

MY STUDIES AND LIFE IN CAMBRIDGE, UK

I have been living and studying in the UK since October 2014. I decided to move here in order to continue my academic career with an MPhil in political thought and intellectual history at the University of Cambridge. Before I came to the UK, I studied political science and sociology at the University of Potsdam.

During my studies in Potsdam, I have developed a particular interest in philosophy and intellectual history. The MPhil in Cambridge seemed to perfectly fit my interests and my career plans. Especially the fact that I was given the chance to work independently on my own research questionings and the high standard of individual supervision in Cambridge attracted me. Until now, my high expectations have been fully satisfied. Besides my own research and the quality of supervision, I particularly benefit from the weekly Research Seminar in Political Thought and Intellectual History. Here, MPhil students have the chance to discuss academic questions with professional scholars from all over the world. It is incredible how fruitful a college community can be. The College brings together people from various disciplines. So far, this has been one of the most fascinating things of my life in the UK. I can share my ideas and perspectives with engineers, biologists and future teachers; and they share their ideas and visions with me. But don't get me wrong: when I speak about this kind of academic exchange, I do not speak about arid discussions. Most emblematic of the actual character of interdisciplinary student life are the daily formal dinners in the old dining hall of my college, Magdalene College.

Here, concentrated and serious academic discourse is accompanied by a glass of good wine, delicious food and humour. Another important aspect of my life in the UK is the English language itself. I learned English in school and since then I have spoken it frequently. But living in the UK and talking to native speakers every day is different. I have always liked and enjoyed the English language, but I have never been fascinated by it. This has changed now. Every day I discover a new side of this language, may it be one of its various beautiful dialects or its tendency to be modest, simple and deeply poetic at the same time. My experience with this language has by far exceeded the stage of mere "improvement"; I am in the midst of a process of real discovery and I enjoy every word I hear or speak.

Here, I've only been able to offer a few sketches of what my life in the UK is like, but I think it's very clear that I'm having a wonderful time, full of learning and experiencing. I want to thank the British Chamber of Commerce in Germany for its generous support, which has played an integral role in making my wonderful new experiences possible.

Tim Karolewicz, Berlin
(currently in Cambridge)

