



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

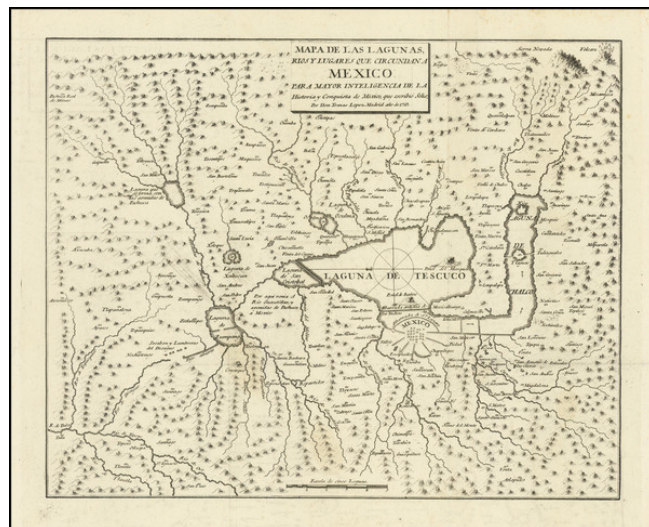
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[Mexico City and Environs] Mapa de las Lagunas, Rios y Lugares que Circundan a Mexico: para mayor inteligencia de la Historia y Conquista de Mexico que escribió Solís . . . 1783

Stock#: 91029
Map Maker: López
Date: 1783
Place: Madrid
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 13 x 10 inches
Price: \$ 1,200.00



Description:

Rare Map of the Valley of Mexico Showing the Now Vanished Lake System

Finely detailed plan of the lake system of the Valley of Mexico, engraved by Tomas Lopez.

The area mapped is from Tula (NW) to Pachuca (NE), Amecameca (SE) and Atlapulco (SW). Details included are old and new works of drainage (the *desagüe*) and principal roads. In addition, there are mountains and volcanoes, dormant and active, shown in semi-perspective. The compass indicator is in Lake Texcoco itself, showing the map to oriented with east at the top.

The map was first engraved for Solís' classic work on the conquest of Mexico by Hernán Cortés; its author, the greatest chronicler of the Indies and playwright Antonio de Solís, had access to archival sources.

Draining the Lake

As indicated by this map, the *Lago de Mexico*, also known as the *Lago de Texcoco* (here called Laguna de Texcoco), was one part of a large lake system that used to be in central Mexico. Agriculture near the lake began 7,000 years ago with several early civilizations competing to control access and farming near its shores.



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After the fall of Teotihuacan in 600-800 AD, several other city states fought for prominence in the region. In 1325 the Aztecs founded Tenochtitlan on the western side of the lake, developing their capital city on an island via a system of dams and canals. This city became the Federal District. There were large floating gardens, *chinampas*, on the lakes; they surrounded the capital city and were also prevalent in other shore areas.

After the Spanish took Tenochtitlan, they never repaired the Aztec dams, making flooding a recurring problem in the region. To stem the floods, the Spanish attempted to drain the lake, with a major effort to divert water and improve drainage as part of the Bourbon reforms in the eighteenth century. This was called the *Desagüe del Valle de México*. However, drainage was not entirely successful until the mid-twentieth century. Now, the majority of the lake system is dry, with a considerable portion of the lake valley now serving as an urban area.

Detailed Condition: