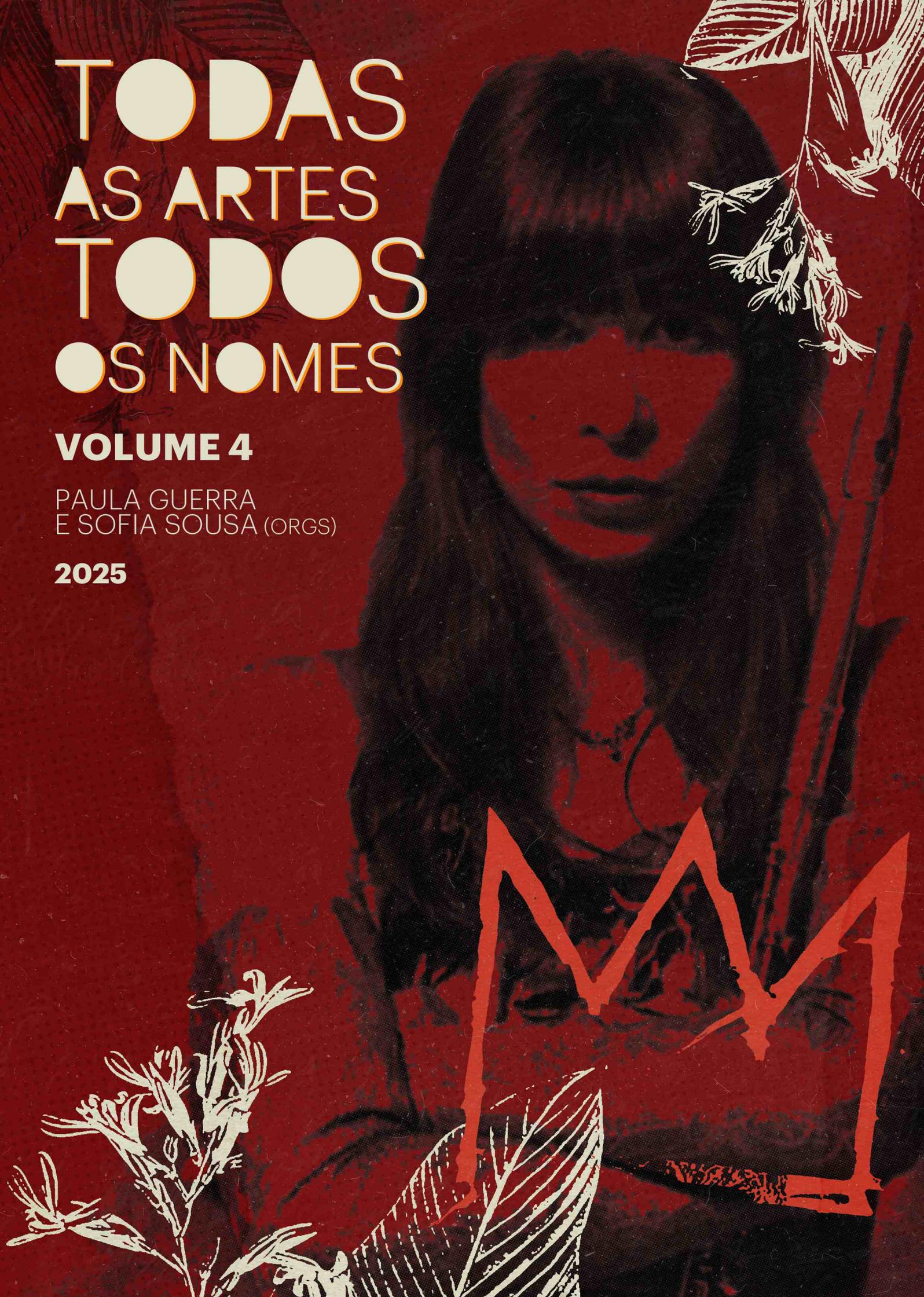


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CAPÍTULO 11



CARLA LONZI E PIERRE BOURDIEU: UN ENCONTRO NO MUSEU VIRTUAL DA TEORIA CRÍTICA?

