



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Mapa Mundi o Descripcion de Todo el Mundo y en Particular del Globo Terrestre

Stock#: 88698
Map Maker: López
Date: 1792
Place: Madrid
Color: Outline Color
Condition: VG
Size: 23.4 x 18.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Spanish Contact with Hawai'i Before Cook

Rare and striking, separately-issued map of the world, first published by Spain's greatest eighteenth-century mapmaker, Tomás López, in Madrid in 1771. This is a fine 1792 updated reissue.

Lopez's map is of significant historical interest as an artifact in the story of "Spanish Hawai'i," or of European contact with Hawai'i before the third voyage of James Cook (1776-1780).

The work is characteristic of Lopez's erudition and craftsmanship and was published at a time when Spain was beginning to more actively publish their archive of information about the South Seas. Previously, they had treated the Pacific as a *mare clausum*, or closed sea, in the hopes that imperial rivals would not interfere with their trade and colonies.

The map provides a detailed charting of the world, and especially the Pacific Ocean, as known to the Spanish in the late-eighteenth century. Alaska has been updated based on Cook's third voyage, but the northern coast of North America still holds its secrets, as does the delineation of Greenland. Australia is outlined, but with Van Diemen's Land connecting to the mainland, as the Bass Strait would not be traversed by Europeans until 1798-9.

In the tradition of Lopez's training in Paris by J.B.B. D'Anville and others, the map is presented in a spare and precise fashion, jettisoning any information that could be skewed as mythical or without foundation.



Mapa Mundi o Descripcion de Todo el Mundo y en Particular del Globo Terrestre

For example, there is no southern continent hypothesized, and the farthest south reached by Cook on his second voyage (1772-5) is marked.

There is, however, extra information outside the map's boundaries, including the solar systems of Ptolemy, Copernicus, and Tycho Brahe. The ornamentation is reserved for the grand title cartouche running along the top, and the medallion hanging between the hemispheres.

Indeed, in the areas where the information set forth is based upon less-than-solid reports, language of caution and explanation are included. In several places, where reports deemed credible existed, but had not been established with certainty, Lopez reports "lands discovered" by explorers, including:

- "*Tierras é Islas descubiertas por Mendana*" (this is the supposed "Spanish Hawai'i" (see below) and is engraved across the top of the *Islas Sandwich*)
- "*Tierras é Islas descubiertas por Quiros*" (south of the Marquesas)
- "*Tierra que vio Drake*" (west of the Strait of Magellan)
- "*Islas descubiertas por los Españoles en 1773*" (west of Chile)

The aforementioned discoveries include two famous, early, but still unconfirmed, discoveries in the South Pacific by Francis Drake and Pedro Fernández de Quiros. The former supposedly sighted land while blown south after exiting the Strait of Magellan during his circumnavigation of 1577 to 1580. The latter, Quiros, had sailed with Mendaña on his second voyage (1595-1596) and became an advocate for a southern continent. He was granted his own voyage in 1605 and thought he discovered the continent; however, in actuality it was the island of Vanuatu. The voyage of 1773 was part of a series of four Spanish voyages (1771-1776) that set out in response to the voyages of Byron, Wallis, Carteret, Cook, and Bougainville in the 1760s.

Near to this final note is "*Pascua ó Davis*." This is a clever elision of a rumored encounter and a documented one. In 1687, the buccaneer Edward Davis reported that he saw land in the area. In 1722, a Dutch voyage commanded by Jacob Roggeveen landed at Rapa Nui on Easter Sunday, giving the island another name of Easter Island (*Pascua* in Spanish). His crew were the first known Europeans to see the famed *moai*.

Lopez's location of the lands discovered by Mendaña are worthy of closer study in the context of the claims that the Spanish beat the British to Hawai'i in the sixteenth-century. These claims interestingly point to Alvaro de Mendaña as the commander who first encountered the island(s) in question, rather than the traditional sources of Villalobos (1542) or Gaetano (1555).

The alleged Spanish encounter with Hawai'i before Cook



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Mapa Mundi o Descripcion de Todo el Mundo y en Particular del Globo Terrestre

A feature long overlooked by scholars, in part because of the rarity of this map, is the small section of land along the Tropic of Cancer identified as "*Tierras e Islas descubiertas por Mendana*". [In the first version of the map, dated 1771](#), the note says, "*Tierra descubierta por Medana*" with a partial eastern coastline—the Sandwich Islands, of course, had not been named at that earlier date.

