knowledge that continues to defy all understanding. And its devotion to eastern religions (however sympathetic) had little to do, as the author points out, with the way religion was actually practiced in those parts of the world. In this regard Theosophy may have been more closely aligned with other groups who at the same time were adopting "eastern" rituals, such as the Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine.

Religion itself remained a problem. Most Toronto Theosophists retained at least a nominal association with their Protestant denominations and could not rid themselves of all the prejudices Protestant culture had implanted. D. P. Pandia, a south Asian scholar and noted authority on the culture of India, was treated very insultingly because of his colour by some of his TTS hosts, and, although Theosophy claimed to be an amalgam of all the world's great religions, Toronto Theosophists could not bring themselves to include Irish Catholics in their new transcendent dispensation. The Roman Catholic Church (and especially the Holy Father) remained beyond reach of the powers of universal enlightenment.

At the end of her fine study the author herself speculates whether the TTS was a mystical sect trying to move society to a new age or a late Victorian debating society with a rather large (but unthreatening) agenda of concerns. I imagine it was both.

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Víctor Macías-González and Ann Rubenstein, eds. *Masculinity and Sexuality in Modern Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2012).

Masculinity and Sexuality in Modern Mexico is an innovative collection of essays on men and masculinity in Mexico. The book aims to understand the ways in which the relationship between biological sex and social gender has changed in Mexico. Through the study of modern masculinities the book also seeks to capture the multiple economic, social, political, and cultural changes that have taken place in the country from the 1800s to the 1970s. The collection includes essays on male and female masculinities, same-sex and cross-sex sexualities, as well as men who dressed like women and identified with diverse genders. As Ramón A. Gutierrez highlights in the Conclusion of the volume, these essays challenge the traditional worldwide known figure of the macho male and its counterpart the submissive female, which prevailed in the myth of *mestizo* nationalism. This myth suggested that all Mexicans were descendants of indigenous and Spaniards and indirectly prescribed one model of femininity and masculinity across the nation. Instead, these essays offer diverse models of masculinity coexisting in modern Mexico. In

the national myth of *mestizaje*, sexuality was also perceived under a unitary model, as reproductive and inhabited by the spirit of conquest and domination. The essays present a diversity of sexual practices and identities. Some chapters even offer alternative readings to sexual practices that at first sight would seem to rest on violence and domination, as in the case of Sloan's essay on elopement cases in 19th century Mexico. The chapter clearly demonstrates the active participation of women in planning elopement with their lovers. By highlighting diverse masculine practices and identities in the past, the essays interrogate narratives that situate diversity in the 21st century in Mexico. While the Mexican State began embracing the rhetoric of diversity in the late 1990s, the various case studies illustrate how the study of masculinities has the potential to challenge easy narratives of progress.

The book is divided in two main parts. The first part considers questions of practices and identities. The five case studies in this section examine the ways in which masculinity is enacted in bathhouses in Porfirian Mexico, in abduction cases in Oaxaca, in Mexicali's red light district, in a love triangle in turn-of-the-century Mexico City and in movie theatres in twentieth-century Mexico. The second part of the book explores the ways in which masculinity is depicted in Mexican mass media. The authors examine gender performances and subjectivities in the penny press, mariachi and queer culture in Guadalajara, and the life and songs of Augustín Lara. A film set where Mario Moreno (Cantinflas) and Jorge Negrete experienced a conflict with a folkloric Spanish dancer also serves as a site to analyze masculinities in modern Mexico. In their introduction Víctor Macías-González and Ann Rubenstein suggest that while the book is divided in two parts three main threads can be found across chapters. The first one examines popular culture through the mass media. Buffington, Mulholland, Pilcher, Rubenstein, and Woods examine the performance of masculinities and the ways in which these assert or resist gender ideologies. Second, the essays of Buffington, Garza, Macías-González, Schantz, and Sloan question the relations between individuals and institutions. The authors examine the ways in which individuals interact with discourses of political, cultural or religious institutions. At times, men's and women's ideas and practices sustain the hierarchies that prevail in modern Mexico. In other instances, individual and collective counter hegemonic practices also question the status quo of these powerful institutions. The last thread explores the role of social space in gender construction. The essays reveal the ways in which spatial mobility comes to be associated with masculinity in modern Mexico. They also interrogate the private and public divide that has been troubled by many scholars, which associates the private sphere with femininity and masculinity with the public domain.

This book makes an important contribution to the history of gender and sexuality in Mexico and Latin America. By considering men and masculinities, these lively accounts contribute to thinking masculinities as attached to diverse bodies and practices. The focus on female and male masculinities offers

the possibility to depart from a scholarship that has for the most part theorized masculinities across disciplines in the region, in relation to masculine bodies. Through this shift the chapters complicate the ways in which scholars have produced knowledge on masculinities in Mexico. The essays also effectively highlight the ways in which Mexican masculinities in the modern period mobilize local and global discourses and practices. For example, Macías-González' chapter "The Bathhouse and Male Homosexuality in Porfirian Mexico" illustrates how the creation of Mexican public bathhouses seek to modernize Mexico by encouraging standards of cleanliness that were largely perceived as European and North American. The governmental effort (unintentionally) provided a space that Mexican men used for erotic encounters. Overall, *Masculinity and Sexuality in Modern Mexico* provides a useful, accessible, and thought-provoking set of case studies on men and masculinities in the lives of ordinary people, movie stars, songwriters and officials in modern Mexico.

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Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, ed. *A Black Communist in the Freedom Struggle: The Life of Harry Haywood* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012).

Harry Haywood's autobiography *Black Bolshevik*, first published in 1978, was also a 700-page biography of the American Left. Haywood came to radical politics in 1919, supported nearly every liberation struggle of the 20th century, and died a dedicated Communist during Ronald Reagan's second term. His life companion and professional historian Gwendolyn Midlo Hall has condensed Haywood's capacious history into *A Black Communist in the Freedom Struggle*, a 325-page distillation of *Black Bolshevik* that helps to cement his legacy as a dynamo of revolutionary thought and action.

Haywood was born in 1898 in Omaha, Nebraska, to former slaves. His father was an admirer of Booker T. Washington. His mother, a domestic worker, would sing "The Ballad of Jesse James" while doing laundry. Haywood worked as a bootblack, porter, then dining-car waiter on the Chicago and Northwestern Railway before being radicalized by the Russian Revolution and 1919 race riots against Blacks in Chicago. By 1922, he had joined both the new Workers' (later Communist) Party and the more secretive Black Marxist organization the African Blood Brotherhood.

Haywood became a Bolshevik, he writes, because he saw 1917 as "part of a world revolutionary movement uniting Chinese, Africans, and Latin Americans with Europeans and North Americans" (101). He deepened this view after being sent by the Workers Party to study at the Bolshevik Universitet