

Review

Author(s): David S. Parker

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ography of the scientific revolution. While the practices of the Spanish cosmographers of the sixteenth century, she concludes, did indeed bear some similarities to those of men of science in Protestant Europe usually associated with the scientific revolution, there are also some important differences. Unlike the latter, the former did not develop a sustained interest in speculative natural philosophy that would challenge Aristotelian epistemology on a philosophical level. "The institutionalization of cosmographical practice [in Spain], whether at the casa, consejo, or corte, instead produced a focused effort to develop aspects of the discipline that promised solutions to the pressing problem of an expanding empire" (p. 302) and was therefore entirely utilitarian in its outlook. However, in characterizing the differences between Spanish sixteenth-century science and seventeenth-century English Baconianism as a "wide gulf," Portuondo may have underestimated the degree to which Bacon's scientific program was also inspired, not merely by a quest toward "uncovering the secrets of nature" (p. 304), but by a thoroughly utilitarian spirit of pressing science into the service of overseas imperial expansionism. It was precisely for this reason that Bacon was intensely interested in Spanish imperial cosmographers such as Céspedes, whose frontispiece he lifted (as Juan Pimentel has shown) for the publication of his own *Novum Organum* (1620).

Overall, *Secret Science* is a magnificent book whose publication will be regarded as one of the most significant events in the recent historiographic revision of Spanish science during the early modern period and as a major event in the historiography of Renaissance knowledge more generally. Impeccably informed by recent scholarship, astute in its readings, judicious in its assessments, and firmly grounded in original research of a vast body of primary sources, both printed and archival, *Secret Science* is a true tour de force in historical scholarship. A few editorial problems, mainly typographical errors (unusual for the University of Chicago Press), do not compromise the clarity and precision of the author's prose or the book's overall elegance, which includes a host of helpful figures and ten beautiful color plates.

*University of Maryland*  
*College Park, Maryland*

RALPH BAUER

## POLITICS & GOVERNANCE

*Uruguay's José Batlle y Ordóñez: The Determined Visionary, 1915-1917.* By Milton I. Vanger. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2010. Pp. xi, 295. Tables. Illustrations. Index. \$49.95 cloth.

Milton Vanger has dedicated a fifty-year career to the study of Uruguay's José Batlle y Ordóñez, president from 1903-1907 and 1911-1915 and architect of that country's pioneering twentieth century reforms. Vanger's previous two books in English on Batlle, *José Batlle y Ordóñez of Uruguay: The Creator of His Times* (1963) and *The Model Country* (1980), focused on Batlle's first and second presidential terms, respectively. This book, covering 1915 to 1917, is an extension of *The Model Country* inasmuch as Batlle contin-

ued to pursue his second-term agenda throughout the administration of his handpicked successor, Feliciano Viera. The book dedicates short chapters to several classic *Batllista* reforms achieved only under Viera—the eight-hour day, old-age pensions, and free public education through university, among others. But the issue that dominated the era, and dominates the book, is Batlle’s dream of abolishing the presidency and replacing it with a plural executive (the *Colegiado*).

Vanger’s comprehensive research, narrative clarity, sympathetic but not hagiographic approach to his subject, and intimate access to the Batlle family and its archive made the first two books indispensable reading for Uruguayans. They entered the national debate. I will be surprised if the third volume has the same impact once translated. Infinitely more has been published in Uruguay since 1980; the events in the book are for the most part well known. This leaves the book’s intended audience in question. Should twenty-first-century English-language readers care much about a 3-year span of Uruguayan history?

