

### **The Anthony Cross Essay Prize in Russian Studies**

Fitzwilliam College is pleased to announce the inaugural competition for the Anthony Cross Essay Prize in Russian 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 Russian, either as part of a degree in Modern Languages or as part of the new joint degree in History and Modern Languages. It is not limited to students already studying Russian history or Russian 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 80th birthday 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 2017**

1. 'Russian culture is in frequent, often troubled dialogue with the West.' Discuss.
2. 'Russian culture of the 1920s aimed to be revolutionary in both form and content.' Discuss.
3. 'Every revolution in political life is accompanied by a revolution in thinking about the roles of women.' Discuss with reference to any single period of revolutionary change in Russian history.
4. 'It is a distinctive feature of our revolution that it brought the people not only freedom, but also material benefits and the possibility of a prosperous and cultured life' [Stalin, 1935]. Discuss with reference to Soviet history.
5. 'Images of the Russian countryside and its inhabitants are central to debates about Russian national identity.' Discuss.
6. 'Russian history is constantly being rewritten to suit the needs of the present.' Discuss.
7. Select any single work of Russian 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. The choice of work is up to you, but if you are unsure what to choose, consider one of the following literary works: Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*; Gogol's 'Diary of a Madman' or 'The Nose'; Dostoevskii's *Notes from Underground*; Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*; Chekhov's 'Ward Number 6' or *The Cherry Orchard*; Bulgakov's *Master and Margarita*; Chukovskaya's *Sofia Petrovna*; OR one of the following films (many of which may be found on youtube, with subtitles): Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* or *Ivan the Terrible*; Aleksandrov's *Circus*; Chiaureli's *Fall of Berlin*; Tarkovskii's *My Name is Ivan* or *Andrei Rublev*; Kalatozov's *Cranes are Flying*; Shepitko's *Wings*; Abuladze's *Repentance*; Balabanov's *Brother*.

Questions are deliberately open-ended to allow you to select and develop your own approach to the topic. They may be discussed with reference to a wide range of texts, images and periods.

### **Competition Rules**

Essays should not exceed 2500 words, including footnotes, but excluding bibliography. Submitted essays must be typed in English, and every page should be 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.

Please ensure that pages are numbered and that your full name is on each page.

Applicants will be required to enter their details on line and to send a copy of their essay to: [essaycompetition@fitz.cam.ac.uk](mailto:essaycompetition@fitz.cam.ac.uk), or by post to Admissions Office, Fitzwilliam College, Storey's Way, Cambridge, CB3 0DG

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

### **Closing date**

The closing date for entries is 1<sup>st</sup> May 2017. Details of how to enter and submit essays are available on our website.

### **Prizes**

Prizes and certificates will be awarded at Fitzwilliam College during the University Open Days in July 2017. 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.

### **Russian Studies at Fitzwilliam College:**

Fitzwilliam is eager to continue the distinguished tradition of Russian studies established by Professor Cross. We welcome applications from students who wish to study Russian, either in combination with another language offered in Modern and Medieval Languages or as part of the new 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/academic/courses/history-and-modern-languages>

Fitzwilliam is proud of the support it is able to offer its students in Modern Languages, with in-house teaching for Russian, French, Spanish and dedicated assistance from special supervisors in German and Italian at other colleges. 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 Russian-speaking countries. Some take courses in Russian universities, whilst others secure internships or teaching placements. This year we have students in Kazan, Moscow and St Petersburg. In previous years Fitzwilliam students have traveled to Belarus, Kyrgyzia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine. Our students' current or recent year abroad projects include research on contemporary Russian theatre, Russian film, Socialist Realist painting, performance art, women's writing and the history of Soviet linguistics. They have worked as English teachers in Krasnodar, museum guides in St Petersburg and as translators in Moscow. 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 Russian at Fitzwilliam are presently working as journalists, civil servants, teachers, lawyers and translators, among other occupations.

**For further information about the competition or studying Russian at Fitzwilliam, please contact:**

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