turmoil because I had not been able to hear ANYTHING no matter how hard I tried. I mumbled a few words and surreptitiously triggered my pager (you could do that in those days and had proved quite handy on various occasions) and snuck away.

Back in my room while I was dejectedly playing with my stethoscope, I discovered that some coworker bastard had threaded pipe cleaners into stems of the scope blocking them completely! I was too happy about this discovery to find blame with anybody. After pulling the cleaners out, I looked around for the nearest heart, my own. You can guess the rest: sure enough I discovered an aortic insufficiency murmur. For a while I thought it was from rheumatic fever, given my family history. But over the years as the insufficiency became stenosis and there appeared no sign of mitral disease, rheumatic heart disease was ruled out.

I go into some detail about this not only because of the drama of the moment, but more importantly, because of the existential pivotal impact it had on my life. Until then, I thought myself too busy to think about healthier life style habits especially exercise. I felt immune. And in any case, who had the time? But lifestyle changes I did make. In fact, shortly after the discovery of that leaky valve, I went on my first ski trip (outside Iran, that is) and used it as an excuse to keep in shape all year long. I lost 15 pounds after my first mountain ski trip.

Fast forward, through years of jogging, swimming, bike-riding, tennis, aerobics, Yoga, not to mention six

months of nonstop skiing in Europe, I finally began, starting about 6 months ago, to experience some shortness of breath and chest pressure feeling but only with vigorous exercise. My echocardiograms started to show increasing pressure gradient across the aortic valve. Still my stress tests were negative; my Holter monitor did not show any abnormal rhythms and my CT Angiogram showed normal coronary arteries.

My cardiologist at Beaumont Hospital and later my cardiac surgeon at U of M both said there was no urgency but it was better to do it now on an elective basis rather than in two years as an emergency. Two other factors persuaded me to go ahead. One was the fact that I did not want to slow down my exercise program. The other was the well-known complication of aortic stenosis, namely sudden death. I'll never forget my first encounter with this devastating outcome. It was shortly after I had arrived in Shiraz in the late 60's and soon after starting a cardiac catheterization laboratory that I admitted a 12 year old boy for a newly diagnosed aortic stenosis. The



Me and My Valve An Affair of the Heart

Bahman Joorabchi

evening before the catheter procedure I went to the nurse's station to get his chart and to talk to him and his parents about it. As I was sitting at the desk, the boy himself walked over and stood expectantly on the other side. I waved at him and finished the page I was reading. When I looked up, he had disappeared. A bit annoyed, I stood up only to discover him quietly crumpled to the ground quite dead. This was virtually his first symptom. Needless to say, he did not respond to resuscitation.

If I needed further persuasion, it was Dr Ali Armin's vivid description of how pathologic specimens of calcified aortic valves such as mine would crumple to dust at the slightest finger pressure.

The next thing to decide was the type of valve to be used. Mechanical valves were out of the question. They do last long but they require life-long anticoagulation and make a clicking noise that could be very bothersome to sensitive types such as me. The other types of valves are tissue valves made either from a pig valve (porcine) or shaped from a cow's cardiac covering (Bovine pericardium). Porcine valves are actual valve tissue cut out of the heart and come in two varieties: Stented ones have a rigid supporting ring which is sown onto the corresponding valve ring of the heart. The advantage of this valve is the possibility of using minimally invasive method of valve replacement that requires only a 5 cm incision between the ribs to the right of the sternum without cutting the sternum itself. This supposedly has a shorter hospital course and is less painful, although there is not complete agreement on that.

The other porcine valve is the unstented valve. This requires two layers of suturing, is more difficult to align and needs a regular sternotomy and standard cardio-pulmonary bypass. The big advantage is that unlike the stented valve, there is no initial obstruction or gradient across the valve and is therefore more suitable for patients with a more active life-style. Dr. Deeb recommended this approach and I readily agreed.

Regardless of the type, none of the tissue valves requires anti-rejection medication. The harvested tissues are treated in formaldehyde and other stuff denaturing their proteins or any other reactive material rendering them non- antigenic. However, I would need to take prophylactic antibiotics before dental work or other procedures.

On the 15th of December, we checked into U of M's hotel, the Med Inn, which is conveniently attached to the Cardiovascular Center and reported in bright and early next morning. I'll spare you the details of almost total body shaving and 2-3 attempts at starting Ivy's (I am not an easy case) and will fast forward 12 hours.

I came fully awake at 6 PM. I had been in the OR for 6 hours. The very first thing I did was to crane my neck to check my cardiac rhythm on the awkwardly placed monitor. One third of patients placed on heart-lung machines wake up with atrial fibrillation, a chaotic rhythm that requires treatment and prolongs hospitalization by a day or two. Nice regular rhythm.

