

## THE ANTHONY CROSS ESSAY PRIZE IN SLAVONIC STUDIES

Fitzwilliam College is pleased to announce the annual competition for the Anthony Cross Essay Prize in Slavonic Studies. It is open to students in Year 12 or the Lower 6th. The prize is intended to encourage students with an interest in history, languages, or literature to consider undertaking university studies in Polish, Russian, or Ukrainian Studies, either as part of a degree in Modern Languages or as part of the joint degree in History and Modern Languages. It is not limited to students already studying Eastern European history or the Polish, Russian or Ukrainian language: any student with an interest in the topic is welcome to submit an essay to the competition.

The prize is offered in celebration of the scholarship of Anthony Cross, who was a fellow of Fitzwilliam College and Professor of Slavonic Studies in the Department of Modern Languages from 1985-2004. Professor Cross played a leading role in developing the field of Slavonic Studies both at Cambridge and in the United Kingdom. He is internationally known for his work on eighteenth-century Russia and Anglo-Russian cultural relations and has published over 400 articles and 25 books.

### ESSAY QUESTIONS FOR 2024

1. Select any single work of Polish, Russian or Ukrainian literature or visual art (a film, a painting, an architectural drawing, or a poster) and discuss the ways in which it reflects some of the principal political and social issues of its age.
2. 'Images of the past are central to concepts of contemporary national identity.' Discuss with respect to either Polish, Ukrainian or Russian culture. You may focus on one work of contemporary literature or art from one of the three countries, or you may examine the rhetoric of contemporary politicians from one or more of the three countries.
3. 'The history of every nation is constantly being rewritten to suit the needs of the present.' Discuss with respect to either Poland, Ukraine or Russia.
4. Select a Polish, Russian or Ukrainian writer, artist or filmmaker and discuss the relevance of their work for the present. Be sure to support your discussion by offering a detailed analysis of one work.
5. 'The current Russian waged war on Ukraine is a war of identity.' Discuss.

**Questions are deliberately open-ended to allow you to select and develop your own approach to the topic.**

## COMPETITION RULES

This essay competition is for students in their penultimate year of education - Year 12 (Eng + Wales), S5 (Scotland), Y13 (NI) or equivalent overseas. International applicants are welcomed but the essay must be written in English. Applicants will be required to enter their details online and to either upload one PDF copy of their essay electronically **or** post a hard copy to:

Schools Liaison Officer  
Fitzwilliam College  
Cambridge  
CB3 0DG

by **6pm on Friday 1st of March 2024**. If the PDF file is too large to submit to the online form, please email your submission to [essaycompetitions@fitz.cam.ac.uk](mailto:essaycompetitions@fitz.cam.ac.uk). Further submission information can be found on the essay competition website: <https://www.fitz.cam.ac.uk/admissions/events-prospective-students/essay-competitions>.

Your submission must be entirely your own work. When submitting your essay you will need to provide contact information for one of your teachers and if necessary we may contact them to verify that your submission is entirely your own work. Students are only permitted to enter one competition and may only submit one entry to their chosen competition. There is a strict limit of five submissions per school for each essay competition. If more than five students from the same school enter the same competition, a teacher from that school will be contacted and asked to select the five entries; failure to do so will result in all submissions from the school to that competition being disqualified.

Essays should not exceed 2500 words, including footnotes, but excluding bibliography. Submitted essays must be typed in English and every page should be numbered and marked with the entrant's name. All entrants must cite sources and secondary literature and provide a list of references at the end of the essay. Guidance on referencing is available on the website.

We regret that it will not be possible for us to provide individual feedback.

## PRIZES

Prizes and certificates will be awarded at Fitzwilliam College during the University Open Days in July. The prize fund is £300, including a first prize of £200. Certificates of commendation may be awarded to runners-up who have impressed the judges. The College reserves the right not to award prizes if there is no entry of sufficient merit.

## SLAVONIC STUDIES AT FITZWILLIAM COLLEGE:

Fitzwilliam is eager to continue the distinguished tradition of Slavonic studies established by Professor Cross. We welcome applications from students who wish to study Slavonic languages, either in combination with another language offered in Modern and Medieval Languages or as part of the joint course in History and Modern Languages. Details here:

<https://www.fitz.cam.ac.uk/academic/courses/modern-and-medieval-languages>

<https://www.fitz.cam.ac.uk/study-us/undergraduate/study/history-modern-languages>

Fitzwilliam is proud of the support it is able to offer its students in Modern Languages. Students on the course in History and Modern Languages can draw on the expertise of our four fellows in History. Many of our MML students choose to spend their year abroad in Eastern Europe, Eurasia, or in countries where a Slavonic language is spoken as a primary or secondary language. Some take language courses in universities, whilst others secure internships or teaching placements. In previous years Fitzwilliam students have travelled to Belarus, Kyrgyzia, Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine. Our students' current or recent year abroad projects include research on literature, theatre, film, art, media studies, history, gender studies and linguistics. They have worked as English teachers, museum guides, translators and parliamentary interns. Students receive help with their year abroad costs from the Fitzwilliam MML Fund, which is supported by generous gifts from our alumni. Each MML student is also eligible to apply for college travel awards to support language study in the vacations.

Former students of Slavonic Studies at Fitzwilliam are presently working as journalists, civil servants, teachers, lawyers and translators, among other occupations.

For further information about the competition or studying Slavonic languages at Fitzwilliam, please contact: Dr. Olenka Z Pevny, University Lecturer in Slavonic Studies – [ozp20@cam.ac.uk](mailto:ozp20@cam.ac.uk)