

Illustration

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(CONTEMPORARY ARGENTINE ARTIST, 1931-2016)

FROM "TROITS TETES" (MACCIO) TO "MAN HAS DIED" (FOUCAULT)

"Troits tetes" was in the exhibitions of Paris (1968) and New York (1970) before arriving in Buenos Aires. It is a work that anticipates what would happen with postmodernity. The three situations of the face in rapid movement, always wrapped in bandages, avoids seeing the terror installed in society. This painting is born concomitantly with Foucault's sentence in "Words and things" (1966) when he expresses "man has died." Macció's philosophical interpretation on the dramatic era that was approaching is touching by its clarity and premonition.

The tragedy that the Greeks invented had the tenor of a prophecy that over the centuries became the usual way of life. From lyrical poetry they turned to tragedy to satisfy the real needs, becoming a public ritual. It helped to think with nobility. Its introduction is due to Tespis of Icaria around 550 A.C. and his creators were Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. Today the occurring drama is not theater, it moves through the streets of the big cities turned into an incredible natural scene with millions of actors who act by the obligatory nature imposed by human society through power. The script is arbitrary and circumstantial, in an amphitheater, where everyone moves at the same time without recognizing the others as if they were not part of their own selves. Pericles, the greatest democrat, at the end of that Greek's golden age had already prophesied: "long ago I warned you of the risk engendered by democracy."

In postmodernism there is lack of the great stories, but this is not only about absence, but that man in his unconsciousness has lost his belief in them. Petty stories occupy today the trivial worldliness in which existence is consumed. That is why this conceptualization of a fragmentary, small, fleeting reality is in force. Man accepts them for subsistence. The great stories promised a future that no longer harbors faith, faced with man's existential exhaustion. This position derives from having worked from the most remote times for an objective that was never reached at a spiritual level. The accumulated history has crumbled it with its lack of answers, with existences that end up being a tragic distraction of nature. The progress in knowledge has inevitably faced a metaphysical alley without any solution whatever the ideology or the language invoked.

Communication today plays a role that has remod-

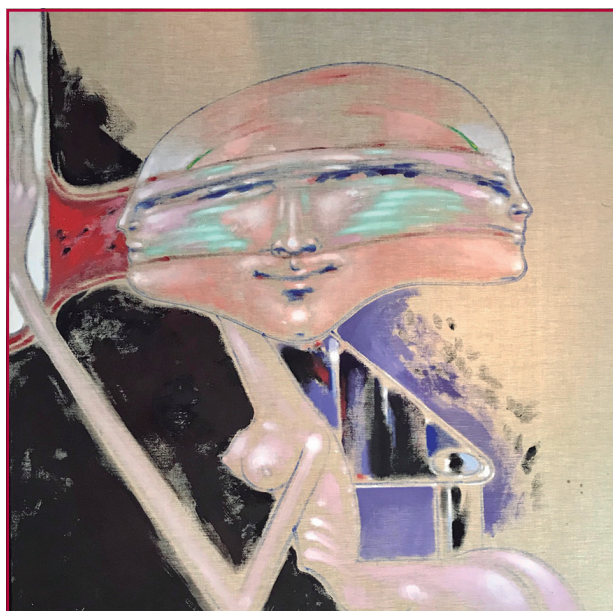


Figure 1. "Troits tetes"

eled human life. It informs, maintains the expectation about the next announcement and acts as a decoy to use the resource of the individual multiplied by millions of actions that favor power. The anonymous man through information simply tries to keep the story, which is small, repetitive and fleeting, speculative for the purposes of consumer economy. The story is partial, interested, invoked by the power. The differences - sometimes diametrically opposed - between the same information, show the struggle for hegemonic positions in the management of the social mass. The information markets resources or ideas. It is interested in her praxis. Power seizes the media. Here, subjectivity is lost. The being is important but only as a member of a mass to be part of a sufficient number that serves technocapitalism. The subject is numbed with the enchantment of the media. He is captured for purposes he ignores.

Man is neither a strict animal nor a superior being. "Intermediate being," he needs intrigue and suspicion because his essence is built with the consciousness and fear of death. Consciousness built his conduct between virtue and guilt. Being gregarious, he needs the social

environment to survive because of his anguish of loneliness. This situation between death and guilt turns him into a hypocritical animal in order to survive. An opportunist of life. His fear of death, suffering and loneliness is such that he takes advantage of the opportunity at the expense of the "other." He does not renounce to sin or the gods, while with an inquisitive gesture he sees the way to rise to success and power and become himself that god which is venerated.

