It has been asserted in recent years that the historiography on Independence has reached consensus on a number of issues. Most evidently, it seems to have been determined that the Latin American nations were the result of the dissolution of the Spanish monarchy but not its cause. Connaughton's introduction finds some cracks: while he recognizes that the cultural wealth of New Spain "did not translate *easily* into an ethnic identity, much less in a (proto) national [one]" (pp. 15–16), he assures us that some kind of "national identity" was forged in New Spain between 1521 and 1808. Furthermore, he contends that in the late seventeenth century various realms or "proto-States" (see Horst Pietschmann, pp. 14–15) were consolidated in Spanish America. Hierarchical networks of cities, villages, and pueblos, religion, and *guadalupanismo* were among the key elements of New Spain's identity, although these would not necessarily lead to independence, since a shared political culture in Spain and America still favored unity with the metropolis, even after 1808. According to Connaughton, the 1812 Constitution of Cádiz allowed consolidated autonomous realms under the monarchy (p. 28). Nevertheless, war and other transformations propelled by liberalism caused the provinces to claim their own rights. This was the start of state-building, an exercise that would not end until decades after independence was obtained. Connaughton's interpretation is debatable. For example, the Constitution of Cadiz did not give rights, as he suggests, to the "American realms." In fact, it recognized the Spanish nation as one, indivisible kingdom. Even so, his contribution serves to question the alleged consensus and keep these issues open for debate. This can only be a good thing.

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
Mexico City, Mexico

ALFREDO AVILA

Funerals, Festivals, and Cultural Politics in Porfirian Mexico. By Matthew D. Esposito. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2010. Pp. xvi, 332. Appendices. Notes. Bibliography. Index.

Cemeteries, death ceremonials, and rituals of remembrance during the Porfirio Díaz regime (1876–1911) are examined in this carefully researched book. Esposito draws upon numerous primary and secondary sources to study the importance of commemoration, invocation, memory, and imagination in the forging of national history, identity, and modernity during this era.. According to the author, the ceremonials and rituals that surrounded death—a constant and pervasive reminder of the precarious daily struggle for survival of most Mexicans—became increasingly modernized, professionalized, and monopolized in tandem with the centralization and complex cultural processes of legitimization also characteristic of the period. Esposito also examines the ways in which national holidays, funerals, and other commemorations led to the appropriation of religious and cultural traditions surrounding the rituals of death by the secular state. He also looks at how the exhumation, reburial, and incorporation of a steadily increasing number of national heroes (above all, male national heroes) promoted a shared sense of the past and ultimately shaped it, thereby permitting Díaz to remain in power for as long as he did.

The book begins with an introductory chapter that is both informative and important for situating the study in a historiographical perspective and within a theoretical framework. The author recurs to the Gramscian concept of hegemony and to James C. Scott's examinations of ritual displays of power as substitutes for coercion. He also draws on Claudio Lomnitz's analyses of nationalism, modernization, and death; Avner Ben-Amos's examination of state funerals as rites of passage in the specific case of the French republic; and recent scholarship on the Porfirian era. In Esposito's view, state funerals, commemorative festivals, and memorialization allowed the Díaz government and the ruling elite to achieve hegemony without "resorting to force of arms or democratic reform" (p. 19). Furthermore, the author claims that state funerals and commemorations "place in relief large-scale processes that transformed Mexico from a constellation of disjoined cities, towns, and villages into a unified nation" (p. 206).

Numerous photographs and images of the Porfirian-era printmaker José Guadalupe Posada accompany the six chapters and conclusion of this book. The first chapter examines the ways in which the Porfirian state came gradually to exercise hegemony over diverse ceremonies and sites of national commemoration and studies the conditions of the capital city's cemeteries and the elaborate traditions that surrounded death, mourning, and graveyards during the Day of the Dead. In the second chapter, Esposito examines the state funerals that took place between 1876 and 1889 and asserts that they became the most important political performances and rituals of reconciliation for a weak and divided government whose "growing monopoly on rites of commemoration reflected its greatest purpose[:] to rule by mediated consent, rather than the democratic process" (p. 80). The third and fourth chapters concentrate on the years between 1890 and 1910, when material progress, not reconciliation, was at the forefront of the political and cultural agenda. A careful scrutiny of military parades, civic processions, national holidays, and the memorial services for Ignacio Zaragoza and Benito Juárez, as well as the most popular holiday event of the period, Father Miguel Hidalgo's *Grito de Dolores,* are presented. In Chapter 5, Esposito studies the motives and symbolism of the annual commemoration and memorial observance of Juárez, Hidalgo, Cuahutémoc, the Niños Heroes, Guerrero, and Morelos, while the final chapter is devoted to the analysis of the "exhumation, reburial and incorporation of premier Mexican heroes into the National Pantheon" (p. 178). Esposito's conclusion reflects on the 1910 centenary celebrations of Mexico's independence; here, he underlines that "coercion and violence were the exceptions, not the rule" (p. 209) in the Díaz regime—one that generally "ruled through hegemony rather than force" (p. 212).

Esposito's study is a valuable addition to the recent scholarship on the Díaz regime. However, this important work tackles an enormous number of topics and a great quantity of information. It would have benefited from a straightforward explanation of specific aims and objectives for each part of the book and from additional discussion on the many "other Mexicos" so as to overcome the book's Mexico City bias and perspective.

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México CLAUDIA AGOSTONI
Mexico City, Mexico