

HISTORY OF HUMANITIES SERIES

CENTRE FOR HUMANITIES INNOVATION

SCHOOL OF MODERN LANGUAGES & CULTURES

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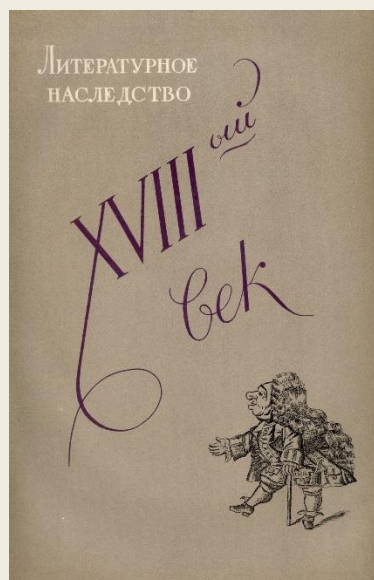
Professor Andrei Zorin

New College, University of Oxford

**The Invention of Russian 18th-Century Studies:
Humanities and the Internalization of Ideology under Stalin**

Wednesday, 18th October 2017, 4.30pm, ER1, A29

**The event is organised as part of the AHRC-funded
Open World Research Initiative (OWRI) programme**



A disciple of the Formalists Viktor Shklovsky and Yuri Tynianov, and later professor to the leader of Soviet semiotics Yuri Lotman, **Grigorii Gukovsky** (1902-1950) is considered the founder of Russian 18th-century literary studies. His forging of this cultural-historical epoch as a critical domain of Soviet humanities scholarship was closely associated with his sincere conversion to a Marxist sociology of literature at the turn of the 1930s – a move that included his publication of a devastating critique of Shklovsky's book on the 18th century for its failure to properly assimilate the sociological turn called for by the ideological imperatives of the socialist state. Gukovsky's own construction of the Russian 18th century was intimately tied to his deep, internal debate about the relationship between scholarship and ideology, the humanities and power, the intelligentsia and history. The lecture will examine how this debate was played out in Gukovsky's writings about the 18th century, as well as about the theory and methodology of literary history, at the height of Stalinism, up until his repression by the state and death in prison in 1950.

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