

Poetic Proverbs for Contemplation

To my Power Points, I often add the “proverbios” of the early 20th c. Spanish poet, Antonio Machado, and those of the later 20th c. Argentine poet, Antonio Porchia. Both men lived simply, loved deeply, and are cherished still as poets in their respective homelands. I don’t know if Porchia ever read Machado. But in any case, their sensibilities were strikingly similar. – Jim Burklo

Antonio Machado – Proverbios

*Tras el vivir y el soñar
está lo que más importa:
despertar.*

**After living and dreaming
comes what matters most:
waking up.**

*“Buena es el agua y la sed;
buena es la sombra y el sol;
la miel de flor de romero,
la miel de campo sin flor.”*

**Good is water and thirst;
good is shade and sunlight;
the honey of rosemary flowers,
the honey of a land without flowers. – Machado**

*Caminante, son tus huellas
el camino, y nada más;
caminante, no hay camino,
se hace camino al andar.*

**Wayfarer, the only way
Is your footsteps, there is no other.
Wayfarer, there is no way,
You make the way as you go. (or You make the road by walking.)
-- Machado**

Lo indomesticable del hombre, no es lo malo que hay en él: es lo bueno.

That in man which cannot be domesticated is not his evil but his goodness. -- Porchia

*No es el yo fundamental
eso que busca el poeta,
sino el tú esencial.*

It is not the fundamental “I” that the poet seeks, but the essential “you”. - Machado

*Enseña el Cristo: a tu prójimo
Amarás como a ti mismo,
Mas nunca olvides que es otro.*

*Dijo otra verdad:
Busca el tú que nunca es tuyo
Ni puede serlo jamás.*

**Christ teaches love your neighbor
As yourself. But never forget
He is someone else.**

**He spoke another truth:
Seek the you that is never yours
And can never be. - Machado**

VOICES by Antonio Porchia

Treat me as you should treat me, not as I should be treated.

Trátame como debes tratarme, no como merezco ser tratado.

The summits guide, but among summits.

Las alturas guían, pero en las alturas.

Mud, when it leaves the mud, stops being mud.

El lodo, apartándolo del lodo, no es más lodo.

Only the wound speaks its own word.

Habla con su propia palabra sólo la herida.

That in man which cannot be domesticated is not his evil but his goodness.

Lo indomesticable del hombre, no es lo malo que hay en él: es lo bueno.

When I believe that the stone is stone and the cloud cloud, I am in a state of unconsciousness.

Cuando creo que la piedra es piedra, que la nube es nube, me hallo en un estado de inconsciencia.

Suffering does not follow us. It goes before us.

El dolor no nos sigue: camina adelante.

We become aware of the void as we fill it.

Percibimos el vacío, llenándolo.

Following straight lines shortens distances, and also life.

El ir derecho acorta las distancias, y también la vida.

Sometimes I light a lamp at night so as not to see.

A veces, de noche, enciendo una luz para no ver.

Only a few arrive at nothing, because the way is long.

Sólo algunos llegan a nada. porque el trayecto es largo.

I know what I have given you. I do not know what you have received.

Qué te he dado, lo sé. Qué has recibido, no lo sé.

To wound the heart is to create it.

Herir al corazón es crearlo.

The soul of all is only the soul of each one.

El alma de todos sólo es el alma de cada una.

The sun illumines the night, it does not turn it into light.

El sol ilumina la noche, no la convierte en luz.

A large heart can be filled with very little.

Un corazón grande se llena con muy poco.

My neighbor's poverty makes me feel poor: my own does not.

La pobreza ajena me basta para sentirme pobre; la mía no me basta.

We see by means of something which illumines us, which we do not see.

Vemos por algo que nos ilumina; por algo que no vemos.

If you climb up step by step, you'll always find yourself level with a step.

Quien asciende peldaño a peldaño, se halla siempre a la altura de un peldaño.

In order to reach some heights, I don't lower them: I raise them higher.

Para poder alcanzar ciertas alturas, no las bajo: las levanto más.

Being someone is being one alone. Being someone is loneliness.

Ser alguien es ser alguien solo. Ser alguien es soledad.

Man lives measuring, and he's the measure of nothing. Not even of himself.

El hombre vive midiendo, y no es medida de nada. Ni de sí mismo.

A hundred men, together, are the hundredth part of a man.

Cien hombres, juntos, son la centésima parte de un hombre.

They'll say you're walking down the wrong path, if you're walking down your path.

Dirán que andas por un camino equivocado, si andas por tu camino.

We have a world for each, but we don't have a world for all.

Tenemos un mundo para cada uno, pero no tenemos un mundo para todos.

My poverty isn't complete: it lacks me.

Mi pobreza no es total: falta yo.

Let each carry their own guilt and there will be no guilty ones.

Lleve cada uno su culpa y no habrá culpables.

To be in company is not to be with someone, but to be in someone.

Estar en compañía no es estar con alguien, sino estar en alguien.

The evil of not believing is believing a little.

El mal de no creer es creer un poco.

A wing is neither heaven nor earth.

Un ala no es cielo ni tierra.