

Business Case

For my MA project, I am translating a text on priests and beekeeping in 19th and 20th century France. The article's aim is to study the link which has long existed between the worlds of apiculture and Catholicism and try to comprehend the influence the latter had on the advancement of beekeeping techniques in France.

The characteristic which first drew me to this paper was the way the author discussed a scientific, technical subject in the context of rural history. As Samuel Gicquel, the author, states, essays on beekeeping usually appear in scientific journals, in the context of broader work on climate change or biodiversity. While these texts are important in their own right, an essay on the advancements of French beekeeping published in a journal on History and Rural Societies promised a novel approach. This essay examines beekeeping from a social perspective, looking at how beekeeping associations and unions in 19th and 20th century France were founded and ran, how they taught the craft to local people and what motivated their actions. Most importantly, it investigates the long and intricate relationship between these associations and the Catholic clergy, whilst illuminating the technical breakthroughs proposed by many religious beekeeping figures. The character of the 'beekeeping-priest' runs through the essay, as it reportedly did through French pastoral history. However, as with much social history, such figures exist mainly in storytelling and the public consciousness.

To better understand the relationship between Catholic priests and beekeeping which defined much of the practice's history in France, I would relish the opportunity to visit a local beekeepers association and be able to have in-person conversations with its members. This would allow me not only to observe the functioning of such an association in France (as an amateur beekeeper, I am a member of an equivalent society in this country and would thus be interested to compare the two) but to question how prevalent the influence of Catholicism was to their own perception and practice of beekeeping.

If possible, I would like to visit the [*Syndicat Interdépartemental des Apiculteurs de la Région Parisienne*](#), an association based on the outskirts of Paris. They are holding a free conference on 20 March which I would like to attend, entitled *Planter pour les abeilles, beauté et diversité dans nos paysages* which will be led by Yves Darricau, the author of several books on beekeeping and ecology. Firstly, the subject of the conference (what to plant to encourage bees, and a broader discussion of the diverse French countryside) would be incredibly useful to discuss terminological points from my source text and to ask questions about the technical advancements that religious figures made in beekeeping (such as the Voirnot and Warré hive models). Secondly, the conference would itself represent an opportunity to be among modern French beekeepers and have fruitful discussions about their hobby and how they perceive its history, especially in relation to Catholicism.

Whilst in Paris, I would also take the opportunity to visit the celebrated bookshop of the [*Syndicat National d'Apiculture*](#), the national French beekeeping association, to look for more testimonials concerning the rural history of French beekeeping.

As the conference is free, I am asking for assistance with the travelling costs getting to and from Paris and the conference and accommodation. The current cheapest Eurostar ticket return price for this date (20 March) is £138.00 and a Navigo day pass for Paris travel is EUR

8.45. The cheapest hostel bed for one night is around £35 according to [Hostelworld](#). This would bring the approximate total to **£181.00**.