CARLA LONZI AND PIERRE BOURDIEU: AN ENCOUNTER IN THE VIRTUAL MUSEUM OF CRITICAL THEORY?

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Resumo

O artigo examina o desenvolvimento do pensamento crítico de Carla Lonzi (1931-1982), primeiro uma brilhante jovem crítica de arte italiana na década de 1960, mais tarde fundadora do movimento feminista italiano na década de 1970, e hoje um ícone internacional do feminismo radical. Em particular, tanto no seu trabalho como crítica de arte na década de 1960 como na sua obra mais famosa, *Autoritratto* (1969) (Autorretrato), identificarei certos conceitos que mais tarde se tornariam centrais para as teorias da sociologia da arte de Pierre Bourdieu e Howard S. Becker, bem como para a nova história da arte de Linda Nochlin. Refiro-me ao conceito de campo social, ao papel das relações na construção da obra de arte, à arte como processo, ao fim da ideologia do artista como 'herói' e da arte como experiência, mas também ao conceito de ordem simbólica, que ela desenvolveria particularmente nos seus escritos feministas da década de 1970. Em *Autoritratto*, a partir de encontros e entrevistas com 14 dos mais importantes artistas italianos da época, realizou uma extraordinária experiência de criatividade-criação relacional. Em particular, será analisada a proximidade teórica entre a sua ideia de "relação-encontro" e o conceito de campo intelectual como campo social, formulado por Pierre Bourdieu em *Les Temps Modernes* em 1966. É precisamente o conceito de 'campo', que passa da física e da psicologia social para as ciências sociais e chega aos mundos da arte, que perpassará a 'nova' crítica de arte de Carla Lonzi, que constitui uma extraordinária e inovadora experiência prática e política.

Palavras-chave: campo social, mundos da arte, feminismo, Carla Lonzi; Pierre Bourdieu.





Abstract

The article examines the development of the critical thought of Carla Lonzi (1931-1982), first a brilliant young Italian art critic in the 1960s, later a founder of the Italian feminist movement in the 1970s, and today an international icon of radical feminism. In particular, both in her work as an art critic in the 1960s and in her most famous work, *Autoritratto* (1969) (Self-portrait), I will identify certain concepts that would later become central to the theories of the sociology of art of Pierre Bourdieu and Howard S. Becker, as well as to the new art history of Linda Nochlin. I'm referring to the concept of the social field, the role of relationships in the construction of the artwork, art as process, the end of the ideology of the artist as 'hero' and art as experience, but also the concept of the symbolic order, which she would develop particularly in her feminist writings of the 1970s. In *Autoritratto*, as a result of meetings and interviews with 14 of the most important Italian artists of the time, she carried out an extraordinary experiment in relational creativity-creation. In particular, the theoretical proximity between her idea of 'encounter-relation' and the concept of the intellectual field as a social field, formulated by Pierre Bourdieu in *Les Temps Modernes* in 1966, will be analysed. It is precisely the concept of the 'field', which moves from physics and social psychology to the social sciences and arrives in the art worlds, that will run through Carla Lonzi's 'new' art criticism, which constitutes an extraordinary and innovative practical and political experiment.

Keywords: social field, art worlds, feminism, Carla Lonzi, Pierre Bourdieu.

1. Introduction

Carla Lonzi (1931-1982) is one of the most innovative figures in the Italian art criticism of the second half of the 20th century, one of the founders of Italian feminism and today, with her widely translated works, an international icon of radical feminism. In 1998, referring to *Autoritratto* - Lonzi's most famous work (1969) - Luciano Fabro, one of 'her' artists, said:

Autoritratto is a book that does not deteriorate with time..... It is one of the few books written as if one were at the centre of the world and not on the periphery (Dantini, 2010, p.304).

