

RECALLING ANGEL MARIA GARIBAY

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I often reflect on the kindly help, encouragement and motivation I received from Father Ángel María Garibay K. during my many sojourns in Mexico.

I first visited Mexico in 1935. At that time I became well acquainted with Dr. Manuel Gamio. I had read and studied his book *Hacia un México Nuevo*, which had been published that same year. I also took a class from Dr. Alfonso Caso at the Universidad. These two eminent Mexican scholars prompted my return to the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México during 1937-38 to secure a Master's degree. My classes included Náhuatl from Prof. Wigberto Jiménez Moreno.

In 1941-42 I returned to the Universidad to study for the Ph. D. degree. In 1942 Dr. Gamio became director of the Instituto Indigenista Interamericano. It was during Dr. Gamio's years as director that I met and formed a lasting friendship with Dr. Miguel León-Portilla.

Father Garibay's *Llave del Náhuatl* was published in 1940. The volume became my constant companion, since it was years later that I secured personal copies of Olmos and Carochi. My thesis project was the *Códice en Cruz*. During 1941 and 1942 I regularly spent evenings with the Father puzzling over the Náhuatl texts and the colonial glyphs of the Codex. Father Garibay then resided in an apartment facing the plaza at Villa Guadalupe. I would knock on the huge wooden doors that faced the plaza and he would welcome me and accompany me to his upstairs apartment. We would spread the *Códice en Cruz* on the carpeted floor and study the Náhuatl texts and the accompanying glyphs. I recall his utter delight when we encountered the Náhuatl text and the glyph of the *Túmulo imperial* of Emperor Charles V. His insight and counsel measurably enhanced the quality of my study of the *Códice en Cruz*.

With the inception of the translation of the Náhuatl text of the *Floretine Codex* in 1950, I frequently compiled a sizable list of Náhuatl

terms and phrases that seemed to defy translation. When the problems mounted, I regularly arranged a stay in Mexico to confer with Father Garibay and Byron McAfee. By the 1950's Father Garibay had moved to Buen Tono 347. For years he and McAfee met every Wednesday morning to study and translate Náhuatl texts, Whenever I arrived in México they graciously invited me to join them and shifted their labors to the *Floretine* texts that were causing me difficulty. On a Wednesday about 10:30, I would announce my arrival at the gate. The Father's sister would invite me into the home and call upstairs: "Viene el señor", or "Viene el señor americano".

Upon the arrival of McAfee, there was a brief discussion of recent publications. Forthwith, Father Garibay would don a green visor, sit at the table and prop a Paso y Troncoso edition of Sahagún's text on a reading stand, with McAfee at his right shoulder and I to his left. He would read a paragraph of Náhuatl text in an impassioned voice and immediately render his Spanish translation. McAfee, who in most cases had studied the text during the week, would suggest alternate renditions. Thus we continued during the morning hours. The spontaneity and abandon of the threesome was ever evident.

As I reflect on my studies of *Cultura Náhuatl* in Mexico, I take pride in the number of eminent Mexican scholars I list as my university professors, and I treasure the warm, cordial friendship I shared with Father Garibay.