Of all the tubes and catheters sticking into and out of me, the first one to come out was the endotracheal tube. When I awoke I was not attached to a respirator so it was time. The

respiratory therapist made it sound simple. All I had to do was to blow out all the air, take a deep breath and hold it. She would do the rest. What she did not tell me was that as soon as I attempted to take a deep breath she was going to suffocate me. No kidding. What she did at my most vulnerable moment when I tried to take some air into the lungs that I had just emptied was simply block the tube with her finger! I can tell you that was the most frightening experience I have ever had. I now know exactly how a drowning person feels. Fortunately, she took pity on me and let me breathe before I passed out.

Next morning I was surprisingly hungry and ate my "liquid" breakfast with gusto. Next 2-3 meals, however, found me with very little appetite. I thought I would end up losing a bit of weight. What a surprise it was to find myself weighing 16 pounds over my preop weight! A bit of fluid retention, I was told.

This brought up the next major problem, the urinary catheter. Now I had had total prostatectomy exactly 10 years previously. I had been discharged home with a catheter in place for about ten days. I had pulled it out myself essentially painlessly and had had a satisfyingly powerful stream immediately. I was therefore relaxed and totally unprepared for the excruciatingly burning exit trip that the little catheter took so long to complete. And that was not all. Despite all that extra fluid on board, I could do no more than a few hellish drips and drops and had to be recatheterized. Fortunately, this did not last long and I made a good start in losing my ungainly girth.

My next ordeal was to get up off the bed, sit on a recliner, get up and walk down the hall and get back onto the bed, all without using my arms or pulling or pushing in any way. On top of that, I had to trundle after me an IV pole to which was attached not only my IV's, but also my monitor cables, and the two chest tubes. These last continued to drain small amounts of blood-tinged fluid in normal amounts, which brings up my life experiences with chest tubes.

As a pediatric resident working in NICU's, I had placed many chest tubes into tiny premature baby chests. My first real world experience with chest tubes occurred in August of 1975 on top of the ski slopes of Portillo, Chile. I was standing by the racecourse watching racers whizzing by when some stupid course attendant sauntered across the course for no apparent reason. This was a downhill race and the racer who was whooshing down had no chance of avoiding the jaywalker. The two crashed into each other right in front of me. Nothing happened to the stupid one but the racer was splayed out alarmingly motionless.

I skied over and one glance told me the racer was in a bad shape. His breathing was labored and his neck had already started to swell from the air escaping his punctured lung. His color was already turning blue. Looking around, I did not see anyone who seemed to know what to do other than dazedly look about hoping for SOMEBODY to do something. I had to step in. I asked for a stretcher and just then Ski Patrol showed up and we quickly skied down to a tiny first aid hut. I knew I had to put in a chest tube immediately but the right equipment was not available. There were IV

equipment so I grabbed an IV tubing cut a couple of holes near one end made a stab wound in front of the chest and pushed the tubing in with a forceps. I then quickly inserted the other end of the tube into a full IV bottle and put the bottle on the floor. I could sense, feel and hear a collective sigh of relief from the onlookers (myself included) as a very satisfying vigorous stream of bubbles started to flow into the bottom of the bottle on the floor.

Naturally, there was a good outcome. The young man's color improved, breathing was not as labored and he could even whisper "Grazie". Soon word came that an ambulance from a nearby Army camp was on the way. Now that I think of it, there were no formal or informal expressions of thanks from the racing officials or from the hotel. But the inner glow of satisfaction I felt was more than enough rewards.

Fast forward two years when I needed a chest tube myself after my car accident on the road from Ahwaz to Shiraz. My multiple rib fractures had punctured my right lung and the pneumothorax was compressing my lungs. When they told me about this I said fine, no problem, a piece of cake. I had never been on the receiving end and thought nothing of it. Until they put the tube in and the explosion of pain inside my chest brought stars to my eyes and a not so muffled scream to my lips. You can imagine my chagrin when following a chest X-ray; I was told I needed another chest tube. I was not so blaze this time, you can be sure.

Fast forward another 33 years and get ready for another

chest tube ordeal. Fortunately, I was not awake when they put in the tubes. Yes, there were two of them inserted side by side under my rib cage at the midline. As much as a nuisance they were when attached to me, I dreaded the moment of the big pull out more. But here was no avoiding it and another ruthless Respiratory Therapist did the honors by powerfully yanking the tubes out. The only saving grace was that she pulled them out together thereby sparing me the agony of repeat performance.