Autoritratto appears today as the 'pivotal element' between Lonzi the art critic and Lonzi the feminist. It is an innovative book-convivium, published in 1969, constructed as a *montage* of interviews realised in previous years with 14 of the most influential artists of the time in Italy^[1]. In this article I will try to analyse how in Lonzi's work, as an art critic up to 1969-70 - before her feminist militancy - it is possible to trace ingenious insights that in the late 1970s and 1980s would be central to the sociology of art of Pierre Bourdieu and Howard S. Becker, and to the new feminist art history of Linda Nochlin. I am referring to the concept of the social field, the role of relationships in the construction of artwork, the art as process, the end of the ideology of the artist as 'hero' and, finally, the art as experience. For example, in the idea of a collective that produces and thinks - which is one of the 'engines' of *Autoritratto* - we can see an anticipation of the collective way of producing knowledge that will be typical of feminism in the 1970s; but it is also an anticipation of the constructionist theory of art as a collective product formulated by Howard S. Becker (1982) in the 1980s.

Lonzi's anticipatory use of the concept of 'field', a term she never explicitly mentioned, creates a theoretical point of intersection with Pierre Bourdieu, configuring an encounter that probably never actually took place, but - as I suggest in the title of my article- can be located in that order of the *possible* even if *non-real* encounters of which Griselda Pollock (2007) speaks in her *Encounters in the Virtual Feminist Museum*. Lonzi's anticipatory view of the art world prefigures theoretical concepts widely shared today by critics, curators and artists. With a conscious and affirmed 'prophetic' posture - as a person of the frontier, as she defined herself (Lonzi, 1969, p.42) - she declared, without any modesty, as follows:

I liked to catch in the bud what they (the artists) were doing that nobody had caught before me (...). I stopped when I realised that there would be no reciprocity (...). Was I too far ahead to find recognition? (Lonzi and Jaquinta, 1990, p. 25).

 ^[1] They were: Carla Accardi, Getulio Alviani, Enrico Castellani, Pietro Consagra, Luciano Fabro, Lucio Fontana, Jannis Kounellis, Salvatore Nigro, Giulio Paolini, Pino Pascali, Mimmo Rotella, Salvatore Scarpitta, Giulio Turcato, Cy Twombly.

It is on this 'prophetic' aspect that my article focuses on her anticipatory lines of research and research methods, which she resoundingly abandoned in 1970, leaving behind a brilliant career as an art critic to devote herself exclusively to feminist militancy. Aware of the theoretical and existential impossibility of an 'authentic' way of being with artists, she declared that 'criticism is power and the artist expects a banal performance from the critic'. She brought with her contradictions and paradoxes that her untimely death - at only 51 years of age - left unresolved. Nevertheless, many of the insights she gained from her innovative experience as a critic in the art world and in her relationship with artists did indeed feed into the practice of feminism, albeit not openly.

Two examples: the experiment in dialogue and confrontation with artists enacted in *Autoritratto* prefigures a form of self-consciousness - a founding practice of feminism. Similarly, the 'laying bare' of the artists' lives, the creation of a confrontation with them trying to renounce her power role as an art critic, seems an indirect way of proclaiming that 'the personal is political' - another fundamental affirmation of 1970s feminism. As a radical feminist, after leaving the art world, Carla Lonzi theorised the need for a *deculturalization*, a kind of *tabula rasa* of patriarchal culture, seeing art as its most refined form of *symbolic colonisation* (Trasforini, 2021,2013). For this reason, she could not conceive of - and never accepted - the existence of a 'feminist woman artist', seeing her as a 'colonised, co-opted' figure of patriarchal culture in search of a social identity. These radical positions were the basis of painful rifts and separations with women artists who proclaimed themselves feminists. The most sensational of these was undoubtedly the break with Carla Accardi, one of the most important Italian artists of the 20th century, a friend of Carla Lonzi and a founder with her of the Italian feminist movement in 1970.