The note on this map is the earliest to memorialize the location of what many believe to be the sixteenth-century Spanish encounter with Hawai'i in the same place where Cook would come upon the Hawaiian Islands two hundred years later.

While the details supporting Spain's discovery of Hawai'i are far from clear, numerous researchers have discussed the possibility for well over one hundred years. The modern theories can be traced to a map captured by Commodore George Anson in 1743, which located an island group that corresponded with the location of Hawai'i. In the 1780s, La Perouse put forth the theory that Juan Gaetano discovered the Hawaiian Islands in 1555. There is also Spanish correspondence from the mid-nineteenth century which articulates the claim that Spain had found Hawai'i in the mid-sixteenth century.

The topic became a popular one for further scholarly discussion. For example, in the *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society*, Titus Munson Coan wrote:

The Hawaiian Islands were discovered in the year 1542 by the Spanish Navigator Juan Gaetano. Traces of this early visit may be found in a Spanish [manuscript] map of the sixteenth century which indicates the place of the islands, though somewhat incorrectly as to their longitude . . . (The Hawaiian Islands . . . Vol. XXI, No. 1889, p. 149)

The Spanish encounter with Hawai'i was reported as probable in other journals published over the next several decades. In *Science* (November 7, 1903), John F. Hayford published an article entitled "The Longitude of Honolulu, Various Determinations, 1555-1903," where he commemorated the first Trans-Pacific cable signal to reach Hawai'i with this survey, drawn largely from the work of Hawai'i's Surveyor General, W.D. Alexander. Hayford reports the [acquisition by Anson in 1743 of a Spanish chart](#) wherein:

a group of islands was laid down in the same latitude as the Hawaiian Islands, but 17° too far east. . . [and that] an official letter from the Spanish Hydrographical Department to the Hawaiian Government dated Madrid, February 21, 1865, states that an ancient manuscript chart exists in the archives of that office, in which this group is laid down as in the chart of the Spanish galleon, with the name "Islas de Mesa," and a note declaring that they were discovered and named by Juan Gaetano in 1555.

Prior to Cook, there is certainly some evidence to support the encounter with Hawai'i by Spanish explorers in the mid-sixteenth century. The most compelling evidence supports the theory that Juan Gaetano, a



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Mapa Mundi o Descripcion de Todo el Mundo y en Particular del Globo Terrestre

Spanish navigator, visited Hawai'i in either 1542 (with Villalobos) or 1555. It is beyond question that Spanish ships were passing within a few hundred miles of Hawai'i during this period, as they regularly sailed between Latin America and East Asia.

Interest in this topic reached its height in the early 1900s. In 1900, Professor William Alexander wrote, "There is little doubt that these islands were discovered by the Spanish navigator, Juan Gaetano, in the year 1555." As noted above, Alexander was citing a document issued in February 1865 from the Colonial Office at Madrid, Spain and addressed to the Governor of the Philippines, which explains:

By all the documents that have been examined, it is demonstrated that the discovery [of Hawaii] dates from the year 1555 and that the discoverer was Juan Gaetano or Gaytan. The principal proof is an old manuscript chart, registered in these archives as anonymous, and in which the Sandwich Islands are laid down under that name, but which also contains a note declaring that he called them Islas de Mesa (Table Islands). There are besides other islands situated in the same latitude, but 10 degrees farther east and respectively named La Mesa, La Desgraciade, Olloa or Los Monges. The chart appears to be a copy of that called the chart of the Spanish Galleon, existing long before the time of Cook, and which is referred to by all the national and foreign authors that have been consulted. Foreign authors say that It (the discovery) took place in 1542, in the expedition commanded by General Rui Lopez de Villalobos, while the Spanish chronicles denote 1555.

Two island groups, called Los Monges and Los Bolcanos, appear on many maps of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and may represent the Hawaiian archipelago, according to historian Father Reginald Yzendoorn. Writing in the 1920s, he notes:

The Los Bolcanos group, consisting of five islands, one of which is called Farfana (probably a misreading for La Tartana), appears for the first time in 1569 on Mercator's map: Nova et aucta orbis descriptio at between 22 and 26 degrees north latitude and about 176 degrees west longitude.

