

make for fascinating reading. In addition, some of these captive people's lives and characters are revealed in surprising detail—including the women who accompanied Rafael at the end. Folsom's focus on female (and, to a lesser extent, male) captives throughout the book allows the author to analyze gendered relations in a sophisticated way. This is remarkable for a book steeped in masculine violence on the frontier.

Folsom's research is impressive at all levels, and the book even includes an extensive appendix. At times, however, Folsom might hew a little too closely to his sources. The "Apaches" who appear in Spanish colonial archives are not always differentiated all that well from one another in the written record, and the author sometimes reproduces this fogginess. In addition, Folsom does a remarkable job naming the many victims of Rafael's crimes, and even comes up with a reliable body count for Rafael (which was significantly lower than rumors would have it). But the names are seldom more than a list. The dead who populate the one hundred and eighty pages of Folsom's narrative rarely receive much of a backstory.

Despite these minor shortcomings, Folsom does an outstanding job throughout the book of centering a general borderlands history around the exploits of Rafael, his boon companion José Antonio, and the many captives who passed in and out of his band. Despite being so deeply integrated with primary sources and conversant with the secondary literature, the book is still remarkably easy to read. It would make for excellent reading material in an undergraduate class on borderlands or frontier history.

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POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY MEXICO

A Life Together: Lucas Alamán and Mexico, 1792-1853. By Eric Van Young. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2021. Pp. 833. \$50 cloth.
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After spending a career looking at the Bajío, it is fitting that Professor Eric Van Young should write the definitive and only full-length biography in English of the the Bajío region's Lucas Alamán, Mexico's leading conservative politician and historian of the first half of the nineteenth century.

The 715-page biography leaves few stones unturned, and the text is exhaustive, and, at times, exhausting. Van Young examines everything, from Alamán's wealthy mining family to his service as one of Mexican representatives to the Cortes of Cádiz urging independence as part of a commonwealth relationship. Upon returning home, he entered the cabinet of the newly-independent republic as its chief minister (1823–

1826). Then he became an investor in British projects to rehabilitate the silver mines flooded during the independence wars.

In 1825, he became the Mexican representative of the Duke of Terranova y Monteleone, the heir of Fernando Cortés. This relationship lasted the rest his life and proved exceptionally beneficial both financially and physically (Alamán convalesced at the Duke's hacienda). Van Young goes into great detail, sometimes irrelevant to his subject's claims to fame.

After his mining venture failed, Alamán returned to government as foreign minister in 1830. He worked tirelessly to set up the Banco de Avío to fund industry, suppress dissent, and found cultural projects (e.g., National Archives and the botanical garden). The Minister of War José Antonio Facio and Alamán were implicated in the murder of former President Guerrero after he led an unsuccessful movement against President Bustamante. Alamán went into hiding in 1832, when Antonio López de Santa Anna overthrew Bustamante. Santa Anna ultimately pardoned Alamán, but not even Van Young will speculate as to why.

Returning to private life, Alamán turned his attention to making money (textiles rather than mining). That venture also failed. Readers might like to know why some entrepreneurs like Cayetano Rubio and Manuel Escandón succeeded where Alamán failed. Re-entering politics, he founded the Conservative Party, published promonarchist newspapers (*El Tiempo* and *El Universal*), and brought Santa Anna back for his final presidency. In the 1840s and 1850s, he began to write his *Dissertaciones* and his successful five-volume *Historia de Méjico*.

When giving his judgments on crucial events of Alamán's life, Van Young tends to accept Alamán's views or his imagining of Alamán's view of events. Most biographers do this. Nevertheless, it is easy to disagree when he posits Alamán's goodwill when he "borrows" seven thousand Mexican pesos from his client's account. Van Young supposes that Alamán justified his theft by assuming he would pay it back. Even the Duke was distressed by his representative's non-repayment (626–627), and we never find out what ultimately happened. But that lapse pales in comparison with his role in the murder of Vicente Guerrero. It is notable that no other leader suffered the same fate until the horrifying assassinations of President Francisco Madero and his vice president, Jesús María Pino Suárez, in 1913.

Van Young delights in his style, often making comments that not even the most learned reader will always understand. Latin and obscure asides are left unexplained. For example, he refers to "Ping, Pang, Pong" (488). I surveyed a dozen academics, and none knew it came from Puccini's opera *Turandot*. Most readers would have thought it an anti-Asian slur, which it was when the opera premiered in 1926. Van Young should have realized that Manuel Gutiérrez de Estrada was an incorrect rendering of monarchist José María Gutiérrez de Estrada. Van Young adopts the same Eurocentric vision for Mexico that his subject did. Despite listing Richard Graham's seminal work on Brazil's nineteenth-century economic development in the bibliography, Van Young does not include Brazil in the index.

Although this book reveals much new information about Alamán's life, it should not make Alamán more important than he was. Van Young opines that “[Lucas Alamán and Antonio López de Santa Anna] were the two most important political figures in Mexico during the first three decades of the country's independence” (402). Santa Anna was no politician, but he was the most important military leader by far, saving Mexico from the Spanish in the 1820s and from the French in the 1830s, when he lost part of his left leg. Nevertheless, he could not save Mexico from either the Texans or the Americans, but probably no one could. Alamán was an important political leader in the 1820s and 1830s, and he wrote the best history of Mexico in the 1840s and 1850s. We academics love good writers. We would like it if more historians were crucial to their nation's future, but realistically we know they are more important to their nation's past.

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FORMATION OF TRANSNATIONAL DIASPORIC COMMUNITIES

Transnational Palestine: Migration and the Right of Return before 1948. By Nadim Bawalsa.
 Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2022. Pp. 276. \$90.00 cloth; \$28.00 paper.
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Nadim Bawalsa's study is a groundbreaking and timely book that recasts the Palestinian struggle for self-determination as a transnational phenomenon with roots in the early twentieth century. Drawing on extensive, multinational archival research and interviews with Palestinian diaspora communities in Latin America, Bawalsa argues that those historical communities first articulated the right of return not in the aftermath of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, but in the interwar period, as Palestinian migrants faced increasing discrimination and denial of citizenship under British rule.

Bawalsa begins by tracing the history of Palestinian migration to Latin America, which began in the late nineteenth century and surged in the early twentieth century, as Palestinians sought to escape economic hardship and political persecution. The majority of Palestinian migrants settled in Argentina, Chile, Brazil, and Mexico, where they established thriving communities that continue to this day.

Bawalsa shows that Palestinian migrants soon encountered challenges in their new Latin American homes. The British Mandate authorities, in collaboration with the Zionist movement, worked to deny Palestinian migrants citizenship rights. Bawalsa argues that the British government and its extended empire created an exclusionary practice through a series of laws and regulations that made it increasingly difficult for Palestinians to prove their eligibility for citizenship. As a result, many Palestinian migrants were left stateless and further vulnerable to exploitation.