Among the many contradictions and issues left unresolved, one in particular deserves to be highlighted at the beginning of this article: Carla Lonzi's analysis, first as an art critic and then as a feminist, never explicitly led to a gendered critique of the art world as a structure of unequal symbolic and material power. For her, the cause of gender inequality lay upstream of the art world, in the culture of a patriarchal society that feminism should and could have revolutionised.

2. Art as a historical product

At the beginning of the 1950s (1952-53) Lonzi went to Paris to prepare her dissertation on theatre and art^[2]. Her thesis advisor at the University of Florence was Roberto Longhi one of the most influential art historians of the time. At the same time Enrico Castelnuovo, the initiator of the social history of art in Italy, was also in Paris at Longhi's suggestion to perfect his specialisation (Tomasi, 2015, p.10). We do not know whether they met. Instead, the

 ^[2] In Paris, Lonzi frequented the theatre milieu, which was at the time going through a debate on the role of the director versus the author and the problem of audience involvement (Martini, 2011, p.16). Just the theme of the mediating role between author and audience prefigures the work of the critic according to Lonzi.

meeting took place shortly afterwards and led to the publication in 1960 of a short essay entitled *Il mercato delle opere d'arte* (The Art Market) (Lonzi, 1960), in the volume *Civiltà nell'arte* (Civilisation in art), edited by Castelnovo himself (Castelnovo, 1960). Its incipit is uniquely assonant with the famous Marxian incipit: 'The history of the art market is the history of collectors, dealers, amateurs...' (Lonzi, 1960, p.145), while the structure of the essay develops with equally Marxian assonances on the formation of value and prices^[3].

Carla Lonzi was an attentive reader of Marx and Gramsci, especially during the Florentine years of her 'political' training in seminars held in the form of 'small groups' (Iamurri, 2016, pp. 31-33). And with an anticipatory culturalist approach, she sees the art world, from the 12th century to the present day, as a real 'social field': that is, a place of social actors (artists, patrons, gallery owners, dealers) where they compete for the cultural construction of taste, its orientation and mutations, with relevant effects on the value and the market of art works^[4]. Explicitly indebted to Arnold Hauser's *Social History of Art* (1951), as she explains in her preparatory readings for the essay (Iamurri, 2016, p. 54), Lonzi seems to 'anticipate' both Francis Haskell's work on *Patrons and Painters* (Haskell, 1963) and Bourdieu's *L'amour de l'art. Les Musées et leur public* (Bourdieu and Darbel, 1966) and, a fortiori, Bourdieu's much later *Les règles de l'art* (Bourdieu, 1992).

As far as we know, Lonzi never met Bourdieu, but she did anticipate some of his key concepts: the use, however sketchy, of both quantitative and qualitative methods in the analysis of art worlds; the truly innovative practical experimentation with the concept of the 'social field' and relations within it - which she would put into practice in *Autoritratto* - and the equally complex concept of the 'symbolic order' - which she would articulate in her feminist writings^[5]. Instead, Castelnovo met Bourdieu in Lausanne in the spring of 1975 (Tomasi, 2015, p.12). The following year, his article *L'histoire sociale de l'art: un bilan provisoire* (Castelnovo, 1976) was published in *Actes de la Recherche - Bourdieu's revue* - followed, in 1981, by the seminal essay he wrote with Carlo Ginzburg '*Domination symbolique et géographie artistique dans l'histoire de l'art italien*' (Castelnovo & Ginzburg 1981)^[6].

 ^[3] "The history of the art market is the history of the collectors, dealers and amateurs who, throughout the ages, have sought and desired rare and precious objects for aesthetic pleasure, prestige or profit. It's the history of who have discovered, or presumed to discover, the hidden treasure that escapes the eye of the layman and often of the connoisseur" (Lonzi, 1960, p.145).

