

PPE offers the possibility of studying power in all its forms, a subject with which I have been preoccupied for several years. Originally interested in political philosophy and anti-capitalism, reading Bertrand Russell's "Proposed Roads to Freedom: Socialism, Anarchism, and Syndicalism" and Jonathan Wolff's "Why Read Marx Today?" and engaging in political activities in local organisations, I soon realised that power and suppression could not adequately be countered solely by philosophical inquiries or economical analysis. This led me to study discourse theory, among others reading Foucault's "Discipline and Punish" (especially his idea of "the power of normalization" attracted me); however, this also turned out to have its flaws (especially its stressing of purely socially (or linguistically) constructed meaning, completely ignoring the fact that meaning is also generated on basis of material conditions). At last realising that my interest in understanding power stemmed from a desire to help oppressed or poor people, to better the lives of others, I read Paul Collier's "The Bottom Billion" and Joseph Stiglitz's "Globalization and its Discontent". Thus, I have recognised the need for each approach to augment one another: no single approach is in itself good enough to understand and change power relations, however logically consistent their theoretical backing. For example, when Pakistan was flooded in August, only a limited amount of Danish emergency aid was giving due to numerous articulations linking Pakistan and Taleban. Also, the optimal distribution of the emergency aid was discussed. PPE's multitude of conceptual and methodological approaches present the possibility of understanding and remedying such complex cases, of conducting complementary studies, and I hope to employ my education and future research in the service of those less fortunate than me.

Alongside my interest in power, I have enjoyed occupying myself with sociology, especially with identity formation in relationship with music. My academic curiosity in sociology was further fuelled by my participation in and winning of the Danish contest "Upcoming Researchers". Navigating the academic world and designing a project in order to both quantitatively and qualitatively compare music, politics and sports as identity markers was interesting and challenging, and I learned about the large range of methodological questions one must inevitably pose oneself in the process of investigating something as diffuse and difficultly defined as identity. The award money from "Upcoming Researchers" allowed for me to be employed at "Consulting Sociologist" where I learned how sociological (and social scientific) research and collection of empirical data is done in practice. But my single most important realisation was the realisation that my curiosity and desire to understand social phenomena scientifically was large.

This delving into the academic world – discourse theory and social constructionism, Marxism, the discrepancy between theory and empirical studies in my "Upcoming Researchers" project – confronted me with epistemological questions, and I recognise that this branch of philosophy is vital to scientific studies.

Also, I play badminton and bass guitar (and teach both), and I have done so for several years. Practicing both sports and music alongside going to school (and participating in "Upcoming Researchers" outside of school) has taught me to manage my time and to be disciplined, but also to allow myself time to relax when needed.

Summing up, I have taken a keen interest in the study of power, this being economical, political or ideological power, and I hope to employ my studies to formulate precise critiques and allow for improvements.

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