The last thing to come out of me was the pacemaker wire that had been threaded through my lower chest wall into my heart. Well, not into my heart but spliced onto the surface pericardium. When asked what it would feel like when pulled, I was told it would be a "funny feeling". That is really an accurate description. It felt like a prolonged tickle. And I mean prolonged. It was surprising how long the suckers were.

Finally, it was time to go home. It was only the 4th post op day, which was fast. There were a couple of surprises: one was that Dr Deeb did not want to see me in follow up for more than 3 weeks after discharge. The other was that I could not fit into my pants. I mean could not button, zip or buckle.

I am happy to report that now in less than 2 weeks post op, I can do all three. And much more.

I close by extending to each and every one of you my sincere thanks and appreciation for all your kind expressions of support and good wishes during this what I would simply call my adventure. ■

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An Interview with

Justine Shapiro

The Filmmaker of:

▣ **Our Summer in Tehran** ▣

part two

By: **Shahrokh Ahkami**

How did you find the families you stayed with?

I had a single entry visa for Iran so I couldn't go once to cast the film, and then again later to shoot it. So I asked Marjaneh to go 6 months ahead of time to cast the film. I asked that she do her best to find a single mom who is an artist, a more cosmopolitan family, and a pro government religious family. She met with dozens of families, all eager to participate in this film. Iranians watch a lot of satellite TV and aware of their image as they portrayed in western media, many families, particular mothers were, eager to open their doors and share something of their lives to show that Iranians are not these demon stick figures as presented by the US press. Marjaneh is a wonderful person, people trust her, and she was able to find many wonderful families including one family where the husband works for the Revolutionary Guards. Marjaneh was

so nervous meeting them the first time because they live in the Far East of the city in a foreboding housing complex for employees of the revolutionary Guard.

I was very nervous to meet them and asked Marjaneh NOT to tell them that we are Jewish. A key scene in the film shows me revealing the fact that I'm Jewish to Marjan Torabi. It comes as the two of us are about to enter one of Iran's holiest Shiite shrines, in Mashad. It was a nerve-racking moment for me. Friends warned me before going to Iran that I should hide my religion. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Iran's president, and other Iranian leaders have openly professed their enmity for Israel. But after I tell Mrs. Torabi that I am Jewish, I hear immediately from her: "It's OK. No problem."

I was amazed at HOW nervous I was to reveal to Marjan Torabi that I'm Jewish. She is a deeply devout Muslim woman, and her husband, Dr. Torabi, works for the Revolutionary Guards. I thought that if Dr. Torabi knew I was Jewish he would bar his wife from spending time with me and participating in our film. I was not sure how Mrs. Torabi was going to respond and honestly I was very surprised, and so relieved, that she was so easy going about it.

What I find really astonishing is that even with all the traveling I've done, even with all my first hand EXPERIENCE, I, like most people, am brainwashed into seeing countries as the news media portrays them. But in actuality, EVERY time I've told a Muslim that I am Jewish (with Palestinians in Palestine, with Iranians in Iran, with Egyptians in Egypt, with Moslems in India) I have never been rejected. On the whole, Muslims regard Jews as "people of the book."

You brought your son with you to Iran, prior to going did you question this decision?

My son Mateo is now 10 years old and attends Malcolm X Elementary School in Berkeley. When Mateo was born I tried to continue working as host of GlobeTrekker, but three-week shoots far from home proved untenable. I had saved enough from GlobeTrekker so that I had one year where I could contemplate a new project. I was fascinated with my new role as mother. During this time, I read all I could find about how children are raised in cultures around the world. I observed Mateo observing me, and realized that in everything I did or said, I

was a model for him. One day as I was shoveling left-overs down the disposal I glanced over and saw Mateo watching his beloved mother throwing away perfectly good food. I began to see our relationship through a new lens. The ways in which I was raising Mateo mirrored my personality and my values and my culture. Mateo woke me up. I then began to pay greater attention to the ways in which my professed values were, and were not, congruent with my actual behavior. I started to pay closer attention to my words, to my actions. What was I teaching Mateo?

One morning, precisely six months after his birth, Mateo was pleasantly nursing. Terrible sounds floated in from the TV in the other room. I staggered to the TV and while holding Mateo, I saw an airplane fly into the Twin Towers. The insular coziness of Motherhood collided with World events.

I have been shown hospitality in the homes of Muslims all over the world: Palestinians, Jordanians, Malaysians, Turks, North Africans, West Africans, Pakistanis and Indians. Therefore the un-abating narrative of the "Muslim as Terrorist" following 9/11 was deeply disturbing. As the news media and politicians vigorously defined America's new enemy, I saw my son's future and that of his generation entangled in new wars. I could only imagine how the US would respond to 9/11. And soon enough the bombing of Iraq and Afghanistan began.

