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Álvaro Salvador (AS): What do you believe is the importance in your poetry of your deep knowledge of music? And of drawing, and of painting?

David Rosenmann-Taub (DRT): Poetry, music, and painting are ways of expressing thought: different languages: verbal, musical, plastic. You'll be able to see this in *Almería*, which is about to be published by Pre-Textos. Isaac Albéniz composed, in music, a poem. To leave a record of my existence through these languages comes naturally to me, like breathing. As for deep knowledge, if the knowledge is not at its absolute maximum, what is done will be either mediocrity or failure.

DRT: Rhythm is a constant phenomenon in the cosmos, biologically: starting with breathing and heartbeats everything falls under rhythm. Drawing, painting, music, and poetry: rhythmic thought. Real music is poetry, and also painting. True painting is also music: it has its own rhythm. Rhythm has a meaning, an expressive function. Tonality and atonality exist in all the arts. For each art, rhythm determines the conditions for relating one element to another: how to emphasize them, confront them with each other. The interplay of syllables is the same as counterpoint. Phonics in music is the search for equilibrium, the contrast of sonorities, the harmonic or the inharmonic: sounds in agreement, sounds at war. Tonality, rhythmic groupings, and their alterations are what rhyme is in poetry. The value of silence is of fundamental importance in poetry and music, equivalent to the distribution of space in painting, sculpture, dance, or theater.

AS: One notices in your poetry a stylization of the popular poetic tradition, not just of Chile, but more generally. Is that done consciously or does it arise in the process of your creative development?

DRT: What is considered popular sometimes has substance. Direct acquaintance with some Araucanos affected me.

AS: The tetralogy *Cortejo y Epinicio* took many years in becoming what it is. Do you consider your creative process as a work in progress?

DRT: In the recent publication of all four volumes by Ediciones LOM, the first volume contains an explanation of why it is called *Cortejo y Epinicio*: the four stages of life. I always saw it in its complete form; life confirmed what I had intuited. To do it took time, but I was perfectly clear as to what I wanted to do from the beginning. It's one thing to plan a work, another to realize it. How to do right by myself. Not to betray myself. Eighty years is an instant. What is indispensable is the testimony, with certitude, of the self. I am not a slave of time. I enjoyed the youthfulness of my grandfather. My parents were ageless. With them I knew what intelligence was, and what it meant to have a mind that is fresh and without prejudices. An influence that I keep with me.

AS: One of the most noticeable features of your poetic trajectory is the existence of long periods of silence. What are those periods due to? Do they have to do with the difficulties of poetic creation or simply with personal circumstances?

DRT: One thing is to write, another to publish. There has not been a day when I haven't written. From the age of two, I dictated to my father or my mother. Sometimes the thought manifests itself to me in music, in drawing. To publish is not easy. Interrupt my creative work? I have never experienced that.

AS: We know that for you poetry is, in a certain way, a process of essentializing the word. To do so, however, you have not spurned forms proper to conversational and even realist poetry, which lends your work a very remarkable singularity. What could you clarify for us about this aspect?

DRT: What is fundamental for me is to be exact. Everything that permits that exactitude, I put in the service of the work.

AS: What meaning do the labels *vanguardista* or *neovanguardista* have for you, which you also sometimes use?

DRT: For me, there are not *vanguardistas* or classicists or romantics. There are artists, or not. The *vanguardista* designation overlooks that we exist in time. I'm concerned with making art, not with being avant-garde or rearguard. Real art is always of now.

AS: One of your central themes is religion, but always treated in a very unorthodox way. What do religion or religions mean for a poet?

DRT: For me they mean nothing, because it makes no sense to me to take into consideration what I have not personally verified. Even fantasy is one of the many resources for expressing truth. One of the least religious expressions is religion. Christ is a manifestation of the truly human. And Jehovah allows me to show the inhuman. When it's a matter of truly religious people, as is the case with John of the Cross or Teresa of Ávila, how did it go for them in their religious milieu? Ingenuousness is also human.

AS: Sexuality, eroticism, are not very present in your poetry, although they sometimes crop up, are suggested. Is it a delicate subject?

DRT: They are present in many aspects of my poetry. With respect to what is delicate, it's as if you were to ask me, "Is mathematics a delicate subject?"

AS: What is your opinion of poetry committed to social concerns or that is directly political?

DRT: Human history is always the same play with different actors. If we see the expression of the Venus de Milo: "I do not want to look at the world; I look far, far away. I don't want to look at those who are looking at me": it is a sculpture for any time. The *Preludes and Fugues* of Bach, *Gaspard de la Nuit* of Ravel will always be as if written just now. Poetry is committed to beauty. What is more beautiful than truth?