There are two reasons why the answer might be yes. First, the story of passage of the *Colegiado* is fascinating in and of itself. Having organized elections for a constitutional convention confident of a majority, Batlle and Viera instead found themselves with a divided Colorado Party, a revitalized Blanco (or National) Party, and a crushing electoral loss. In response, Viera halted Batlle’s reforms and the *Colegiado* appeared dead. Batlle, however, refused to give up. Behind the scenes he worked to marginalize the anti-Colegialist Colorados and to achieve an unlikely Grand Compromise with the Blancos. How Batlle succeeded provides a brilliant lesson in the art of politics. On the one hand, his bull-headed single-mindedness on behalf of a genuine reformist vision speaks to the power of political conviction. On the other hand, Batlle was willing to concede some of the Blancos’ oldest and most desperately desired objectives: the secret ballot, proportional representation, and, by offering the Nationalists three of the first *Colegiado*’s nine seats, guaranteed minority participation in government. In addition to this, Batlle was tactically ruthless in pushing his Grand Compromise, resorting to extraordinary levels of deception, veiled and unveiled threats, legislative hardball, and every electoral trick in Uruguay’s time-tested political playbook. Batlle’s hallmark mix of idealism and *realpolitik* helps explain why he remains among the most loved and most hated men in Uruguayan history.

The other reason the book might be of interest has to do with the legacy of the Viera years. An argument can be made that this was the tipping point when both the Colorado and the Blanco parties ceased to be nineteenth-century caudillo bands and transformed into modern parties with increasingly differentiated social bases and ideological programs. The reforms of the era—less the *Colegiado* itself than the advances in labor rights, social benefits, and secularization—had an influence far beyond Uruguay’s size and weight as a nation.

Still, this is but a study of three years in the history of a small country. Batlle in many ways seemed more important to Latin American history from the vantage point of 1963 when Vanger began publishing than he does from the perspective of 2010. Vanger is to be

praised for having brought his lifelong work closer to conclusion, and Lynne Rienner is to be praised for seeing fit to publish it. Although this book is not as good and will not be as influential as the first two volumes, it would have been a tragedy had Vanger not been able to take his political biography of Batlle up through the moment of many of his most significant achievements.

*Queen's University*  
*Kingston, Ontario, Canada*

DAVID S. PARKER

*State Governors in the Mexican Revolution, 1910-1952: Portraits in Conflict, Courage, and Corruption.* Edited by Jürgen Buchenau and William H. Beezley. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009. Pp. xi, 207. Map. Table. Notes. Index. \$29.95 paper.

Since the 1970s, regional studies of postrevolutionary Mexico have thrived amid scholarly interest in explaining the PRI's control of the state through much of the twentieth century. But even with the recent cultural turn, which has emphasized the local and popular facets of state building, regional studies still commonly portray governors as either charismatic caudillos or bland bureaucratic cogs in the ruling party's patronage machine. This collection, by contrast, shows us governors who were occasionally violent and sometimes heroic, though most often pragmatic. As William Beezley suggests in his introductory chapter, many governors pursued the hard-headed state building at the regional level—including mass organizing, social reform, and the modernization of infrastructure and taxation—that ultimately underpinned the consolidation of the national state. Almost all of the content chapters eschew explicit theoretical and historiographical insights, but together they make important contributions regarding state building, regional sovereignty, and the Janus-face of Revolutionary politics.

The archetypal revolutionary governor appears in Jürgen Buchenau's analysis of Plutarco Elías Calles of Sonora. Calles viciously repressed opponents and used his later power as president (1924-1928) for personal aggrandizement. But he also drew on popular radicalism and promulgated regional legislation that ensured that reform would be enshrined in the 1917 Constitution and in postrevolutionary politics. Similarly, in his well-researched chapter on Marte R. Gómez of Tamaulipas, Michael Ervin demonstrates that governors often best understood that political stability and capitalist modernization would only come in tandem with social reform. Indeed, governors frequently initiated reform before the federal government had the capacity, vision, or will to do so. Moreover, as Andrew Grant Wood reveals in his chapter on Veracruz's Adalberto Tejeda, governors also routinely established the corporatist arrangements that became the bedrock of ruling party power, as in Tejeda's case with agrarian groups. As indicated by Wood and others, political alliances between regional and national officials often rested more on a shared commitment to corporatist rule than on a shared political ideology.

Francie Chassen-López's forcefully argued chapter on Benito Juárez Maza of Oaxaca presents a governor who, at first blush, appears to be among the collection's least revo-