In 2003 with the war raging in Iraq, I wrote a grant proposal for a TV series called: Mateo Meets Mohammad. The idea was that Mateo and I would travel to Muslim majority nations to spend time with families. I thought that meeting Muslims through the lens of ordinary everyday family life might breathe new life into our collective view of the Muslim world. In watching how kids are raised in these countries we might make connections, and perhaps even learn something from the child-rearing practices in those societies. Unfortunately the foundations where I submitted proposals thought the idea too outrageous and dangerous to fund.

In 2004 I re-wrote the proposal de-emphasizing Muslim nations. I re-named the series, The Global Moms Project. I received a major grant and while in pre-production for our first shoot in China, I found myself distracted by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the implication that Iran would be next. My intuition told me to turn from China towards Iran. But

logic (and my father) dismissed the idea as crazy. "A Jewish American woman and her 6 year old son go to Iran?" No way. But as the media and the politicians sounded a call for war with Iran, I decided that, while China was an important country for Americans to understand, there was urgency around humanizing the people living in Iran.

Many people asked me to consider if it was safe for me to bring Mateo. Some, like my father, were brave enough to tell me that they thought I was being irresponsible in taking him with me. But I had done my homework, I had spoken with dozens of Iranians and I felt certain that it was as dangerous for us to go to Iran as it was for us to drive on the freeway near my house. I don't want to give into irrational fear of the 'other'.

Was Iran like you imagined?

The people were much warmer towards me than I expected them to be. They were enjoyed answering my questions about politics (off camera) and were far more open than I had expected. They were really funny, making jokes and hilarious commentaries on the state of their politics. When they recounted their own history vis a vis Iran's history, I heard profound and difficult stories of how Iran's governments over time have affected their lives. I also came to understand that for many Iranians, Islam is a private spiritual practice. Not many Iranians go to Mosque to pray however many pray at home. Many Iranians I met were devoutly religious AND anti-government. Iranians are a very spiritual people but I learned that religion does not necessarily go hand in hand with politics.

How were you treated there?

At first I was hesitant to go to Iran. Many people thought I was irresponsible taking Mateo because not only are we American but we are also Jewish. But I confronted these concerns by talking with many Iranians who had recently been to Iran. I made appoint of NOT taking advice from Iranians who had not been back in 5, 10 30 years. Rather I spoke with Iranians who travel there at least once a year. One friend had been a journalist in Evin's notorious prison, and had been released in the past 6 months was now studying at UC Berkeley. He encouraged me to go and promised me that no harm would come to Mateo or me. The worst they would do to

me, he said, would be to separate me from Mateo for a few days for questioning and if they do question you, he advised that I be honest." They can see through lie, "my friend assured me. If they ask you why you went on your Irish passport, tell them the truth "that you wanted a long visa". They will appreciate the truth. He reminded me that Iran is home to the largest population of Jews in the Middle East, outside of Israel and therefore the fact that I am Jewish would not be an issue and it wasn't.

I was told that in Iran, family is everything and that people practice hospitality like an art. Mateo and were made to feel incredibly welcome everywhere we went. Iranians are fascinated by Americans and many Iranians dream only of getting a visa to go to the US to study, and to live. Just because I'm from the US they did not assume that I was a Bush supporter. Of course a swooping generalization of an entire country is inherently problematic. In American when we indulge in swooping generalizations we often assume that the government and the people are one, in terms of ideology and belief system. Iranians (and most other nationals whom I've met as I've traveled the world) are much better at assuming a distinction between government and people.

Mateo loved Iran. Children are indulged in Iranian society. While you'll rarely see a man and a women touching on the street, children, on the other hand, are fair game. Adults will touch a child's head, stroke his or hair, hand him or her candy (without checking with the child's parent), and coo over them. The one thing Mateo disliked most about being in Iran was that he got his cheeks pinched 25 times a day by total strangers. There is no sense of personal space when it comes to kids.

The only people who weren't so hospitable were the Intelligence Ministry. And on the other side of the coin, there are many, far too many examples of how inhospitable Homeland Security in the US is towards Iranians. Even those Iranians who get their Visa to come to the US (and getting a visa to come to the US is a major undertaking given that there is no US Embassy in Iran, Iranians must travel to Turkey or Dubai to submit their application) have been turned away, sometimes handcuffed, at the US airport and sent back to Iran. I never took my case personally. I saw that what happened with me was just an example of what happens when nations are not communicating. The Hikers who are in prison in Iran are paying

a very dear price for our countries lack of diplomatic relations. It's so sad, so awful, that these American hikers, these young innocents, have suffered so much.

