

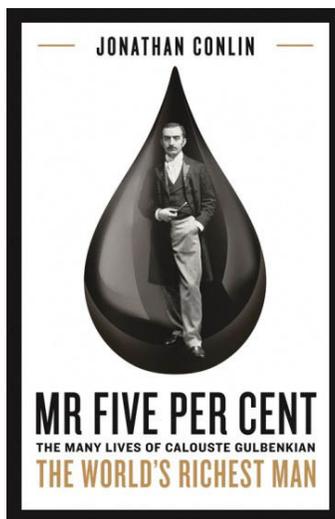


The California State University, Fresno
Armenian Studies Program
and the **Leon S. Peters Foundation**
present

**“CALOUSTE GULBENKIAN (1869-1955)
AND THE ‘PASDURMA PROBLEM’”**

PRESENTED BY

JONATHAN CONLIN, UNIV. OF SOUTHAMPTON



Born into the Armenian merchant elite of Istanbul in 1869, the renowned oil magnate Calouste Gulbenkian made his fortune as a ‘business architect,’ persuading rival oil companies to collaborate for their mutual enrichment, particularly in the Middle East. The violent collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the Armenian Genocide and the attempt to establish a secure “Armenian National Home” at Versailles barely affected Gulbenkian, who appeared uninterested in being a “good Armenian.” His fellow Armenians nonetheless looked to him as benefactor and leader of their diaspora. He was thus appointed to the presidency of the Armenian General Benevolent Union. This talk will consider the biographer’s challenges in addressing what Gulbenkian’s daughter dubbed “the pasdurma problem”: the question of how to situate oneself as a family which showed little interest either in being “good Armenians” or in assimilation. It argues that Gulbenkian’s cosmopolitanism reflected the “amira” class from which he hailed as much as it did that supranational world of multi-national oil companies whose emergence Gulbenkian did so much to foster.

Born in New York, Jonathan Conlin studied history and modern languages at Oxford before undertaking graduate degrees at the Courtauld Institute and Cambridge, where he was subsequently appointed a Fellow of Sidney Sussex College. Since 2006 he has taught history at the University of Southampton. His books include a history of the National Gallery (London), a comparative history of Paris and London and a biography of Adam Smith. In 2019 he published Mr Five Per Cent: The Many Lives of Calouste Gulbenkian, The World’s Richest Man, the product of five years’ research in ten countries.

Tuesday, April 2, 2019 • 7:30 PM

University Business Center • Alice Peters Auditorium • Fresno State

Free Admission. Use permit code-273903-Park in Lot P6 or P5 near the UBC.

**Mr. Five Per Cent: The Many Lives of Calouste Gulbenkian
will be on sale at the lecture.**

For more information about upcoming events contact
the Armenian Studies Program at 559-278-2669.
<http://fresnostate.edu/armenianstudies>

