

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

323R
Colegio de Mexico
Mexican history

FROM: WB

DATE: June 11, 1947

TO:

DHS		NHS
JM		JM

COMMENTS:

FEB 25 1948

SUBJECT: Letter of May 22 from Daniel Cosío Villegas

Cosío's proposed project would seem to have definite merit and to be worth investigating. A sizable monograph from him on the history of the Mexican Revolution would be a basic work for the interpretation of modern Mexican social and cultural history.

It would seem to have an additional item in its favor in that Mexican historians, like other Latin Americans, are given to writing on periods before 1850, for reasons of safety and through a lack of willingness to attempt objectively to interpret the recent past. Cosío, through his own knowledge of the 20th century in Mexico and through his ability to get at valuable materials with relative ease, would be in a privileged position to prepare an important study with definite implications for the humanities and the social sciences in the Latin American field. His writing has consistently been to the point and objective, even when objectivity might have less than pleasant consequences. I feel that he has both the training and the experience to evaluate incidental and fragmentary studies on the Revolution and to produce on his own a work of fundamental importance for the understanding of Mexico since 1900, which is after all the real Mexican period.

I do not know whether the fact that Cosío mentions a grant from the Colegio as improper would mean that he would feel embarrassed by having a grant made through the Colegio or administered by it, for his work. Offhand I can see no difficulty in such a procedure since he would be carrying forth a program of research and interpretation which would fit in well with the Colegio's program as begun in the past and carried on at present. He might be said, under such circumstances, to be changing from administrative to scholarly work. If there is any difficulty in administering aid through the Colegio, I should anticipate no such difficulty through the Institute of History and Anthropology or the Department of History in the Faculty of Philosophy of the National University. My feeling would be that administration of any assistance through the Colegio would be preferable, if this could be arranged.

It would seem perfectly justifiable to inquire to what extent Cosío would plan to give up all other activities during a period covered

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by a grant, so that he might undertake the research mentioned. He will doubtless be glad to provide a more detailed description of what he has in mind, without having it necessarily imply that assistance is practically certain. On the whole, this looks to me like a possibility worth sympathetic consideration.

WB:MPB

copy to WB