How did you find the country, the people and the food?

Well like many ignorant Americans I assumed that the food would be, 'middle eastern' meaning hummus, baba ganoush, falafel, etc. I soon learned that Persian food has nothing to do with Lebanese food. Persian food, cooked at home, is simply extraordinary. I loved the spices, the herbs, fruits and stews like the fesenjoon. Mateo adored the crispy rice, Tah-deeg. I liked kookoo and Sabzi polo, while Mateo was partial to BOOF, Iran's answer to McDonald's. BOOF's burgers really are delicious, fresh. And if you order a "Happy Meal" at BOOF (yes, they really call it a "happy meal") they serve it up with french fries, a corn on the cob. And Orangina!

Would you encourage others to travel to Iran?

I would like to return to Iran and really travel. I want to go to Yadz, Esfahan, Shiraz and so many other places. To have a greater appreciation for this ancient civilization one could travel there and visit Persepolis in Shiraz, the many ruins, the stunning mosques, the places where the silk road brought people together from all parts of the world. I saw during our 14 hours bus ride up to Mashad a magical landscape, beautiful and varied.

Do you believe we in the states do not know or are not properly educated on the Middle East?

Besides a few days here and there, I did not study the Middle East in high school. I studied the Middle East in university but again I took only two classes and I see now that it was taught as an abstract concept, an introduction to an exotic culture with a tortured political landscape, rather than as a history with a contemporary significance. Few people are properly educated on the Middle East. Even many journalists write what is expected of them. Rarely do they attempt to see a story from a unique perspective. Many journalists find their research material on-line. Few journalists read books, know their history, and travel themselves to the place that they

are reporting on. We therefore get a sort of cookie cutter view of the Middle East and not a great deal of insight is created by the news machine. History really is the key to all transpires in the present and if journalists relay the story, without drawing on the history, than we get a kind of flat familiar regurgitation of current events rather than a more nuanced, complex big picture view.

What was your most interesting experience there and your least favorite experience?

For me the most interesting experience was watching families engaged in their daily routine. Rarely forks. To rock their babies to sleep, mother's put pillows are on top of their legs extended as they lean back against a wall. The baby lies on the pillow. This way as they rock their legs side to side, they are rocking their babies to sleep. The mom's back is supported and they make eye contact with their baby as they rock them.

I like the respect that Iranians show towards one another. You'd never find an Iranian with his back to another person. Even if the restaurant is crowded they will make a point of turning their chair so that their back is not turned to you. And of course the practice of ta'arof is most fascinating to me. Ta'arof is a code of conduct whereby Iranians are indirect and poetic about practical things. It's hard to do business with ta'arof.

I'd often ask my production manager to secure a second camera, or to set up a shoot in a yoga studio, or to find a local musician for us and he could never say 'no'. He could not be direct. I never knew what we might really get or what was just 'no'. So in the business environment I found ta'arof very frustrating, but in the social environment I found it more confusing and endearing.

In many ways my experience with OUR SUMMER IN TEHRAN was not as creative as I had hoped it would be. The logistical challenges were excessive and the nature of filming in Iran meant that I had to be exceptionally prudent. My producer, my crew, and of course the families in the film, are Iranians, living in Iran.

As I edited the film, and wrote the voice over, my creative choices were limited. I could not include material that might put my families or my crew at risk. Especially in the summer of 2009, during the post-election demonstrations, many of

my crew and some of the families were under careful surveillance by the Iranian authorities. As a Jewish-American divorced single mother, I was a fish out of water in a conservative Muslim society. There was a lot potential in that dynamic and yet I could explore only a small piece of this in OUR SUMMER IN TEHRAN.

I had hoped to spend more time with the families but our time was cut off so abruptly, so soon. Instead of having 12 weeks with these families, we had only 6. Moreover I discovered that Iranians are hesitant to share, on-camera, not only their political views but also their personal private selves.

Iranians tend to be very private and the veils are not just literal. Unlike Palestinians, Americans and Israelis, the Iranians whom I met are formal, more conscious of appearance, and not too keen to share either politics or personal with a camera. Some of that seems due to government censorship and some of that, I think, is also the nature of Iranians. They take off their veils only once they know you really well. So our conversations in the film could not go far enough in an honest candid way.

What did you expect to accomplish with this documentary and thus far has it been successful?

I hoped to complete this film and find a TV audience as well an audience in schools. It took five years to make this very simple film. The logistics and the fundraising presented huge challenges. I am fundraising to help bring the film into middle and high schools, universities and policy institutes.

