

Narrative Statement

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The primary contribution the research trip made to my project was in the accumulation of primary sources. The majority of my time in Europe was spent at the *Historical Archives of the European Union*, housed by the *EUI*, in Florence Italy. Here I spent numerous days reading through the archives of the EEC, OEEC, and OECD for information that was pertinent to the development of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). In total I copied over 2,000 pages of primary documents that will form the evidential basis for the first half of my dissertation.

A significant portion of my project is towards a re-interpretation of the events and ideas which created the conditions for the integration of agriculture in Europe. Such a project would not be possible without the opportunity to review the original historical documents that reflect the context within which the economic, social and political importance of agricultural policy and rural governance were articulated by political elites following WWII. The money provided by the European Commission – through the CES grant – made this primary research possible. It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of this grant as it provided me the time and money to spend over 150 hours in the archives attempting to understand the relations between agricultural policy and questions such as labour supply, population growth, and economic/political stability in post-war Europe.

The archival research will also become important as I attempt to de-bunk a number of popular conclusions that have been drawn regarding agricultural governance in Europe. The CAP, similar to other massive public welfare programs, has begun to develop a certain ‘common sense’ regarding its origins and purposes. I will interrogate this ‘common sense’ by drawing on primary documents such as OEEC meeting minutes and early EEC policy papers. By using primary documents I will be much better positioned in presenting an alternative narrative on the development of the CAP.

In addition to archival research, I utilized the remainder of the funds to conduct an exploratory research trip to the Netherlands and Belgium. Here I was able to make contacts with a number of academics/researchers working in the areas of European agricultural policy or European rural sociology. These individuals included Dirk Strijker from the *University of Groningen*, Hub Zwart from *Radboud University Nijmegen* and Thierry Kesteloot from *Oxfam International*. Through these contacts and meetings I was able to receive feedback on ideas for my thesis, provided suggestions on sources to consult and given possibilities for future funding. Furthermore, I secured commitments from individuals who will be willing to review my upcoming work.

Though the bulk of my time in Florence was spent in the archives, I also made liberal use of *EUI* facilities and faculty. During my stay in Florence I was able to attend seminars at the *EUI*, as well as speak with faculty members and graduate students working on various aspects of European integration. The *EUI* library also proved to be a valuable resource as I was able to access books and documents which are not housed at Carleton. In conclusion, I thank CES for the generous grant which funded my archival research during June 2006.