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*Autonomy is not to do just with the power to dispossess
the other*

Jean-Marc Poinot

Translator: Simon Pleasance

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- 1 In her attempt to offer a new reading of feminism, Elizabeth Grosz puts her trust in Henri Bergson to propose a different definition of the concepts of autonomy, power to act, and freedom, with these words: "His understanding of freedom is remarkably subtle and complex and may provide new ways of understanding both the openness of subjectivity and politics as well as their integration and cohesion with their respective pasts or history" (See p. 97 in this issue of *Critique d'art*). Further on she specifies: "Freedom is not so much linked to choice (a selection from pre-given options or commodities) as it is to autonomy, and autonomy is linked to the ability to make (or refuse to make) activities (including language and systems of representation and value) one's own, that is, to integrate the activities one undertakes into one's history, one's becoming" (p. 98). So autonomy is not linked just with the power to dispossess the other, but might be resolved in the capacity to make activities one's own and incorporate them in one's history and in one's future.
- 2 Needless to say, philosophers have opened up our horizons, but they still do not resolve all the contradictions and difficulties between claims to do with an action, and then with a global history, as evoked by Elvan Zabunyan in the matter of Sophie Cras's contribution to the catalogue for the exhibition *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin, 1950s -1980s*¹. When the geopolitics of art is still being played out between Europe and North America, what is there to say about the works and positions of Edgardo Antonio Vigo in Argentina and Helio Oiticica in Brazil? The task of deconstruction undertaken by Jack Goody in *The Theft of History* (2006) would be futile if many different projects had not been embarked upon in tandem both on the level of ideas (Elizabeth Grosz) and on that of history as the choice of works.

- 3 Morad Montazami² thus arrays the resources of history and geography in relation to exhibitions and their publications in London and Marseille dealing with chronologies of present-day Arab art and the challenges of cartography in the collective unconscious with regard to Algeria. In a different way, the parallel shows around Pop art seem, according to Marine Schütz³, to reveal the works of many artists on the fringes of the western world, and the works of women artists, hitherto smitten by invisibility, but also the effectiveness of the recourse to visual and to cultural studies, complementing the revival of theoretical and historian forms of discourse. This new light should be compared to an archival reminder about the way Pop was received in France⁴.
- 4 We measure on a daily basis the gap which separates the proposals made by artists today and the re-writings of history, even though, to do as much, it is important to master the components of these histories, and continue to have access thereto in a critical and renewed way. The threesome made up of critics, curators and, in the case of one of them, an artist, as examined by Catherine Spencer⁵, namely Lawrence Alloway, Dawn Ades and Lawrence Gowing, turns out to be an excellent remedy for an all-encompassing and dogmatic model.
- 5 It is less easy with more comprehensive figures, such as Le Corbusier was and still is, to draw up an objective inventory. The many different books which appeared in 2015 have given rise to controversies which it seems hard to summarize without taking sides. Gilles Ragot (p. 68-80) draws up a precise and detailed report, but his choices are clear. Do we share them? This is not necessary, our goal is not to produce a doxa, but to offer people the floor and, above all, refer readers to the sources and the books which we urge them to read, or re-read.
- 6 This issue of *Critique d'art* ushers in many other proposals which we invite you to discover, including portraits of René Block and Julien Prévieux, and the history of exhibitions seen through imagery, according to Remi Parcollet.
- 7 Good reading,

NOTES

1. See the article of Elvan Zabunyan, "What Orientations for Disorientation?", in this issue of *Critique d'art*, p. 14-25
2. "Revising the Canon, Resurrecting Arab Worlds", p. 26-38
3. "Counter-culture, Feminism and Politics: the challenges of Pop art seen through the global lens", p. 38-54
4. See the article of Richard Leeman, "Before the Catastrophe: Pop in France in 1963 - Selected Excerpts", in this issue of *Critique d'art*, p. 130-150

5. In the rubric "Revisiting the History", see the article of Catherine Spencer, "'Made in England': art history, criticism and curating through the writings of Lawrence Alloway, Dawn Ades and Lawrence Gowing", p. 120-128