Though the film is on PBS, the fundraising efforts are crucial to the film's success. A lot of people think, 'oh great, it's going on TV, you have reached your goal.' But this film could have such a huge impact in middle schools, high schools and organizations working with U.S.-Muslim relations, U.S.-Iran relations and diplomacy.

Being a documentary filmmaker is a labor of love. Most people don't make independent documentary films because they want to be famous or they want to make money. They do it because they want to get the stories out.

I think more and more people are starting to distrust the news and are turning to documentaries for news because they understand that that is the deeper story.

TURKMEN JEWELRY,
Silver Ornaments from the Marshall and Marilyn R. Wolf Collection

Layla S. Diba with contributions by Stefano Carboni and Jean-Francois de Laperouse
(YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS in association with The Metropolitan Museum of Art)



Best known for their carpets and textiles, the nomadic Turkmen people of Central Asia have also long distinguished themselves as the makers of extraordinary silver jewelry. This book presents more than two hundred examples of Turkmen jewelry, created in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, from the renowned collection of Marshall and Marilyn R. Wolf.

These remarkable objects-crowns and headbands, armbands and rings, necklets and amulet holders-are characterized by graceful forms, bold geometry, delicate openwork, and often-enormous scale. Working with a limited set of materials (silver accented by gold, carnelian, turquoise, and colored glass) and relatively simple techniques, Turkmen silversmiths used great ingenuity to achieve their dazzling effects.

This book, the first publication in the United States devoted to Turkmen jewelry, highlights the aesthetic aspects of these objects, which until recently were valued primarily for their ethnographic significance. Layla S. Diba situates Turkmen ornament within both its historical context and the tradition of Islamic silver jewelry production. By taking an art historical approach and providing detailed formal analysis of the objects, supplemented by gorgeous color photographs, this publication broadens the appreciation of these vibrant, monumental pieces, elevating them from folk art to fine art.



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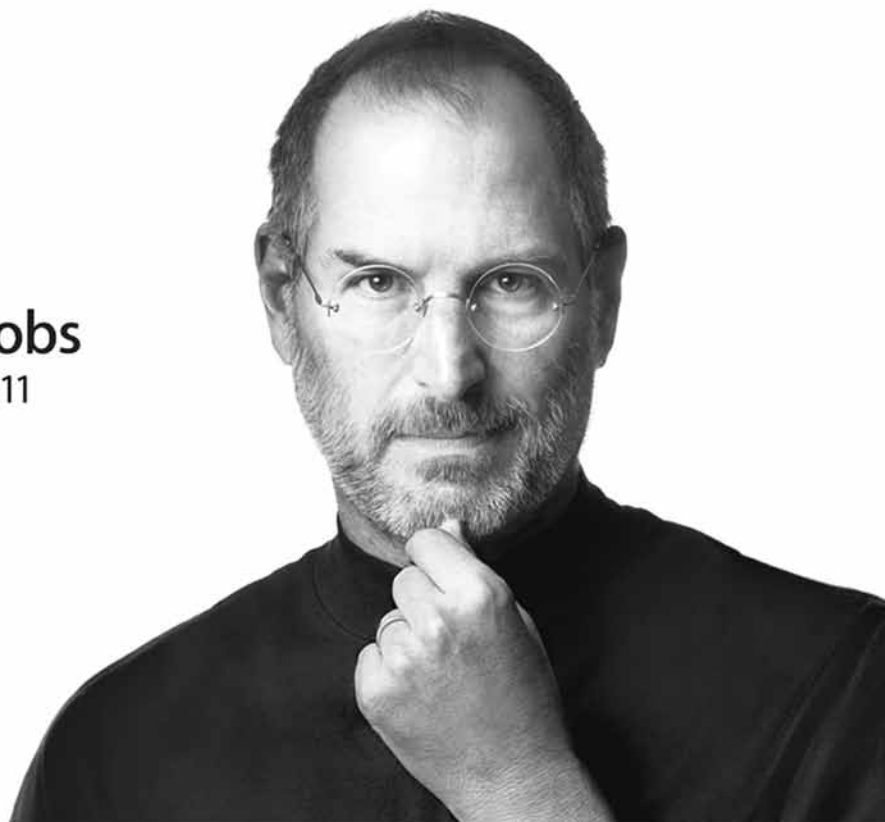
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Steve Jobs

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Stanford Report, June 14, 2005

Steve Jobs: “You’ve got to find what you love”

This is a prepared text of the Commencement address delivered by Steve Jobs, CEO of Apple Computer and of Pixar Animation Studios, on June 12, 2005.