^[4] "The birth and life of an art work has always been linked, to a greater or lesser extent, to economic factors that have affected its autonomy, its preservation and sometimes even its longevity. In many cases, the material of which the work is made directly influences its vicissitudes... Art, artists and works have not always been seen as we see them today" (Lonzi, 1960, p.145).

^[5] As I mentioned in the introduction, Lonzi (1974) in her feminist writings - especially in *Sputiamo su Hegel* (Let's spit on Hegel) (1974) - will develop the concept of deculturalization to make a tabula rasa of patriarchal culture as a dominant and colonising male culture. Bourdieu (1992, 1998) - who was, however, well acquainted with the analyses of French feminists - will also speak of a dominant symbolic order as the "construction and interpretation of the world", shaped by the male gender, which is given as naturally dominant. For both Lonzi and Bourdieu, art is a relevant 'cultural field' those exercises 'a decisive power in the construction of the symbolic order' (Boschetti, 2003, p.50).

^[6] The seminar intitled *Juger et classer: pour une histoire sociale de la perception artistique*, with Pierre Bourdieu, Enrico Castelnovo and Carlo Ginzburg in Cortona, organised by the University of Pisa, originates from 1982. Other speakers were : Paola Barocchi, Michael Baxandall, Albert Boime, Anna Boschetti, Peter Burke, Marisa Dalai Emiliani, Erica Deuber-Pauli, Massimo Ferretti, Dario Gamboni, Klaus Herding, Joseph Jurt, Maria Mimita Lamberti, Giovanni Romano e Salvatore Settis (Testa, 2020, p. 41).

3. The concept of field in the art world

Let us return to the concept of field. This category moves from Kurt Lewin's social psychology through the social sciences to the language of art. What is the genealogy of this concept? Kurt Lewin (1951) developed it in the 1940s, taking it from physics and defining it as a 'life space'. According to Lewin, what characterises the field is everything that is present to the subject at a given moment and determines his or her actions, feelings and knowledge according to a 'principle of contemporaneity' (Lewin, 1951, p.57). Any behaviour or other change within a psychological field therefore depends on the particular configuration of the field at that moment.

As can be observed, there are numerous parallels between the definition of the social field proposed by Bourdieu and that of Lewin and Gestalt. As testified by Jean Claude Passeron – Bourdieu's friend and collaborator from 1961 to 1972-, Bourdieu developed this concept as early as the 1960s and subsequently systematised it in 1966 with the well-known article in *Les Temps Modernes*, borrowing the concept from Kurt Lewin and the Gestalt theory (Passeron 2016, p.64). In this text he outlined a general functioning of the intellectual field as a social field, analysing the interaction between social actors with differentiated positions and resources (symbolic, economic, relational), as subjects competing to modify rules and configuration of a given field or to maintain their dominant position (Bourdieu, 1966, p.886) [7].

It remains unclear whether Lonzi had the opportunity to be aware of this issue of *Les Temps Modernes*, which was devoted to structuralism, at a time when, in the French cultural debate, interdisciplinary exchanges were becoming increasingly common. It is known, however, that from 1957 Lonzi, who spoke French^[8], frequently visited Turin, a crossroads of research and artistic generations (Bertolino, 2011, p. 53), then the most francophone city in Italy (Conte, 2012, p. 692).

In the second years of the 1960s, the concept of the 'field' also began to circulate within the sphere of the 'new' art criticism^[9]. In 1967, the Italian art critic Maurizio Calvesi (1967) employed the term in a brief essay, initially referencing the 'life space' of artistic action, as previously theorised by the Futurist Filippo Marinetti, and subsequently explicitly linking it to the social psychology of Kurt Lewin. The term 'field' is thus employed to describe the vital space of an organism. The organism of which Calvesi speaks is the art work itself, and the space understood as a field, makes the artwork an 'active presence' that increasingly "exerts its influences not only in a formal sense" (Calvesi, 1967, p. 4).

