

Being the Heart of the World

In this timely book, Nino Vallen tells the story of New Spain's gradual integration into the Pacific Basin and challenges established views about identity formation among the elites of colonial Mexico. The book examines how discussions about the establishment and desirability of transpacific connections interacted with more general debates over why some people deserved certain benefits over others. As part of these struggles, New Spain's changing place at the crossroads of transatlantic and transpacific routes became a subject of contention between actors moved by competing notions of a deserving self: the learned councillor, the veteran, the discoverer, the meritorious, the creole, and the merchant. Reassessing current historiographical narratives on creole identities and worldviews, *Being the Heart of the World* contributes to a broader understanding of the early modern self and the ways in which it was shaped by the mobilities of an increasingly globalized world.

Nino Vallen is a research fellow at the Pacific Office of the German Historical Institute Washington, University of California, Berkeley. His research focuses on the role of transpacific interactions in Latin America's social and political history. This is his first book.

CAMBRIDGE LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

General Editors

KRIS LANE, Tulane University
 MATTHEW RESTALL, Pennsylvania State University

Editor Emeritus

HERBERT S. KLEIN
 Gouverneur Morris Emeritus Professor of History, Columbia University and Hoover
 Research Fellow, Stanford University

Other Books in the Series

- 130 *A Tale of Two Granadas: Custom, Community, and Citizenship in the Spanish Empire, 1568–1668*, Max Deardorff
- 129 *A Colonial Book Market: Peruvian Print Culture in the Age of Enlightenment*, Agnes Gehbald
- 128 *Veracruz and the Caribbean in the Seventeenth Century*, Joseph M. H. Clark
- 127 *We, the King: Creating Royal Legislation in the Sixteenth Century Spanish New World*, Adrian Masters
- 126 *A History of Chile 1808–2018*, 2nd edition, William F. Sater and Simon Collier
- 125 *The Dread Plague and the Cow Killers: The Politics of Animal Disease in Mexico and the World*, Thomas Rath
- 124 *Islands in the Lake: Environment and Ethnohistory in Xochimilco, New Spain*, Richard M. Conway
- 123 *Journey to Indo-América: APRA and the Transnational Politics of Exile, Persecution, and Solidarity, 1918–1945*, Geneviève Dorais
- 122 *Nationalizing Nature: Iguaza Falls and National Parks at the Brazil–Argentina Border*, Frederico Freitas
- 121 *Islanders and Empire: Smuggling and Political Defiance in Hispaniola, 1580–1690*, Juan José Ponce-Vázquez
- 120 *Our Time Is Now: Race and Modernity in Postcolonial Guatemala*, Julie Gibbings
- 119 *The Sexual Question: A History of Prostitution in Peru, 1850s–1950s*, Paulo Drinot
- 118 *A Silver River in a Silver World: Dutch Trade in the Rio de la Plata, 1648–1678*, David Freeman
- 117 *Laboring for the State: Women, Family, and Work in Revolutionary Cuba, 1959–1971*, Rachel Hynson
- 116 *Violence and The Caste War of Yucatán*, Wolfgang Gabbert
- 115 *For Christ and Country: Militant Catholic Youth in Post-Revolutionary Mexico*, Robert Weis
- 114 *The Mexican Mission: Indigenous Reconstruction and Mendicant Enterprise in New Spain, 1521–1600*, Ryan Dominic Crewe

(Continued after the Index)

Being the Heart of the World

*The Pacific and the Fashioning of the Self in
New Spain, 1513–1641*

NINO VALLEN

University of California, Berkeley



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press & Assessment
 978-1-009-32207-2 — Being the Heart of the World
 Nino Vallen
 Frontmatter
[More Information](#)



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
 New Delhi – 110025, India
 103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,
 a department of the University of Cambridge.

We share the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of
 education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781009322072

DOI: 10.1017/9781009322089

© Nino Vallen 2023

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions
 of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take
 place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press & Assessment.

First published 2023

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

NAMES: Vallen, Nino, author

TITLE: Being the heart of the world : the Pacific and the fashioning of the self in new Spain,
 1513-1641 / Nino Vallen, Pacific Office of the German Historical Institute Washington,
 University of California, Berkeley.

DESCRIPTION: Cambridge ; New York : Cambridge University Press, 2023. | Series: CLAS
 Cambridge Latin American studies | Includes bibliographical references and index.

IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2023007951 (print) | LCCN 2023007952 (ebook) | ISBN 9781009322072
 (hardback) | ISBN 9781009322041 (paperback) | ISBN 9781009322089 (epub)

SUBJECTS: LCSH: Identity (Philosophical concept) | New Spain—Emigration and
 immigration. | New Spain—Commerce—History. | Mexico—Emigration and immigration. |
 Mexico—Commerce—History. | Pacific Area—Relations—New Spain. | New Spain—Relations—
 Pacific Area. | Pacific Area—Commerce—New Spain. | New Spain—Commerce—Pacific Area. |
 Spain—Colonies—History.