I am honored to be with you today at your commencement from one of the finest universities in the world. I never graduated from college. Truth be told, this is the closest I’ve ever gotten to a college graduation. Today I want to tell you three stories from my life. That’s it. No big deal. Just three stories.

THE FIRST STORY IS ABOUT CONNECTING THE DOTS.

I dropped out of Reed College after the first 6 months, but then stayed around as a drop-in for another 18 months or so before I really quit. So why did I drop out?

It started before I was born. My biological mother was a young, unwed college graduate student, and she decided to put me up for adoption. She felt very strongly that I should be adopted by college graduates, so everything was all set for me to be adopted at birth by a lawyer and his wife. Except that when

I popped out they decided at the last minute that they really wanted a girl. So my parents, who were on a waiting list, got a call in the middle of the night asking: “We have an unexpected baby boy; do you want him?” They said: “Of course.” My biological mother later found out that my mother had never graduated from college and that my father had never graduated from high school. She refused to sign the final adoption papers. She only relented a few months later when my parents promised that I would someday go to college.

And 17 years later I did go to college. But I naively chose a college that was almost as expensive as Stanford, and all of my working-class parents’ savings were being spent on my college tuition. After six months, I couldn’t see the value in it. I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life and no idea how college was going to help me figure it out. And here I was spending all of the money my parents had saved their entire

life. So I decided to drop out and trust that it would all work out OK. It was pretty scary at the time, but looking back it was one of the best decisions I ever made. The minute I dropped out I could stop taking the required classes that didn't interest me, and begin dropping in on the ones that looked interesting.

It wasn't all romantic. I didn't have a dorm room, so I slept on the floor in friends' rooms, I returned coke bottles for the 5¢ deposits to buy food with, and I would walk the 7 miles across town every Sunday night to get one good meal a week at the Hare Krishna temple. I loved it. And much of what I stumbled into by following my curiosity and intuition turned out to be priceless later on. Let me give you one example:

Reed College at that time offered perhaps the best calligraphy instruction in the country. Throughout the campus every poster, every label on every drawer, was beautifully hand calligraphed. Because I had dropped out and didn't have to take the normal classes, I decided to take a calligraphy class to learn how to do this. I learned about serif and sans serif typefaces, about varying the amount of space between different letter combinations, about what makes great typography great. It was beautiful, historical, artistically subtle in a way that science can't capture, and I found it fascinating.

None of this had even a hope of any practical application in my life. But ten years later, when we were designing the first Macintosh computer, it all came back to me. And we designed it all into the Mac. It was the first computer with beautiful typography. If I had never dropped in on that single course in college, the Mac would have never had multiple typefaces or proportionally spaced fonts. And since Windows just copied the Mac, it's likely that no personal computer would have them. If I had never dropped out, I would have never dropped in on this calligraphy class, and personal computers might not have the wonderful typography that they do. Of course it was impossible to connect the dots looking forward when I was in college. But it was very, very clear looking backwards ten years later.

Again, you can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something — your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. This approach has never let me down, and it has made all the difference in my life.

MY SECOND STORY IS ABOUT LOVE AND LOSS.

I was lucky — I found what I loved to do early in life. Woz and I started Apple in my parents garage when I was 20. We worked hard, and in 10 years Apple had grown from just the two of us in a garage into a \$2 billion company with over 4000 employees. We had just released our finest creation — the Macintosh — a year earlier, and I had just turned 30. And then I got fired. How can you get fired from a company you started? Well, as Apple grew we hired someone who I thought was very talented to run the company with me, and for the first year or so things went well. But then our visions of the future began to diverge and eventually we had a falling out. When we did, our Board of Directors sided with him. So at 30 I was out. And very publicly out. What had been the focus of my entire adult life was gone, and it was devastating.

I really didn't know what to do for a few months. I felt that I had let the previous generation of entrepreneurs down - that I had dropped the baton as it was being passed to me. I met with David Packard and Bob Noyce and tried to apologize for screwing up so badly. I was a very public failure, and I even thought about running away from the valley. But something slowly began to dawn on me — I still loved what I did. The turn of events at Apple had not changed that one bit. I had been rejected, but I was still in love. And so I decided to start over.

I didn't see it then, but it turned out that getting fired from Apple was the best thing that could have ever happened to me. The heaviness of being successful was replaced by the lightness of being a beginner again, less sure about everything. It freed me to enter one of the most creative periods of my life.

During the next five years, I started a company named NeXT, another company named Pixar, and fell in love with an amazing woman who would become my wife. Pixar went on to create the world's first computer animated feature film, Toy Story, and is now the most successful animation studio in the world. In a remarkable turn of events, Apple bought NeXT, I returned to Apple, and the technology we developed at NeXT is at the heart of Apple's current renaissance. And Laurene and I have a wonderful family together.

