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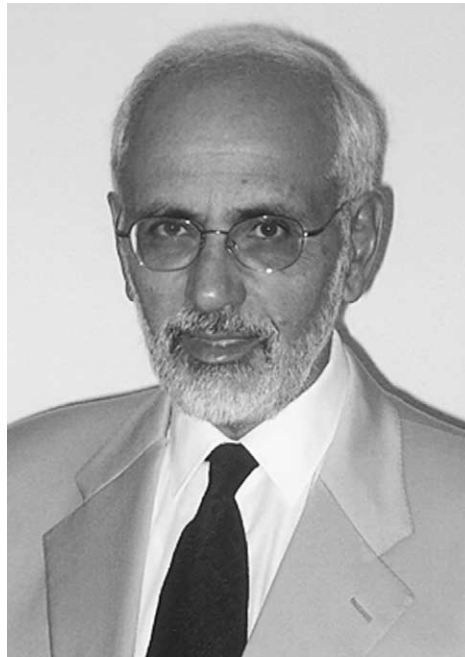
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Foreword



George wasn't really supposed to be an academic. Born in 1939 in Istanbul, Turkey, to Charalambos Yadigaroglu and Pepi Konstantinides, he was groomed to become a straight-laced business man, and to eventually take over the family interests—a lumber and construction material company, a refrigeration plant, and some real-estate on Taksim Square.

In 1955 this plan came to an end. Sixteen years old and vacationing in Greece for the summer, he received a phone call from his parents that he should remain abroad—the situation in Istanbul had worsened and anti-Greek riots erupted. His parents followed him to Greece in 1961, leaving possessions and their way of life behind. Our father would not return to Turkey for twenty years.

This is sadly a familiar story, repeated in countless other areas. The next chapter is, however, extraordinary. Alone and in exile, George decided then and there to reinterpret the turn of events as a stroke of good fortune—the weight of tradition and expectations had been lifted, and he was free to live a different, unique life. From Athens to Lausanne, and then on to Raleigh and Boston, we find him a few years later married to our mother Suzanne, in tie-dye shirts and sandals, in Berkeley, Swiss scholarships and MIT had carried him to a doctorate in engineering and a passion for research and teaching. George had become what he probably always wanted to be: an Engineer and a Professor.

We were born in 1967 and 1969, and despite some cultural confusion, had the happiest possible childhoods—although we weren't too sure why all the discussions about bubbles were so important. Among all the things our father taught us, he made us appreciate freedom in all its dimensions and gave us great confidence in people and places. The ruminations of victimhood were so entirely absent at home, that we struggle even today to reconcile our family's "old history" with how our father lived our identity, including many memories of Turkish friends and delightful Turkish foods and customs.

We are very proud and honored by this tribute to our father's academic record. We hope you will consider how extraordinary this story really is, and how we owe it to a young man in 1955 who had the wisdom and courage to be a force for good, to look forward instead of back.

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