 [7] "The intellectual field, like a magnetic field, is a system of lines of force: that is to say, the agents or systems of agents that are part of it can be described as so many forces that, through their positioning, opposition and composition, give it a specific structure at a given time" (Bourdieu, 1966, p.865).

[8] Carla Lonzi speaks French, which she also taught at an art school before graduating in 1956 (Lonzi & Jaquinta, 1990, p.12).

[9] On the change in Italian criticism in these years, I refer here to Conte (2011, pp. 89-93), Dantini (2011, 2012a), Iamurri (2016, pp. 99) and Trione (ed.) (2024).

Almost a decade later, Germano Celant (1976), the Italian theorist of Arte Povera artistic movement^[10], also explicitly identified art as a sensitive field that "crosses over into action, into process," where the viewer is no longer confronted with a passive fruition of the work but is urged to an active involvement in the event, in a dynamic becoming in time and space (Conte, 2011, p. 88). Even Achille Bonito Oliva, in a 1983 discussion of the work of Carla Accardi, the sole female artist represented in *Autoritratto*, employs the term "field" in a literal sense:

(In Accardi's painting) [...] space is not perceived as a quantitatively inert dimension, a static measure or a pure container. In this instance, it is configured as a field, a mobile system of relations that plays with the instantaneity of signs[...] without a discernible centre or periphery [...] (Oliva, 2024, p.358).

In both Calvesi's 1967 and Celant's later interpretation, the focus is on the impact of the artwork on the relationship between the public and the artwork, while Bonito Oliva emphasises the relational and dynamic dimension of the space of the work. On closer examination, however, the matrix and tension is similar: it is still an action between interacting subjects, which in Lonzi's practice and analysis takes the form of the critic-artist relationship.

4. Carla Lonzi: relations and instruments in the field

Although she never explicitly used the term 'field', Lonzi put it into practice in the years before *Autoritratto*, establishing a dynamic of mutual exchange, participation and experience between herself and the artists. In 1966 she published the *Discorsi* in the magazine *Marcatrè*, which were later included in *Autoritratto* (Iamurri, 2012). By using a relational methodology, as a shared discourse, she sought to promote mutual recognition, while in the *Discorsi* she also sought to transform the tools of narrative, writing outside the canons of tradition (Bertolino, 2011). Lonzi is a 'technical experimenter'. Her work is an investigation on language, its translation, and the physical-morphological change of state of language as medium. On this subject, and on the same page where her photo appears while she is unwinding in Minneapolis, USA, in 1967, she declares:

What personally attracts me to recording? I am attracted by an elementary fact: to be able to go from sounds to punctuation, to writing, to find a page that is not a written page, but a page that [...] In short, as in chemical processes, when there is condensation [...] when a sound condenses into a sign, that is, when a gas turns into a liquid (Lonzi,1969, p.39).

 ^[10] The Arte Povera movement emerged in Italy in the late 1960s, with critic Germano Celant as its main theoretician. What characterizes the work of 'Arte Povera' artists is the use of anti-rhetorical, poor materials such as iron, cement, earth, plastic, wood or recycled materials, with an artistic language reduced to the essential. Some of the artists interviewed by Carla Lonzi in *Autoritratto* were also part of this movement: Giulio Paolini, Pino Pascali, Luciano Fabro and Jannis Kounellis.

Images are transformed into words: for example, her work on the Italian radio programme *L'Approdo* since 1958, for about a decade, has led her to translate images into radio and literary words. The transcription of interviews for *Autoritratto*, with the innovative role of the tape recorder, introduces the physicality of voices, noises and silences of the field of encounter (Iamurri, 2016; Ventrella, 2015). The final transformation of words into photographs in *Autoritratto* invents a way of 'documenting' what has not yet been seen, with placements in the text that are not accidental but also suggest new meanings^[11]. The 105 photographs are identified in the text by a progressive number and accompanied by a dry, summary caption at the end of the volume. They construct a parallel text of presences, bodies - a kind of visual trace of the Bourdesian habitus - stories and relationships that do not concern individual artists, but the field of a relationship: the artworks and the artists, the artworks and Lonzi, the artists and Lonzi, the artworks and the viewers/audience, the artworks and their end-use value, until they become "an object, a piece of furniture more or less" (Lonzi, 1969, p.33).

