

against Thomas's treatment of Michel's anarchism.

Thomas's book is the only full-length treatment of Michel's life in English. It has its problems. Some of the minor ones have been dealt with by the translator, but the extensive quotations from Michel's poetry are rarely even paraphrased in a note. Black Rose Press has apparently dispensed with proofreaders. Usually the typographical errors are merely distracting, but the disappearance of footnotes is more serious. The book cannot be read on its own. The reader will want a good history of modern France in one hand (say, Gordon Wright's) and a bilingual dictionary in the other. Michel deserves a shorter, snappier, and more analytical biography. Meanwhile Thomas's book is reliable for the facts of Michel's life.

Machisma: Women and Daring

Grace Lichtenstein. Doubleday, 1981.

Judith Posner

Machisma is a strange book. It is also an offensive one. It focuses on "macho women" or, as Lichtenstein says, women who make things "tough" for themselves: "She picks up the check at lunch with a male companion in an expensive restaurant and flashes a gold American Express card to pay for it . . . She dreams of becoming an astronaut and tells of her exploits as a tomboy

. . . She flies first class to Hawaii for a weekend on a whim . . . She subscribes to *Field and Stream*."

What makes her book offensive is her underlying assumption that women should learn to be "macha." In short, Lichtenstein accepts the notion of macho (or macha) as a positive value. This seems ironic at a time in which feminist literature has been vehemently criticizing the notion of macho and the ill effects of masculine societal values.

Furthermore, even if one agrees with her ethical bias, there is little in the book to substantiate her contention. Her characterizations are weak and make no attempt to delve into the psyche of so-called macho women, female mountain climbers, politicians like Bella Abzug, and movie stars like Jane Fonda. She mentions little about the conflict such women must feel (if they are indeed macha) about their identities. She never attempts to analyze in any depth how women come to choose a machisma lifestyle. The book is as offensive analytically as it is ideologically. For example, the first few pages of her book are devoted to a rather vague and circumlocuted discussion of the notion of machisma. Her generalizations are poorly documented and her illustrations reflect her uncritical theoretical assumptions.

"Machisma implies not just wanting to win or to be successful, but to beat someone or something, to show off, to strut one's stuff" (p. 10). Thus Lichtenstein's notion of machisma reflects a su-

perficial concern with form as opposed to substance. But perhaps she would argue that indeed this is what macho is about – the cool presentation of self. If this is the case it is hard to understand why anyone, especially a woman, would espouse such an attitude. In this light, it is interesting to note that Lichtenstein barely mentions the Latin American origins of the concept machismo and its usage historically. Only later in the book, in the context of a discussion of sexuality, does she even acknowledge the potentially destructive aspect of machismo: "Machismo in its most virulent form is terribly destructive, its ideology the excuse for rape, beatings, and murder" (p. 280).

Secondly, although Lichtenstein claims that machisma is relevant to risks that are other than physical, she begins with the latter and devotes most of the book to them. This is just another way in which she accepts a superficial masculinized value system and extends it to women. She even discusses in laudatory fashion women's sexual prowess in the light of traditional machisma. This section on sexuality epitomizes her bizarre value system and what is most disturbing about the book, its facile view of successful unconventional women and the fact that it holds up as an ideal the very thing that feminists and other social critics have been decrying. In short, it is a giant step backward for womankind and humankind as well.

BOOKS RECEIVED

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Louise Dulude, *Love, Marriage and Money: An Analysis of Financial Relations Between the Spouses*.

Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 1984.

Sara Jeannette Duncan, *The Pool in the Desert*. Penguin Books, 1984.

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Estella Lauter, *Women as Mythmakers: Poetry and Visual Art by Twentieth Century Women*. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1984.

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Veronica Ross, *Fisher Woman*. Nova Scotia: Pottersfield Press, 1984.

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Penny Kemp, *Binding Twine*. Charlottetown: Ragweed Press, 1984.

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Carol C. Gould, ed., *Beyond Domination: New Perspectives on Women and Philosophy*. New Jersey: Rowman & Allanheld, 1983.

LIVRES REÇUS

Cathy Bernheim, *Perturbation, ma soeur*. Naissance d'un mouvement de femmes. Paris: Seuil, collection Libre à Elles, 1983.

Carolle Simard, *L'Administration contre les femmes: La reproduction des différences sexuelles dans la fonction publique canadienne*. Montréal: Boréal Express, 1983.

Marie Lavigne et Yolande Pinard, *Travailleuses et féministes: Les femmes et la société québécoise*. Montréal: Boréal Express, 1983.

Elizabeth Vigée-Lebrun, *Souvenirs*, (2 tomes). Paris: Editions de femmes, 1984. Ce livre est édité par Claudine Hermann qui a voulu que l'on connaisse l'auteure, portraitiste du 18^e siècle qui a fait de nombreux portraits de femmes.

Françoise Giroud, *Une femme honorable, Marie Curie*. Paris: Editions Fayard, 1981.

Penelope, numéro 9, automne 1983, "Femmes et techniques". Cette revue est publiée par le Groupe d'études féministes de l'Université de Paris 7 et du Centre de recherches historiques de l'École des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales.

Forum. Les femmes: une force économique insoupçonnée. Grand ralliement organisé par le Conseil du Statut de la femme au Palais de Congrès en 1983. Les documents de recherches suivants furent publiés et sont disponibles. (Adresse du CSF: 8 rue Cook, 3^e étage, bureau 300 Québec, QUE. CIR 5J7):

1. *Document-synthèse, orientation, problématique, synthèse des autres documents et conclusion*, par Louise Vandelac.
2. *Les femmes et la production sociale*, par Sylvie Rheault.
3. *Perspectives d'emploi pour les Québécoises dans la décennie 1980*, par Suzanne Messier.
4. *Femmes et pouvoir*, par Sylvie Paquerot.
5. *Les femmes et l'aménagement du temps de travail salarié*, par Louise Clermont.
6. *Les femmes et l'emploi*, par Sylvie Rheault, Francine Lepage, Micheline Boivin.
7. *La réforme des régimes de retraite: un enjeu emportant pour les femmes*, par Francine Lepage.
8. *Les nouvelles technologies et le travail salarié des femmes*, par Renée Carpentier.

Fièvre de nos mains

Femme de pluie, tes rêves s'exposent sur les branches d'un pays qui bouge. La tête pleine de cailloux, le ventre de plomb, des drôles d'oiseaux perchés sur un défi. L'orage stérile fait le tour de tes prières, s'assoit dans tes mains et se fait l'agent de tes désirs.

Un quart de lune résiste à la source de tes yeux qui trempent les façades brûlantes et poursuivent le trajet des choses ruminant dans tes tripes. Tes seins se gonflent d'ironie et se dévident tel un ballon. Les enfants ne veulent plus être nourris d'illusions tragiques dont le goût se mêle aux verbes plus concrets que tes doigts.

Le langage de révolte s'enfoncé jusqu'au nombril des terres abandonnées. Il sort de la boue chaude un désir de reprendre son pays, des cris de feu. Le regard des martyrs et des héros est derrière nous, voyant l'alternatif comme une levure éloigne la faim et la tient à l'écart juste assez loin pour la prendre encore les yeux fermés.

Note: ce poème est un extrait de *Fièvre de nos mains*. Moncton: Ed. Perce-Neige, s.d.

Rose Déprés