CLASSIFICATION: LCC DU65 .v35 2023 (print) | LCC DU65 (ebook) |

DDC 304.8/20972530903-dc23/eng/20230307

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2023007951>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2023007952>

ISBN 978-1-009-32207-2 Hardback

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence
 or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this
 publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will
 remain, accurate or appropriate

For Marcela and Lea

Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xi
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xiii
Introduction	I
1 The Discoverer: Legal Struggles over the Pacific Northwest	24
2 The Veteran: Capitalizing on Knowledge of the Routes between the Indies	63
3 The Meritorious: Rootedness and Mobility in the Pacific Basin	96
4 The Creole: Distributing Royal Patronage on the Westward Religious Itinerary to Asia	131
5 The Merchant: Debating Transpacific Trade and the Economy of Favor	164
Conclusion	197
<i>Glossary</i>	205
<i>Bibliography</i>	209
<i>Index</i>	233

Figures

1.1	Map of the Spanish Indies. Juan López de Velasco, <i>Demarcación y navegación de Indias</i> , Madrid (ca. 1575)	page 3
1.1	Alonso de Santa Cruz, <i>Nova verior et integra totius orbis descriptio</i> (1542)	25
1.2	Giacomo Gastaldi, <i>Universale Novo</i> in <i>La geografia di Claudio Ptolemeo alessandrino</i> , Venice (1548)	46
1.3	Domingo del Castillo, Map of the Pacific Coast (1541)	54
1.4	Detail of map of North America in Alonso de Santa Cruz's <i>Islario general</i> (1541)	57
1.5	Detail of <i>Nova verior et integra totius descriptio</i>	58
1.6	Detail of world map by Sebastian Cabot, Nuremberg (1544)	60
2.1	“Jave le Grande” on the Dauphin or Harleian world map (ca. 1547)	90
5.1	Anonymous, view of the Central Plaza of Mexico City and the Iztacalco Promenade (ca. 1636)	190
5.2	Detail from view of the Central Plaza of Mexico City and the Iztacalco	193

Acknowledgments

This book would not have come into being if not for the generous help of many colleagues and friends as well as several institutions. I am especially indebted to Stefan Rinke, who has believed in this project from the moment it consisted of nothing but a vague idea. After his questions set me on my way, he supported me during every step of the slow process of writing this book. More generally, I am deeply grateful for his encouragement and guidance in the field of Latin American History.

At the Institute for Latin American Studies at the Free University of Berlin, I owe special gratitude to Marianne Braig for her spirited support and to Michael Goebel, Nikolaus Böttcher, Mónica Contreras, Lasse Hölck, Debora Gerstenberger, and Karina Kriegesmann for reading parts of the manuscript and helping me out on so many occasions. I also want to thank Peter Rietbergen, who has been a mentor and friend since I was an undergraduate student at Radboud University Nijmegen. His comments on an earlier version of the manuscript have helped me sharpen my argument. I am also indebted to colleagues in Mexico and the United States: Bernd Hausberger, Antonio Ibarra, Federico Navarrete Linares, Ana Carolina Ibarra González, and Gibran Bautista y Lugo all received me so kindly and provided valuable advice on this and other projects. I also benefited greatly from my conversations with Jeremy Adelman, Evelyn Hu-DeHart, Tatiana Seijas, and Christina Lee, who helped me to navigate the world of academic publishing. Their guidance has been crucial for making this book what it is.

This book would not have been possible if not for the financial support I received over the years. I would like to thank the International Research Training Group “Between Spaces” for bringing me to Berlin. Who would

have thought that this one-year scholarship would lead to a decade-long stay at the Institute for Latin American Studies. I am especially grateful for the research grant provided by the Slicher van Bath-De Jong Fund, which allowed me to collect additional archival material and improve my writing. I am pleased to honor such a prolific historian by continuing to study the history of Latin America in his name. Grants provided by the Dahlem Research School and the Center for International Cooperation at the Free University of Berlin gave me the possibility to spend time at the University of California, Berkeley, and Princeton University. Finally, I would like to thank the German Historical Institute Washington for enabling me to finish this book while setting out on a new journey.

Two anonymous readers provided invaluable feedback on the working manuscript, and their observations and suggestions have improved it tremendously. I am much obliged to Christopher Hank, who has painstakingly read and improved my writing over the years. I also thank Cecelia A. Cancellaro at Cambridge University Press, as well as series editors Kris Lane and Matthew Restall for believing in this project.

Finally, my warmest thanks go to my family. My mother, my Mexican family, and especially my wife, Marcela, and daughter, Lea. They have brought so much light and love into my days. It took a while, but we did it. Together!

Abbreviations

- Actas* *Actas de cabildo del ayuntamiento de México*. Edited by Manuel Orozco y Berra and Antonio Espinosa de los Monteros. 50 vols. Mexico: Aguilar e Hijos, 1889–1911
- AGI Archivo General de Indias (Seville)
- AGN Archivo General de la Nación (Mexico City)
- AHN Archivo Histórico Nacional (Madrid)
- BNE Biblioteca Nacional de España (Madrid)
- BP Biblioteca Palafoxiana (Puebla)
- CDI *Colección de documentos inéditos relativos al descubrimiento, conquista y organización de las antiguas posesiones españolas de América y Oceanía*. Edited by Joaquín F. Pacheco, Francisco de Cárdenas, and Luis Torres de Mendoza. 42 vols. Madrid, 1864–1884
- CODOIN *Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España*. Edited by Martín Fernández Navarrete et al. 112 vols. Madrid, 1842–1895
- ENE *Epistolario de Nueva España, 1505–1818*. Edited by Francisco Paso y Troncoso. 16 vols. Mexico: Antigua librería Robredo, de José Porrúa e hijos, 1939–1942
- RAH Real Academia de la Historia (Madrid)