In one of the most unusual photographs in *Autoritratto* (no. 7), a work by Lucio Fontana appears in an image of an aseptic bourgeois living room, taken from an interior design magazine. In this case the reflection of Lonzi is about the role of the critic, the cultural institution and the market:

[...] that his, (the artist's) product should be considered an object, more or less a piece of furniture, and under this pretext be placed in (the house of) those who have a surplus, like this, to spend, in short, this is a problem [...] (Lonzi,1969, p. 33).

5. Fruition and perception: art as a transformative experience of habitus

The uniqueness of photographs in *Autoritratto* also lies in the relevance of the field in which the artwork and the audience act. The focus is on the energy of the artwork and what it produces in the viewer. Through the physicality of perception, one can arrive at a new experience of reality and a transformation of knowledge itself. Lonzi was aware of the transformative capacity of the artworks and developed it already in the *Discorsi* of 1966. In the one with Carla Accardi, in 1966, the construction of the space of the *Tent* (La Tenda)- one of Accardi's most famous works - is a concrete situation that starts from the intuition of a new spatial condition. In it,

perception allows us to experience things. Participation in the visual flow that surrounds us implies that there is no abstract subjectivity as opposed to an abstract objectivity. Instead, there is a system of interferences between self and life that makes it perceived as an unfragmented totality (Lonzi, 2012, p. 476).

 ^[11] A similar work was done by Francois Truffaut in his book-interview with Alfred Hitchcock, published in France in 1966 (Truffaut,1966). The great novelty of this book is "the close connection between the text and the stills or scene photographs that Truffaut went out to find in Europe" (Morreale, 2016, 67).

The experience of the work, by altering a psychological balance, can lead, even though irony, to an increase in knowledge, to the creation of a new point of view, as in Paolini's work, so commented by Lonzi in 1965:

[...] and this efficacy (as a lucid device of passage from one work to another) is measured by the degree and quality with which it takes hold of the observer, altering his/her psychological equilibrium, depriving the observer of the comfort of certainties and points of reference, in a non-painful indeed in a certain encouraging way: here is the value of irony (Lonzi, 2012, p.414).

And again in 1966 Lonzi, referring to non-figurative art research, says:

The movement and visual richness of the work force the viewer to train in the real control of his/her own capacity for perception. In this way the viewer is urged to free him/herself from the verbal part of his/her personality, that is, from the habit of seeing only what can be put into words and connected with thought (Lonzi, 2012, p. 456).

In this bodily and physical experience of art, one can perhaps discern a reflection/hint of how a subject can transform itself and transform its own knowledge, i.e. its own habitus: not only through theory and a mental process, but through an experience in which one's own body is fully involved.

6. Art as a collaborative process and the end of the ideology of artist as a solitary genius

At the beginning of the 1960s, Lonzi had a special encounter with an anomalous and unconventional artist, Pinot Gallizio who became a painter after the age of 50. In Gallizio, she saw a figure opposite to the emphatically inspired solitary genius (Bertolino, 2011, p. 51), recognising in him her own search for an experience made up of transformative encounters: "I am more and more convinced that a new work of art [...] can only be born from the experience of new relationships between people [...]"^[12]

The artist is never a solitary, isolated genius, but part of a community of intellectual and emotional relationships. And precisely the context of social relations and networks, even of an affective community of belonging, is represented in *Autoritratto col Doganiere* (1968) by Giulio Paolini's, an artist dear to Lonzi and a leading protagonist of *Autoritratto*. This work, in which Lonzi appears in the foreground, not only explicitly cites the Douanier Rousseau, but also, we might add, pays homage to Courbet's *L'Atelier de l'artiste* (1854-55), the work that most proclaims and mysteriously affirms art as a collective and metaphorical work (Nochlin, 1999). In it, Paolini represents himself within his 'affective community', as described by Michele Dantini (2012b):

^[12] Letter of Lonzi to Pinot Gallizio dated 9 March 1961, as reported by Bertolino (2011, p. 46).



