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Mellon Foundation Area and International Studies Fellowships for Incoming Graduate Students
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The Mellon Foundation Area and International Studies Fellowships allowed me to visit Madrid, Spain during the summer of 2018. My research interests lie in how bureaucratic states functioned during the early modern period and how literature portrayed the effects of the ruling class upon the development of urban spaces and the people that inhabited them.

I spent most of my days at the Biblioteca Nacional and the Archivo de la Villa, where I researched documents related to Madrid's development as a city after being declared the capital in 1561. I looked over printed materials from the sixteenth and seventeenth century, manuscripts that were related to city ordinances, correspondences from various kings that directly affected the zoning of neighborhoods within the city, as well as letters related to the decision to relocate the capital back to Madrid after a brief stay in Valladolid. I attended the Día Internacional de los Archivos at the Archivo Histórico Nacional and at that event I saw presentations by various researchers from the center. These were intimate talks with four to five people in the audience listening and asking questions to top experts within their fields. During this time, I viewed among other things papal bulls that allowed for the founding of the Complutense University, the book used by members of the Trinitarian Order to find and free Miguel Cervantes from captivity, and documents that were posted throughout Europe during the seventeenth century that announced a duel between two prominent Spanish figures. Access to these lectures greatly helped me narrow the scope of my research interests and showed how the ruling class formed educational institutes, handled international diplomacy as well as domestic disputes and rivalries.

Although I spent the majority of my time in the capital I also visited nearby cities of great historical importance. Among these were Toledo, Valladolid, Ávila, and Segovia. These additional trips outside of Madrid provided me the opportunity to visit important sites and also enriched my cultural experience. During my time in Toledo I visited an exhibit on the Spanish Hapsburgs at the Museo de Santa Cruz and also went to the Museum of the Army, which houses an extensive collection of materials related to the military activity of Spain during the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries. At the Monastery of Saint Dominic of Silos, I saw the painter El Greco's first commissioned work in Spain as well as his burial place. My Mellon Foundation award also gave me the chance to travel to Valladolid, where I visited an exhibit at the Casa de Cervantes, and the Museo Nacional de Escultura. Valladolid, Toledo, and Madrid have all been capitals of Spain and my time in those cities enabled me to make a comparative analysis of their urban geography and how the space of these cities reflected royal ambitions. During a brief visit to Ávila I went to Saint Teresa's childhood home as well as the city's 12th century cathedral. In Segovia, I saw a second century Roman aqueduct and walked the same streets as one of Spanish literature's more memorable picaresque characters, Pablos. I greatly appreciate the Mellon Foundation and Institute for Regional and International Studies for funding my time abroad, which has helped advance my research work and will aid me tremendously in the writing of my thesis.