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and cumbersome. The shameful and much publicized affair which deprived Smith of three of its professors increased my desire to leave. As we now know, the evidence brought against them had been obtained by the police without a proper warrant. More immediately, I was outraged by the dishonesty of the administration which had formally assured the faculty that no action would be taken by the college until the legal procedures had run their course and then proceeded to dismiss all of them during the intervening summer, though the cases were eventually thrown out by the court. The general silence of the faculty in the face of patent administrative deception did not increase my respect, but rather taught me that there is no coward like an academic coward. Still more personally, I was deeply distressed by the fate of Professor Newton Arvin, whatever weakness he displayed in the face of police harassment. In my first year at Smith, Professor Arvin, one of the unquestioned stars of the English Department, had shown me great kindness at a time when, as a totally insignificant first-year instructor, I could not be of the slightest use or interest to him.

As my discontent grew at Smith, changes were taking place at Columbia. The chairman of the Department of Middle East Languages and Cultures and professor of Ottoman history, Tibor Halasi-Kun, maintained steadily that his subject could not be taught adequately without a consideration of the imperial minorities among which the Armenians were the largest. Made wary by an unfortunate earlier appointment, Columbia was by no means ready to commit itself once again to the field. The most that it would tolerate at first was an adjunct lecturer intended to test the waters. As a result of this decision, my three subsequent winters, 1962-1965, turned into a hectic merry-go-round. Making the most of Smith's split week, during which I continued to teach my normal load of classical subjects, I packed a bag on every Wednesday afternoon not given over to a faculty meeting, stuffed the furiously spitting Tigran into his carrier, and drove frantically the two-hundred-odd miles to New York, since trains no longer stopped at Northampton. Thursdays and Fridays, I taught three altogether different courses in Armenian history, Classical and Modern Armenian, for the latter of which I was but moderately competent, gathered what wits I had left on Saturday and made the return journey on Sunday. Under such

circumstances, any serious attempt at original scholarship necessarily had to be put on hold, but a light had unquestionably appeared at the end of the tunnel. After three years' probation, Columbia decided to take the plunge and offered me a joint appointment in the History and Middle East Departments at the same level as the one I held at Smith, though the administration first attempted to hedge its bets by making this an appointment without tenure, capitulating only upon my categorical rejection of a demotion which would have left me totally vulnerable.

The world I found at Columbia was altogether different from the one I had left. For the first time since I had entered the Brearley, I found myself in a real co-ed world. But neither there, nor for that matter anywhere else, was I to suffer from the all too common discrimination which was the usual lot of academic women outside of all female institutions. There were, to be sure, occasional glitches. When our oldest American friend, the Nobel prizewinner Simon Kuznets suggested my candidacy for the newly created Armenian chair at Harvard, the unequivocal answer was, "We would not consider a woman". I was the first woman appointed with tenure in both of my departments at Columbia and one history professor, who later became a particularly close friend, asserted at the time that this would be done over his dead body. Together with four female colleagues, dubbed the "paranoid ladies", we out-sat our male colleagues to early dawn in Low Memorial Library, until the administration agreed to include a section on women into the plan for affirmative action being prepared by the university. For endless years I was a member of the Committee on the (altogether unsatisfactory) Status of Women, where I was later joined by the Supreme Court judge to be, Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Even so, I personally was neither obstructed in my work nor harassed. I found no overt antagonism, perhaps because my esoteric field threatened no one else's turf, and all my promotions were rapid. Nevertheless, the History Department was too large and MELAC too fragmented into its eight divisions to provide the cohesion and collegiality I had known at Smith.

I made far fewer friends. Among them, the Dutch scholar Seeger Bonnebaker, who had first learned his Arabic in Indonesia, as a child during World War II, from a mullah in a Japanese prison camp and who hid a wicked wit behind the dour façade of

a puritan pastor, but who unfortunately left us for UCLA. The most exotic member of the department was the Turkologist, Karl Menges, a German Catholic socialist. His path to Columbia had been an all but unbelievable odyssey. Warned just before the war by a student in Berlin, "Professor, I would not return home, they are waiting", he embarked on a journey of several years, which took him to Turkey by way of Vienna and Prague, still pursued by the Nazi authorities. Fleeing still further when the von Papen mission made his stay in Turkey perilous, he crossed the Soviet border into the Caucasus. There, served by his encyclopaedic knowledge of the obscure native dialects, he was surreptitiously passed by kinsmen from village to village, much as Xenophon had been two millennia earlier. A journey on the Trans-Siberian railroad, interrupted by a bout with the Soviet NKVD at Ekaterinburg/Sverdlovsk, then brought him to Vladivostok and finally to Japan in time to arrive in the United States on a Japanese cargo at the very end of November 1941 some ten days before the attack on Pearl Harbor. Menges' long stays in Central Asia had even altered his appearance, his thin mustache hung limply like that of a Chinese sage and his nails had turned yellow. He enjoyed coming to our house to practice his excellent Russian, and he was a favourite of my grandmother, though his Russian, learned from the Red Army during a year's stay in 1928, was peppered with expressions she had never met even in writing, and which jolted her out of her chair. Menges had a deservedly world reputation as a linguist, but teaching was not his *métier*. In a tenure of more than twenty years, he succeeded in frightening off all but three candidates by his unreasonable demands: "So, you want to be a Turkologist. Do you know Turkish?" "Yes, Professor". "Do you know Ottoman?" "Yes, Professor". "Do you know Azeri?" "Yes, Professor". "Do you know Kipchak?" "Yes, Professor". "Do you know Kirgiz?" "Yes Professor". "Do you know Uzbek?" "Yes, Professor". "Do you know Uighur?" "Yes, Professor". "Hmm, do you know Kara Kalpak?" "No, Professor". "Idiot, moron, cretin, how dare you come to me when you do not know Kara Kalpak!" Enrollments understandably remained low. One of Menges' responsibilities was to set the German language examination for graduate students. When their complaints that the passage set for translation was impossible reached me as the supervisor, my initial reaction

was not sympathetic, since I was generally inured to such jeremiads. The sight of the offensive passage, however, rapidly changed my mind. Professor Menges had chosen an extract from his own Uzbek grammar in which only the *ands* and *but*s were in German.

Menges' return to Europe upon his retirement ultimately severed our contacts, but this has not been the case for my closest Columbia friend, the historian of India during the British Raj, Ainslie Embree. It was to his guidance and company during his tenure as cultural counselor to the American embassy in Delhi, that I owe a far better acquaintance with and understanding of India than I could ever have acquired otherwise. Neither his nor my temporary absences from the university, nor his retirement from New York with his half-French wife Suzanne, have interfered with the growth of our affection. At the same time, my knowledge and appreciation of Persian civilization grew apace from my long collaboration and friendship with my new colleague, the eminent Iranist Edith Porada.

My work at Columbia, almost exclusively in the Graduate School, was much more arduous from the start than any I had previously known. I had to learn overnight to direct a graduate seminar and doctoral dissertations. When my history colleague Ihor Sevcenko left Columbia for Dumbarton Oaks, I inherited all of his Byzantine responsibilities in addition to my own. For the first time, my attention was now to be directed almost exclusively to Armenia and the East rather than to the more general Mediterranean world. In my own eyes, my first and foremost obligation, then as now, was to draw a clear distinction between Armenian studies and the various ethnic or gender studies coming into fashion and to apply to them the same rigorous criteria as those taken for granted in the other disciplines of the liberal arts. The task was Sisyphean. Even the brightest students did not have sufficient preparation, especially in languages. The Columbia Libraries were poorly supplied with Armenian historical material much of which was uncatalogued and consequently unavailable. Texts and adequate translations were still in the future. Armenian studies, above all in history, had not yet emerged from the nineteenth century. They were still dominated to a large extent by generally accepted, hallowed traditions rather than scholarship. I did not realize at first the difficulties of the road

before me, but I have never wavered in my initial conviction that the Armenian field should be equated with any other, without the benefit of mitigating circumstances, special pleading, excuses, or apologies.

The first years were rendered additionally difficult by the understandable paucity of doctoral candidates and by the unmanageable character of the field which encompassed at a minimum language, literature, archæology, art history, historical geography, intellectual and social history, as well as history *tout court*. A syllabus had to be devised, without the benefit of any textbook, to cover in four semesters no matter how superficially, the more than three millennia of prehistory and history on the Armenian plateau. Advanced reading courses and seminars, at the very least in historiography, social and intellectual history and historical geography were imperative to supplement the introductory survey and prepare doctoral candidates. No single individual was capable of dealing with such demands and limitations had to be imposed. Some decisions made from the start were admittedly arbitrary. Since my own focus lay in antiquity and the middle ages, I normally would not accept candidates in the modern period, especially since a solid programme directed to that field existed at UCLA, while the earlier periods were usually passed over. In order to give students the ability to read the Soviet scholarly literature gradually becoming available, an elementary course in the so-called "East" Armenian, official in the Soviet Republic, was introduced alongside the existing offerings in the somewhat dissimilar "West" Armenian of the vast Diaspora. These decisions were intellectually altogether defensible, but they did not necessarily endear us to the far more traditionally minded community which often failed to appreciate or share our goals.

Two factors helped to make the programme viable. Columbia relieved me of all language teaching by granting me the assistance of one of my earliest doctors, now Father, Krikor Maksoudian, whose expertise in all forms of Armenian far outstripped my own and whose knowledge of mediæval and modern bibliography is inexhaustible. At first doctoral candidates were understandably few. Even so, I had no money to support them, when neither the departments nor the university cared to extend their limited funds to Armenia. In my nearly three decades at

Columbia, and despite the evident merit of a number of my students, only two of them ever received a university fellowship. Armenian, as the most recently added and least recognized field, was and tended to remain the low man on the totem pole in a department whose name—Middle East Languages and Cultures—automatically directed its primary concern to the Islamic world, Arabic, Iranian and Turkish (largely Ottoman). Our perennial state of destitution was soon alleviated in a large part by the generosity of Dolores Zohrab Liebmann, the daughter of the eminent author and parliamentarian, Krikor Zohrab, whose assassination together with his Armenian colleagues in 1915 inaugurated the Armenian genocide. Long before a chair in the field was created, Mrs Liebmann most generously bestowed on the Columbia Armenian Programme a large endowment in memory of her parents, the interest from which was intended for the support of graduate fellowships in Armenian studies. We still lived in penury, robbing Peter to pay Paul, as I sought to apportion our limited funds equitably, but without the help of the Zohrab fellowships, we would most likely, have disappeared without a trace.

Once the difficult years of transition were successfully negotiated, I finally found the leisure to complete my slow preparation and attend to my own much neglected research. Before I supplemented the work leading to my dissertation with original work, I undertook a translation from Russian and the *aggiornamento* of Nicholas Adontz's magisterial study of *Armenia in the Period of Justinian*, published more than half a century earlier. This valuable exercise had been suggested to me by the great Armenian art historian Sirapie der Nersessian, whom I had first met at thirteen, when my mother took me to a series of lectures given by her at the Morgan Library. Miss der Nersessian never was my teacher in the strict sense, but throughout her life she guided me with the unfailing wisdom and kindness which made of her my spiritual mother. The extensive research required to bring Adontz's work and its bibliography up to date made me aware of the Eurocentric focus which allowed even a great scholar like him to seek in eleventh-century French feudalism parallels for the fourth- and fifth-century Armenian institutions he was studying and it raised a plethora of questions. Urged on by Miss der Nersessian's invaluable criterion that anyone study-

ing a border area would necessarily see much farther and more perceptively by looking at both sides of the frontier rather than at one alone, I edged increasingly toward the Iranian world I had first glimpsed in Professor Bickerman's lectures.

By the time of the Oxford Byzantine Congress of 1966, I felt ready to present the results of my own investigations and conclusions. Simultaneously, an unexpected door opened before me. For the first time a group of scholars from the Soviet Union had been allowed to attend an International Byzantine Congress, although they were constantly kept under the baleful eye of their leader and keeper, Zinaida Vladimirovna Udaltsova, who took a sadistic pleasure in thwarting any attempt to elude the isolation from their western colleagues that she sought to impose on her compatriots. Necessity came to their rescue and helped them evade her malignant vigilance. Russian is always listed as one of the official languages of the Congress, but the Soviet scholars realized on their arrival that if they gave their papers in their own tongue, they would effectively be speaking almost exclusively to each other. Having heard through some manifestation of the bush telegraph that I could be of help in this quandary, the entire delegation came begging me to translate its communications into either English or French. Most of my time at Oxford was given over to this undertaking, but it was to provide me in the future with invaluable ties in the Soviet Union through both the benevolent sponsorship of the old Armenian academician Suren Eremyan in Erevan and the abiding friendship of the younger Byzantinists, Karen Yuzbashyan and Viada Arutyunova-Fidanyan in Leningrad and Moscow.

*"Now Voyager"***

The meeting with Soviet scholars aroused my curiosity. Until then, memories of the horror stories of my childhood had made me fearful of visiting the Soviet Union, especially since I was aware of my legal position there: the children of former Russian nationals born outside the Soviet Union in any country before its recognition of the Soviet government were considered by it to be Soviet citizens. I had been born in Paris three weeks before France's official recognition of the Soviet Union, and the American State Department warned us that it would not protect us on the territory of a sovereign state in case of difficulties. Even so, I decided that the meetings of the International Congress of Historians to be held in Moscow in the summer of 1970 were official and public enough to be safe. Informed by the organizers of the Congress that, "a mother may be considered an accompanying spouse", Mother and I decided to take the risk and set out from Venice via Vienna, where I picked up our entry visas requested months earlier, and acquired my first taste of Soviet bureaucratic efficiency.

The Congress itself, held in the hideous new Palace of Congresses which disfigures the Kremlin, was largely given over to Soviet propaganda and general platitudes, but, as usual, the attending circumstances were far more rewarding. With the help of mother's faultless memory, I ranged over Moscow, disregarding its dinginess and repulsive Soviet architecture to find the lovely abandoned fifteenth-century churches in Zamoskvorechie on the far side of the river and the mostly secular, renaissance complex, shielding a matchless baroque façade of green and white varnished, molded tiles, at Krutitskoe Podvor'ie, which not even Moscow taxi drivers knew where to find. Guided by Anatoli, the graduate student assigned to us as a "translator", I saw

** Poem by Walt Whitman.