

Identities Without Borders

Lord Bhikhu Parekh delivers keynote lecture

The Armenian Institute began a year of activities with a major international colloquium, generously funded by the St. Sarkis Trust. The first event on February 6th, a keynote address by Lord Bhikhu Parekh (pictured right), was held at the British Library (below left). Professor of Political Theory at the LSE and the University of Hull, Lord Parekh is the author of *Rethinking Multiculturalism* and numerous other reports, articles and books. He opened the colloquium by addressing the central issue of "Fostering Cohesion in Multicultural Societies". Prof. Eileen Barker (below right) of the LSE moderated the session.

Colloquium

The following day, speakers and delegates were welcomed at Armenian House. Four panels throughout the day brought together speakers from Europe and the United States, interacting with each other and the audience in lively discussions. Panel one on "Contemporary issues in migration, refugee, and diaspora studies" included Professors Khachig Tölölyan (Wesleyan), Peter Loizos (LSE) and Gloria Toticaguena (Nevada), chaired by Dr. Ruth Mandel (UCL). Bringing together examples from Basque people, Armenians, Cyprus, and others, the panel discussed issues of loyalty regarding multiple identities, the place of dissent, sustaining networks of meaning and identity and other issues. In the second panel, moderated by historian Prof. Claire Mouradian (Paris), a different approach to similar questions was evidenced as Thomas Chullikal of the Menuhin Foundation (Brussels) and Emma



D'Costa of Cultural Cooperation (London) addressed: "The public space of diversity: diasporas explored in the media and the arts". Both organisations have considerable experience in presenting different, especially minority cultures to the wider public through the arts (festivals, school education, the internet, and by facilitating networks of diaspora artists). *(continued on page 2)*



MAY

ARMENIAN CULTURAL PERFORMANCE

Friday 23 May
Barbican Hall

COOKERY WORKSHOP

Multicultural Cuisine
Highlighting Armenian Dishes
Thursday 22 May
Acton

JUNE

SPECIAL CONCERT

THE PHAROS SOLOISTS

Wednesday 11 June
St. John's Smith Square

To also mark the birth centenary of Aram Khatchadurian

MUSIC WORKSHOP FOR CHILDREN

Sunday, 15 June

Led by violinist
Levon Chilingirian
and cellist
Alexander Chaushian

JULY

LECTURE

(details forthcoming)

ARMENIAN STUDIES GROUP

(details forthcoming)



Ruth Mandel, Gloria Totoricaguena, Peter Loizos, Dina Kiwan, Susan Pattie, Anny Bakalian, Birgit Brandt, Emma D'Costa, Claire Mouradian, Tom Chullikal

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In the third panel, "Citizenship and Grass-roots: What are the interfaces of Diaspora, Community and the State", scholars who have also worked with education and politics at the local level led the discussion. Dr. Dina Kiwan (Institute of Education), Dr. Birgit Brandt (Community Fund), and Dr. Anny Bakalian (CUNY) looked at the impact of local advocacy groups, different concepts and expectations of citizenship, and the place of education in nurturing new citizens. The final panel, chaired by Dr. Susan Pattie (UCL) featured Dr. Razmik Panossian, Hratch Tchilingirian and Dr. Gloria Totoricaguena, summarising the earlier panels and looking for practical proposals stemming from the discussions.

schools in different European countries. The children listened to the stories and were assisted in illustrating them by the Foundation's resident artists. A series of books has come from this project, including Toumanian's *The Flower of Paradise*, for which Dr. Pattie wrote the introduction, giving background on Armenians for young readers.

The Armenian Institute is grateful to the St. Sarkis Trust for the financial assistance and to Armenian House for the generous use of the building; to Tania Jakobs for her delicious contributions to the proceedings, and to Mrs. E. Simolac for her kind help.

The Armenian Diaspora

In the evening, a roundtable discussion on "The Armenian Diaspora Today" was held with the participation of a large group of scholars. Chaired by Pattie, the panel included Bakalian, Mouradian, Panossian, Tchilingirian, Tölölyan, Theo van Lint, and Pamela Young. Three brief presentations were made on the Armenian communities in Europe (Mouradian), North America (Bakalian), the Mideast (Tchilingirian) and Armenia relations (Panossian). After short reflections by the other panels, a lively discussion followed with the full participation of the audience.

Oral History

Oral histories, or life stories, are becoming ever more popular as ways to enhance what is known about families, ethnic groups, and local communities. It is also very rewarding for individuals who participate, either as the storyteller or the interviewer. William Christian, Jr., a well-known writer, led a daylong workshop on creating oral histories on March 1. The day began with a demonstration of his favoured technique, asking each of the participants to bring in one of their own household objects to talk about. Through this seemingly innocent introduction, personalities quickly came through and it was clear that this method could prove very revealing. A slide-illustrated talk about his own work was then followed



Left (LtoR): Khachig Tölölyan, Razmik Panossian, Claire Mouradian, Pamela Young, Anny Bakalian, Susan Pattie, Hratch Tchilingirian, Theo van Lint. Centre: storytellers Vergine Gulbenkian, Chris Smith, Sally Pomme Clayton. Right: William Christian, Jr.

Storytelling

A storytelling workshop for families followed on Saturday afternoon (February 8th). Top British storytellers performed tales from around the world. Sally Pomme Clayton, Vergine Gulbenkian and Chris Smith entertained with words and song, taking the audience to Armenia, Central Asia, England and Palestine. In the evening Thomas Chullikal gave a video-illustrated lecture about the work of the Menuhin Foundation. He focused on the project "Enfants d'ici, Contes d'ailleurs" for which the Armenian Institute served as advisor. This project took storytellers from four minority cultures in Europe (Armenian, Kurdish, Gypsy, and Berber) into primary

by lunch and a visit to a home where a demonstration took place with a kind volunteer. Miss Molly Davis graciously opened her living room to the group and spoke about her life in Dulwich as she answered questions about different objects in the room. The Armenian Institute will continue to explore the creation and use of oral histories with future workshops and speakers.

“ A society divided in the present cannot agree on the past. ”

Prof. Bhikhu Parekh
on teaching history