Los Monges are mapped for the first time by Abraham Ortelius on the map of America, made in 1587, and reproduced in the 1612 edition of his monumental atlas: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum. There they are at between 20 and 22 degrees north latitude and 159 and 162 degrees west longitude. Various cartographers during the two following centuries have maintained the Los Monges group on their maps, until Cook rediscovered and renamed them; whilst Los Bolcanos are mapped for the last time by J. A. Maginus in 1617.

Yzendoorn concludes, "A complete study of all these maps leaves no doubt as to the identity of these groups with the Hawaiian Islands."



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Mapa Mundi o Descripcion de Todo el Mundo y en Particular del Globo Terrestre

There are also numerous articles from the same time, and after, refuting the claims that Hawai'i was discovered by the Spanish. These articles argue persuasively that the sources above are simply not sufficiently reliable to establish definitively the Spanish discovery of Hawai'i.

Did "Mendana" Discover Hawai'i?

It must be assumed that in referencing "Mendana," Lopez was referring to Álvaro de Mendaña y Neira (1542 - 1595), who was best known for the two voyages of discovery he led into the Pacific in 1567 and 1595 in search of *Terra Australis*. Mendaña's 1567 map and journal are some of the most important early manuscript sources for Spanish encounters in the Pacific.

In his first voyage, Mendaña sailed from Callao, Peru, on November 20, 1567 and reached the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific in February 1568, before returning to Mexico via the Marshall Islands, Wake Island, and the Channel Islands in 1568-1569. The course from Wake Island to the Channel Islands of California would certainly have taken Mendaña within a relatively short distance of Hawai'i.

While it is plausible that Mendaña could have visited or sighted Hawai'i on this 1567-1569 voyage, it is also possible that Lopez was merely reporting earlier information derived from Mendaña, although his choice of words ("*Tierras e Islas descubiertas por Mendana*") strongly suggests that Lopez believed Mendaña was the discoverer of the lands depicted with this caption.

Lopez's map is one of the only maps that places the island(s) discovered by the Spanish in almost exactly the correct location of Hawai'i and also distinguishes these discoveries from the so-called Islas de Mesa, which are roughly 15-20 degrees further to the east on this map. Lopez was likely basing this placement on information which he had derived from previously unreported Spanish manuscript sources, although he was also compiling partial information from earlier published maps, [like John Green's important 1753 map of the Pacific](#).

This inclusion by Lopez came at a time when Spain was struggling to retain its claim to a *mare clausum* in the face of the British (Anson, Byron, Wallis, Carteret, and Cook) and French (Louis-Antoine de Bouganville) arrival in the Pacific. It would have been imperative for the Spanish to put forward their best claims to retention of the Pacific Ocean as a Spanish dominion, as well as their initial encounter of islands therein, in the face of competition from other seafaring powers. Indeed, as Lopez compiled this map, the Spanish Fleet in the Pacific was actively attempting to colonize Tahiti as a means of solidifying the Spanish hold on their "closed sea."

While there is nothing conclusive about the lands attributed to Mendaña on Lopez's maps, it is beyond question that Lopez would have relied upon some existing chart or account for the inclusion of this



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Mapa Mundi o Descripcion de Todo el Mundo y en Particular del Globo Terrestre

information and that the timing of the disclosure, first coming six years prior to Cook's arrival in Hawai'i in 1778, is circumstantial evidence of an earlier source.

In summary, while we draw no conclusions on the underlying question of Spanish primacy in the European encounter with Hawai'i, the Lopez map presents a compelling new chapter in the discussion, adding to the pro-Spanish argument a map engraved seven years prior to Cook's visit to Hawai'i (the first version) by Spain's pre-eminent mapmaker. In this second version, Lopez goes farther, explicitly showing how Mendaña's likely find preceded the more-famous Cook by two centuries.

Rarity

The Lopez map of the world is of the utmost rarity. OCLC lists the 1771 first version in two institutional collections, at the national libraries of Spain and France. It does not list examples of the 1792 version, but further research has revealed examples at the Real Biblioteca and the Ministry of Defense in Spain.

This is the first time we have sold the map in thirty years of trading.

Detailed Condition: