

## Philosophy, Sidney Sussex College, 2016

Thinking about the world and our own place in it is as old as humanity. Philosophy, this ancient discipline with its wide range of questions about what we should think and do is essential even today. We can hardly understand our past and present without knowing our ancestors' answers to these questions, and I believe we cannot build a better future for our descendants without progressing further in this field either. I would like to understand this part of our historical heritage and with this understanding also contribute to its development.

In primary school I was mainly interested in history and literature, as well as in mathematics. With this interest, I took a humanities track in Hungary's top high school, where I studied all three subjects at higher level. I took part at various competitions, including a national one in literature, where I twice qualified for the finals, once receiving a gold medal. In 2013, I became an organiser of the student demonstrations against the education policies of the government and joined a small civil rights club, which turned my attention to social science and to moral and political philosophy. In the same year, I was selected to an international youth conference in Berlin, where we discussed discrimination and diversity. I also took up a class in philosophy and immediately fell in love with the subject. Reading classical texts from Heraclitus's fragments to Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* and Heidegger's essays, I developed a particular interest in aesthetics and political philosophy. I achieved 6th place at the main national competition in the subject, and qualified for the IPO 2014, where I received a Silver Medal for my essay on 'what makes art genuine'. In my last two years, I took up extra classes in history and maths at school, and joined the reading group of a Hungarian philosopher, discussing seminal texts by Sandel, Foucault and Danto. Thanks to these, this year I won a national essay contest, reached 5th place at the national philosophy competition and won a gold medal for my essay on the relation of art and philosophy at the IPO 2015. As my readings made me understand the benefits of a profound training in analytic philosophy, I decided to study in the UK.

To prepare, I enrolled in an English-language talent programme, where I took classes in Philosophy, Linguistics and Art History. In Philosophy, we reviewed the main fields and core problems of present-day Anglo-Saxon philosophy based on S. Blackburn's *Think* and some classic texts in metaphysics, epistemology and the philosophy of mind. Given my interest in ethics and political philosophy, I also watched M. Sandel's Harvard lecture series on Justice, and prepared an essay on the significance of Kant's categorical approach to moral reasoning in the context of political decision-making. In Linguistics, we were introduced to the main branches and the most important theoretical frameworks of the discipline, and discussed the relationship between language and society reading D. Crystal's *Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language*. In Art History, after a broad overview of the development of Western art, we discussed the relationship of art and power and the communication between high art and mass culture. In the end, I prepared an essay on Malevich's art theory in the political context of the Russian Revolution. Currently I attend a class on the history of ideas where we discuss the nature of modern science and politics as they emerged in the Late Renaissance and Early Modern Europe.

In my free time I like reading and widening my knowledge in history, sociology, and economics. I also like visiting museums and art theatres, listening to pop and classical music (I used to play the violoncello for 9 years), or following the debates of the House of Commons.

Studying in the UK, I hope to acquire the skills and knowledge that will help me become a critical yet empathetic thinker who can contribute to advancing intellectual inquiry and debate.