

MML (French and Latin), 2022, Christ's College

'Oh! comme la lune a l'air étrange!' Having read *Salomé*, Wilde's queer and minor use of French captured my attention. The abundance of copular phrases, the repetitions in dialogue, the interweaving of two feminine characters, la Lune et la Princesse, and the way the longing Page turns from active to passive on the stage captivated me at once. Moving on to examine Alfred Douglas' translation, I found an absence of crucial nuances: for instance, the lack of phrases stressing the importance of seeing or the loss of the representation of the femme fatale through grammatical elements. Douglas nevertheless does something peculiar: adopting a lofty tone, he renders Wilde's estrangement of French into English. As I became more interested in Francophone literature, I scrutinised a Jean-de-la-Fontaine-anthology I bought in Paris: I observed the fables' context and aesthetic properties, then tried to find similarities in their Latin, English, or Hungarian translations. This novel appreciation has prompted me to pursue a combined course at university to have an adequate notion as to what literary and cultural relations one can find between French and Latin, and how translation works.

I enrolled in Milestone Institute, an advanced studies programme. I studied Verlaine's *Poèmes saturniens*: being mesmerised by the way Verlaine depicts an omnipresent anxiety that both suffocates him and makes for artistic creation, I became interested in Decadence, be it French or English. As a final paper for a close reading course, I looked into the representation of sexual ambiguity and social satire through animalism and Pan culture in 'Gabriel-Ernest' by Saki, who was part of the Uranian circle. Being absorbed by the epoch, I juxtaposed Theocritus' eclogues with Edward Lefroy's Echoes from Theocritus to analyse the latter's treatment of the bucolic homoerotic tradition for the Mary Renault Prize, at which my essay won first prize. Dealing with such topics as the appearance of Pan in literary works as the representation of an unconventional and wild culture throughout history, I could draw parallels between fin-de-siècle literature and the ancient world. An essay on the Shakespearian treatment of Ovidian mythology in *The Winter's Tale* as part of a comparative literature module, the influence of Aristotle's Poetics on Shakespeare and Mandelstam, or the formalist and reader-response analysis of Catullus 64 were also among the inspiring assignments I worked on when I was exploring literary theories with my mentor.

Outside Milestone modules – such as Art History, where I wrote a review of the development of perspective in the early Renaissance, considering ancient antetypes such as the frescoes in the Villa Boscoreale – I looked even further into Humanities: I finished as second in the Hungarian National French Olympiad and passed the DALF C2 exam. Teaching French to a friend ab initio, I observed language acquisition from the opposite side. I have equally studied Russian and a bit of German, allowing me, for example, to read *Onegin* in original Russian. Latin is also a passion I pursue outside of school; nevertheless, I hope to test my knowledge at a C1 language exam in October, so that I can officially correct other people's ungrammatical tattoos. Writing and translating poetry have also been a means of better understanding rhythm and meter. Since I study History and Hungarian Literature on an advanced level, I could peruse the poems of the Hungarian Renaissance poet Janus Pannonius, discern the Horatian heritage in Berzsenyi's poems, or discover implicit allusions to ancient events. I enjoy creative challenges, too: I edit my blog where I post fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and my paintings.

Most importantly, I would like to examine the mainly literary relations between cultures in a multidisciplinary way. Ultimately, my goal is to pursue a career in academia.