



THE ANTHONY CROSS ESSAY PRIZE IN RUSSIAN STUDIES

Fitzwilliam College is pleased to announce the second annual 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 was established in 2017 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 at the University of Cambridge from 1985-2004. Professor Cross has played a leading role in the field of Slavonic Studies 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 2018

1. Select any single work of Russian literature or visual art (a film, a painting, an architectural drawing, or a poster) and make an argument about the ways in which the work questions or affirms key cultural and/or political values of the era when it was created. Make sure your argument takes into account the formal qualities of the work: pay attention not only to 'what' it says or shows, but also to 'how' it says or shows it. 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 'Mumu'; Chekhov's 'Ward Number 6' or *Uncle Vanya*; Zamiatin's *We*; Bulgakov's *Master and Margarita*; Chukovskaya's *Sofia Petrovna*; any of Varlam Shalamov's *Kolyma Tales*; OR one of the following films (most of which may be found on youtube, with subtitles): Protazanov's *Aelita: Queen of Mars*; Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible*; Aleksandrov's *Volga-Volga*; Tarkovskii's *Andrei Rublev*; Kalatozov's *Cranes are Flying*; Shepitko's *Wings*; Abuladze's *Repentance*; Balabanov's *Brother*; Todorovskii's *Hipsters*; Zviagintsev's *Leviathan*.
2. 'Petersburg exemplifies one idea; Moscow exemplifies another.' Discuss.
3. 'Every monument— whether erected to honour Peter the Great, Lenin, Stalin, Putin, the end of a war or the start of a new era—tells us less about its subject than it does about the views of the people who commissioned and created it.' Discuss with reference to any Russian, Soviet or post-Soviet monumental sculpture.
4. 'Soviet citizens came to believe that it was both possible and necessary to transform not only the social order, but also the entire fabric of everyday life: streets, houses, cities, families, even human souls.' Discuss with reference to a single, clearly defined period in Soviet history.
5. 'Life has improved, comrades! Life has become more joyful!— Joseph Stalin, 1935.' Discuss this quotation with reference to Soviet culture of the 1930s.
6. 'The impact of revolutionary change on women's lives is always unexpected, as is the role that women come to play in revolutionary movements.' Discuss with reference to a single, clearly defined period of Russian, Soviet or post-Soviet history. Possible topics include: the role of women radicals in the 1870s, attempts to transform women's roles in the 1920s, or 21st-century protest movements.

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. Successful essays will build their arguments on the careful analysis of primary texts or a critical discussion of secondary accounts.



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 in a list of references at the end of the essay.

CLOSING DATE AND ENTRY PROCEDURE

The closing date for entries is Tuesday 1st May 2018. Applicants will be required to enter their details on line and to send a copy of their essay to: essaycompetition@fitz.cam.ac.uk, or by post to Admissions Office, Fitzwilliam College, Storey's Way, Cambridge, CB3 0DG

Details of how to enter and submit essays are available on our website:

<https://www.fitz.cam.ac.uk/admissions/essay-competitions>

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 2018. 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:

Dr. Susan Larsen, College Lecturer in Russian and Director of Studies in Modern Languages

SL545@cam.ac.uk