

In memory of Omar Parra Rozo

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It's hard to write about the person who shared his life with me, and now he accompanies me from Heaven, because the memories, the mourning for his physical absence and the nostalgia for all the shared overcome by tears and sadness. However, remembering him is like a balm that relieves my spirit because in evoking a life full of values and qualities my soul is flooded again with joy. On the day of his departure, who celebrated the ceremony of his Passover in the Lord synthesized in two words what was his life: "intelligence and spirituality." In this brief writing, I agree. I also thank God for allowing me to accompany him in much of the way he traveled.

Omar Antonio Parra Rozo (1957-2016) was a man of tremendous heart, prodigious memory, and amazing intelligence. Tireless reader, dedicated writer, educator and researcher and, above all, an example of life. I always admired his generosity, simplicity, and creativity that embodied in his writings and his classes; his kindness in dealing with people, his prudence in handling stressful situations and his tireless desire to help. He stood out in the labor, educational and social settings for his chivalry, his responsibility, commitment and good humor. He kept the idea of preserving children's abilities, being surprised at the world and amazed at the smallest details around them.

He knew how to connect *The Little Prince*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Winnie the Pooh*, *Pinocchio*, *Peter Pan*, the superheroes and, in general, the children's world with works by such complex authors as Zygmunt Bauman, Gaston Bachelard, Richard Feynmann, Paul Feyerabend, Eduardo Punset, Jorge Wagensberg, Hans Georg Gadamer, Roald Hoffmann, Susan Sontag, Roland Barthes, Paul Auster, Siri Hustvedt, Oliver Sacks, Roger Bartra or Umberto Eco, to mention just a few of the many authors he read and admired. He also managed to relate them to the works of his writer friends Jairo Anibal Niño and Fernando Soto Aparicio, and of course with Jorge Luis Borges, whose work had a special place in his heart, in our travels, and in our library.

His students do not forget the funny connections that he drove them to find among the subjects of his classes and books or children's movies that were topical. The riddles and hieroglyphs that they had to solve to start each day of face-to-face or virtual study and which, at first, could seem to be non-existent connections, but then they became deep reflections that reflected in the works or discussions that took place in the class. His spirit was enriched and satisfied by recognizing changes in his disciples' thinking, which corresponded to those he intended to achieve with his rigorously planned classes weeks in advance.

Narrative, care, literature, neuroscience, neuro pedagogy, brain, cinema, mythology, disease, and death were favorite subjects that he worked hard and kept him awake at night. He was an enthusiastic reader; he read avidly the books that each Saturday acquired to enrich his ideas and enthusiastically wrote them immediately so that they did not escape. He read to be happy, he said it himself. So the best gift he could get was a book. When someone asked my opinion about a gift for him, I would say, "Give him a book, which makes him very happy."

From his readings in books and magazines, his vision of the environment that surrounded him and his amusing gatherings that arose at any moment, took shape all his writings, articles for magazines, stories and novels (unedited), texts that I had the privilege of knowing and check firsthand, like "freshly baked bread." His lectures on various subjects and for different audiences were accompanied by playful and artistic presentations to show that knowledge if it were complex, could be made easy and enjoyable. I remember one in particular, called *The investigation is a children's thing*, which he exhibited many times in national scenes and abroad, and that was frequently asked because it never lost its validity despite the years since he first introduced it.

In the institutions where he worked as a teacher and administrative (Javeriana University, Santo Tomás University, National University of Colombia, University of Sabana and Military University of Nueva Granada) he was recognized for his amazing work capacity, his responsibility, his interest in welfare of peers and encouraged young people to study and consolidate their life plans. He gave them all the necessary push not to fall or leave the road. It was proverbial his patience and respectful attitude for those who did not share his ideas or had divergences with his approaches. A complete teacher, who left us all his teachings.

He directed the journals *Hallazgos e Innovo*, of the University Santo Tomás; he was a member of the board and editorial committee of the *Latin American Journal of Bioethics*, of the Military University New Granada, and a member of the board and editorial committee of the magazine *Hallazgos*. He made part of the scientific committee of the journal *Advances in Nursing*, of the National University, where they learned about their personal and professional conditions, their dedication, their creativity, their love for work and their contributions to education and research.

Those who were his friends always found in him a word fit for the moment, a joke that brought them smiles, advice, applause for their triumphs and even a scolding, when he thought they were getting off the right track. He guessed his most unknown circumstances, such as the pregnancies or the dates when his children would be born, which always surprised them despite having happened more than once.

As a wife, it was always a pleasure for me to share the acknowledgments he received for his achievements and executions. His academic degrees, his postdoctoral degrees, his *honoris causa* doctorate of the National University Daniel Alcides Carrión (Peru), his designation as honorary professor of the National University of Colombia, the medals awarded by the University Santo Tomás and the Military University New Granada. All those acknowledgments he received them with the simplicity that always characterized him and, at the same time, with the head up and satisfaction to be recognized within the best.

Today, a few days before the first year of his departure, I continue to receive tributes, messages, and testimonies that give me the certainty that his teachings passed through classrooms, work meetings, occasional meetings, social receptions and casual conversations, and that they took root in the lives of their students, their colleagues, their acquaintances, their friends and, of course, in mine, that was one with his own.