He has reached a point where his own path of desire does not include the authenticity of death as the ultimate goal. He is full of imaginations, fruit of fear and its culture of survival. And this has led him to be a hallucinated animal. Fear and greed have not allowed him to be what he should have built. This "unfixed animal" of Nietzsche, and also of Foucault, has allowed himself to be mistreated by a progress that has squandered his intelligence based only on increasingly positivist intentions, to the point that his energy rises because of the matter he sees and touches. The essential of his existential comprehension has become insignificant, which paradoxically, is the attribute that occupies the emptiness of his being, invisible aspect, but so solid, that could have placed him in the position that corresponds to him by natural act of intelligence and knowledge. He grew where he should not. He was never aware that the consciousness of fear, the existential anguish, was nonsense. This drew him to the vices of lust, selfishness, pride and greed. The selfless society slipped away without him ever being able to sustain it in history, which is invariably repeated with reason supporting instinct. Today he trembles at his own vision when alone he contemplates the cosmos.

Had he understood his "natural interlude" he would not have improperly pounced on progress in order to hide his greedy and ambitious nature. He would have stationed himself in the affection and understanding of the "other," assuming the reality that fear belongs to all, moving away from the dread of the intimate inquisition of his conscience with which he patrols his days. A conjunction of good and evil alienates him, preventing him from being an animal that understands the situation he inhabits. Confused, he refuses social justice because it sets him back in his conquests and accepts hypocrisy in disguise so as not to feel marked. He has become a forger of his possibility, his origin, and his destiny. He supports his work in a metaphysics shaped at his convenience, to which he comes with explanations and questions that are only decompressions of his existential anguish. He suffers what he could never assume: his nature. It will be recognized that it was the result of the development of his conscience, but actually it is his conscience the one that warned him of his precariousness. However, fear surmounted him. He has always been dominated by the visceral impulse of survival, which together with his capacity for intellect, placed man in that "natural intermediate."

Every man, in his daily built history, should restart it where the rational-being is currently located, looking at the rubble to avoid its repetition. This is the only way his hard-working and tragic chronicle would make sense. He would reach a sense so as not to be thrown into the fire in which he continually burns his dealings. There is a point for this decision and it is the ethics to build with his authentic intelligent capacity, in which he can glimpse the "neighbor", and also eliminate the fear of ultimate solitude. Assume it.

We cannot create scenarios to hide our essential incapacity or disregard that we have replaced it with progress and with power over "others." We are beings that emotionally need to overcome others and fight for a life beyond death. This did not remove us from the situation of being alone in the final destination, but it led us to lose the only life we have in consciousness and the only consciousness of life.

Nature tailored us to its design and not to the one we try to assume. And this is capital. It decided the history of man. It built his "style of being." We have reached, within the limited space of knowledge, a use of our consciousness but never its meaning. Perhaps we can still honestly assume our last unexplained loneliness, which does not justify the consequences of fear or perversions against the "human factor," avoiding the inability to explain ourselves.

Every system ends in the faith or knowledge of something, therefore in a conjunction of insufficiency. Like the trunk of a tree its ends are shoots that dilute in the emptiness of the heavens with the branches or in the earth with the roots. There is no metaphysical resolution for this symbolism that is part of man.

One cannot deny or object to existence. It would be to possess a higher truth. In fact, at that point where mystery and nothingness have the same meaning, man-being must necessarily declare his ignorance. What seems, the non-sense of the universe, cannot contemplate of going beyond the relative that is man. And if he tries to give it a sense, it does not have consistency in the knowledge of death, of the limited time of consciousness. Perhaps death keeps a meaning? Then it will be to declaim the idea that life is a cruelty. Actually we get to a point called *ahorrecia* (without decision), which seems to be the greatest lucidity that can be achieved. We still love despair to maintain utopias.

Romulo Macció in the course of his "*Troits tetes*", notes that man passes from rebellion to the condition of tolerant, to resignation; and finally to the expiation of his terrible condition. Perhaps this is the last perspective that justifies waiting for death and not anticipating it. The triumph of nothingness is a lost consolation to this expectation of what is suspected of the universe: that it is the progenitor of the boredom that nests in man.

Jorge C. Trainini