

BITA AND JAAKKO

WHILE I MAY NOT BE A STRONG SUPPORTER OF THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE, I BELIEVE IN THE IDEA AND THE IDEAL. I RECOGNIZE THAT SOME MARRIAGES INAUGURATE TRUE PARTNERSHIPS AND DEEP FRIENDSHIPS, AND HELP TO MAINTAIN THE SANITY OF THE WORLD. THIS IS ONE OF THOSE NECESSARY MARRIAGES.

IN THIS ANXIOUS MOMENT THE FUNDAMENTALIST TRUE FINN PARTY ADVANCES ACROSS THE FINNISH LANDSCAPE. RACIST MANIFESTATIONS OF FEAR AND FASCISM HAVE ALSO TAKEN HOLD ACROSS EUROPE: VLAAMS BELANG (FLEMISH INTEREST) IN BELGIUM, THE PARTIJA VOOR DE VRIJHEID (PVV) OF GEERT WILDERS IN THE NETHERLANDS, THE FRONT NATIONAL (FN) OF MARINE LE PEN IN FRANCE, AND OTHERS. THE IRONY IS THAT AS THE PEOPLE OF THE MIDEAST STRUGGLE TOWARD DEMOCRACY, THE PEOPLE OF EUROPE ARE TURNING AWAY FROM IT.

IN SUCH AN ENVIRONMENT -WHETHER THEY INTENDED IT TO BE SO OR NOT- THIS MARRIAGE BETWEEN A FINNISH MAN AND AN IRANIAN WOMAN STANDS AS A BEACON OF RESISTANCE AGAINST RAMPANT XENOPHOBIA. IN MY VIEW BITA AND JAAKKO ARE MAKING A STANCE FOR A TRULY EGALITARIAN FINLAND & IRAN: THE TRUE FINN AND TRUE IRANIAN IN SOLIDARITY AGAINST STUPIDITY, OPPRESSION, PREJUDICE, AND BIGOTRY. POST-MODERNITY'S CRITIQUE OF MODERNITY.

THIS MARRIAGE BETWEEN TWO ARTISTS IS BOTH A CAREFULLY SCRIPTED SOCIAL RITUAL AND A SKEPTICISM AGAINST ALL SUCH RITUALS. THEY HAVE APPROPRIATED THEIR OWN MARRIAGE AND HAVE ALSO APPROPRIATED THE ROLES OF BITA'S TWO EXAMINERS. KARI YLI-ANNALA AND I ARE NOW IMPLICATED IN THE PRODUCTION OF THE VERY WORK WE ARE MEANT TO 'EXAMINE'.

THE ACT OF JUDGING IS MORE APPROPRIATELY TRANSFORMED INTO A LESS IMPERIALIST ACT OF 'WITNESSING'. WE HAVE BEEN INVITED TO WITNESS A SITE OF CONCEPTUAL PLEASURE AND PERFORMANCE. THE SOCIETY ITSELF --RATHER THAN JUST THE BRIDE AND GROOM-- UNDERGOES A RITE OF PASSAGE THROUGH THIS WITNESSING INTO A MORE ETHICAL AND HUMANIST FUTURE.

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