I'm pretty sure none of this would have happened if I hadn't been fired from Apple. It was awful tasting medicine, but I guess the patient needed it. Sometimes life hits you in the head with a brick. Don't lose faith. I'm convinced that the only thing that kept me going was that I loved what I did. You've got to find what you love. And that is as true for your work as it is for your lovers. Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it. And, like any great relationship, it just gets better and better as the years roll on. So keep looking until you find it. Don't settle.

MY THIRD STORY IS ABOUT DEATH.

When I was 17, I read a quote that went something like: "If you live each day as if it was your last, someday you'll most certainly be right." It made an impression on me, and since then, for the past 33 years, I have looked in the mirror every morning and asked myself: "If today were the last day of my life, would I want to do what I am about to do today?" And whenever the answer has been "No" for too many days in a row, I know I need to change something.

Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Because almost everything — all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure - these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important. Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart.

About a year ago I was diagnosed with cancer. I had a scan at 7:30 in the morning, and it clearly showed a tumor on my pancreas. I didn't even know what a pancreas was. The doctors told me this was almost certainly a type of cancer that

is incurable, and that I should expect to live no longer than three to six months. My doctor advised me to go home and get my affairs in order, which is doctor's code for prepare to die. It means to try to tell your kids everything you thought you'd have the next 10 years to tell them in just a few months. It means to make sure everything is buttoned up so that it will be as easy as possible for your family. It means to say your goodbyes.

I lived with that diagnosis all day. Later that evening I had a biopsy, where they stuck an endoscope down my throat, through my stomach and into my intestines, put a needle into my pancreas and got a few cells from the tumor. I was sedated, but my wife, who was there, told me that when they viewed the cells under a microscope the doctors started crying because it turned out to be a very rare form of pancreatic cancer that is curable with surgery. I had the surgery and I'm fine now.

This was the closest I've been to facing death, and I hope it's the closest I get for a few more decades. Having lived through it, I can now say this to you with a bit more certainty than when death was a useful but purely intellectual concept:

No one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven don't want to die to get there. And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it. And that is as it should be, because Death is very likely the single best invention of Life. It is Life's change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new. Right now the new is you, but someday not too long from now, you will gradually become the old and be cleared away. Sorry to be so dramatic, but it is quite true.

Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma — which is living with the results of other people's thinking. Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary.

When I was young, there was an amazing publication called *The Whole Earth Catalog*, which was one of the bibles of my generation. It was created by a fellow named Stewart Brand not far from here in Menlo Park, and he brought it to life with his poetic touch. This was in the late 1960's, before personal computers and desktop publishing, so it was all made with typewriters, scissors, and polaroid cameras. It was sort of like Google in paperback form, 35 years before Google came along: it was idealistic, and overflowing with neat tools and great notions.

Stewart and his team put out several issues of *The Whole Earth Catalog*, and then when it had run its course, they put out a final issue. It was the mid-1970s, and I was your age. On the back cover of their final issue was a photograph of an early morning country road, the kind you might find yourself hitchhiking on if you were so adventurous. Beneath it were the words: "Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish." It was their farewell message as they signed off. Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish. And I have always wished that for myself. And now, as you graduate to begin anew, I wish that for you.

Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish.

Thank you all very much.

Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish.



A PERSONAL TRIBUTE TO STEVE

Dear Friends, Family, and Co-Workers of Steve Jobs,

When people ask me what it was like to work at NeXT and Apple for a guy like Steve Jobs, I always tell them it was the most exhilarating experience of my life. It was an environment where I was always sure that nothing less than excellence was expected from me at all times. It was an environment where I knew that this expectation was shared by the folks I worked closely with. Who could ask for more?

When I think about how Steve's vision of technology and the art of the possible has impacted me over my lifetime I feel a tremendous sense of gratitude. That I played a small part in helping implement this vision fills me with a sense of wonder and a deep appreciation for the happenstance of life. My passion for Apple's vision and Steve's vision for what technology can do for people and the power of design has never wavered, even now, 10 years after I left the company to play in the world of startups...

None of us know how long our lives will be and what challenges we will face, I'm just so grateful that my life intersected with Steve's. I'm grateful for all the wisdom he imparted to me through his very vocal aesthetic senses and his constant demands for excellence. [Even if I didn't seem to appreciate it at the time:-)]

I wish Steve's family a future where their immediate sorrow is replaced by happy memories of a life so well lived. The long and the short of this is that I just wanted to say "Thank You" to Steve one last time.

Siamak