[...] Illustrious men and women are gathered as in a contemporary Parnassus. Carla Lonzi is in the foreground, in a position of honour, her face bright and smiling, calm and perceptive. On either side of her are Fontana (who died shortly afterwards) and Douanier, to whom Lonzi recently dedicated a volume [...]

By placing the artist in a historical context - relational, social and therefore biographical, as underlined by the use of photographs in *Autoritratto* - Lonzi anticipates, through her own experience as an innovative art critic, a reflection on the end of the ideology of the solitary genius artist, which will characterise both H.S. Becker's and Linda Nochlin's feminist analyses. For Becker (1982), art is always the result of collective ideas, shared canons, conventions and negotiations; for art historian Linda Nochlin, it is also the result of power relations in which gender plays a founding and guiding role. In the context of the new art history that emerged with feminism in the early 1970s in North American circles, Nochlin's seminal essay 'Why have there been no great women artists?' (1971) questioned the relationship between art, art institutions, the ideology of the genius artist and gender, initiating a collective research path that revolutionised art history.

I have already pointed out that, paradoxically, the gender critique of art is not explicitly evident in Lonzi's work as an art critic (up to 1970), and that for her, once she had left the art world and embraced feminist militancy (after 1970), it was even inconceivable to speak of a feminist women artist. Nevertheless, while it must be acknowledged that Lonzi in practice anticipated some fundamental theoretical intuitions of both the new feminist art history and the sociology of art of the 1970s and 1980s, it must also be reiterated that there are many unresolved and contradictory spaces in her brilliant theoretical and existential journey.

7. Conclusions in a game of mirrors

In 1965 Lonzi did not write anything. In fact, she was staging a genuine 'aesthetics of silence', that will be theorised by Susan Sontag in 1967 (Sontag, 1967). The contribution of Lonzi on the exhibition catalogue of Italian artist Michelangelo Pistoletto^[13], is not a text but it consists of two photographs. In them, Lonzi is a simple presence in Pistoletto's mirror paintings, a 'silent, participating figure' (Iamurri, 2012, pp 714-715). She appears "alongside the artists and, in this case, physically and visually on the same side, that is, within the image captured by Pistoletto's reflective surfaces" (Iamurri 2012, ibidem).

Like Velasquez with *Las Meninas*, used by Michel Foucault at the beginning of *Les Mots et les Choses* to talk about the representation of representation, Lonzi also destabilises the position of the spectator, i.e. us: "by the fact that we only see this reverse, we do not know who we are, nor what we are doing" (Foucault, 1967, p. 19).

 ^[13] Pistoletto in Accardi Castellani Paolini Pistoletto Twombly, exhibition catalogue, Turin, Galleria Notizie, 28 May-15 June 1965.

Lonzi/Pistoletto's work/photo also 'acts', producing a spatial/visual disorientation of us viewers, similar to that of us readers of *Autoritratto*. In this stance we are induced to a critical, cautious and conscious reading, knowing that the book is a *montage* and therefore a form of fiction, in the absence of a real physical contemporaneity in space and time. Faced with this game of mirrors we find ourselves in front of a truly authorial gesture by Lonzi, created in the decade of the Sixties, which Susan Sontag (1996), revisiting in 1996 her *Against Interpretation*, so brilliantly traced:

The two poles of distinctively modern sentiment—of course they have a reciprocal relation — are nostalgia and “utopia”. Perhaps the most interesting characteristic of the time now labeled The Sixties was that there was so little nostalgia. In that sense, it was indeed a utopian moment^[14].

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