

another of his characters, Jacques LaRuelle. It is located at the intersection of Calles Humboldt and Absolo. There you will find the famous tower with the crenellated windows, and the ravine known as 'la barranca' slicing ominously through back of the property.

The student of Lowry's works can spend a pleasant hour or so reading in the garden, or even take a table up at one of his old haunts on the main square (La Universal), but with all the house-numbers changed, his trail is hard to follow. You do feel his presence however, and the imprint of the Curenavaca's geography remains as you read, and re-read his books. If you want to ask anyone local about him, refer to him as 'el escritor Lowry'. This is a worthy, taxing pilgrimage for the truly dedicated (*). Let's move on now, from the merely difficult, to the all but impossible...

FIELD # 2 (Invisible Tenochtitlan) I trace much of my initial interest in the story of the Conquista back to two sources. One was C. W. Ceram's concise account in 'Gods, Graves, and Scholars'. The other was a catalogue (in German) for an exhibition of treasures from Mexico's Museum of Anthropology which happened to be touring Austria at the same time I was. Though my group missed the exhibition (by one day) I was able to get what the guard insisted was the 'very last catalogue'.

From: "Scratching the Surface" (see C.V.)
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Inside was a map, showing the outline of the Aztec capitol of Tenochtitlan superimposed on a rough layout of Mexico City's modern streets. Armed with this map (and a copy of Prescott) I came down determined to walk around the entire 'invisible' shore of the island city, just to see how big it was. I would like to describe this route now, for anyone who might be moved to seek it out.

It's some 680 blocks long, and might be easier to do in quadrants. Let's start by dividing the ancient city in half, along its great north/south axis (as defined by Calzada Tlalpan, Aves Pino Suarez, Republica de Argentina, and Jesus Carranza). Cut it again from east to west along Aves Puente de Alvarado, Tacuba and Republica de Guatemala.

(*)

Before we begin, may I admit that all these directions are approximations? No one really knows exactly what lay where in the aftermath of Cortes complete destruction of the city. Furthermore, there are no landmarks to go by, except for street-names in generally poor neighborhoods. Still, I think we can come pretty close, and our feet will certainly register the scale of things even if our eyes will not.

It's useful if, as I suggested, you start by walking in from Metro Xola to Metro Chabacano. That way you get a feel for the length of the causeway. Then head east, along Calzada Chabacano, all the way to Ave. Congreso de la Union, which approximates the eastern shore. Elevated Linea # 4 runs above you to the east.

Turn north, and seek out the wide Ave. del Trabajo, which slices through the barrios in a radically northwest direction, and follow this until you get to Canal del Norte, which forms the northern shore. Head west on this until you reach Ave. Jesus Carranza (the cardo) and take that back down to the Zocalo. Two quadrants are enough for one day, and the next two are even harder to find than the first.

From the top of Ave. Jesus Carranza, we head west on Canal del Norte / Manuel Gonzalez, and begin a dismal highway-side ramble along the northern 'shore' of rival center Tlatlolco (once an island too, and site of the main market). Now, it's a rather industrial area, whose railroad yards and refineries make tracing the exact outline very difficult. If you turn southwest on Ave. Insurgentes Norte, around the base of a very tall (trapezoidal) building, you will reach Ave. Flores Magon, once the old causeway to Tlacopan. A railway fence prevents you from continuing further south as the shore would have. But, no problem...

Pick your way south on Zaragoza, east on Luna, south on Guerrero, east on Sol, south on Zarco, and east on Camellia, all the way to Santa Maria de Responda. You eventually wind up at the intersection of Paseo de la Reforma and Lazzaro Cardenas, completing the outline of a Tlatlolco's peninsula, whose southern shore was cut by inlets. I'd pause now for a quick bite at one of the many roadside Taquerias, and maybe wander up to look at the Plaza of Three Cultures, which features remnants of Tlatlolco's ceremonial buildings.

The outline of Tenochtitlan looks a bit the way your right hand would, were you about to light a cigarette lighter. We have just circumnavigated your thumb, and are resting in the joint between that and your first finger. The whole space in between was known as 'Lagunilla', or lagoon, from which the nearby Flea-market (*) takes its name.

We can continue our route around the last quadrant of 'invisible' Tenochtitlan by heading west on Mosqueta, and generically southwest to Guerrero / Buccareli, across Ave Chapultepec to Ave Puebla. Head southeast along Dr. Bernard, straight east on Dr. Liceaga, across Lazzaro Cardenas, and northeast up Dr. Terres to Pino Suarez / Antonio Abad. Heading south on these will take you back to Chabacano, along the route of the great causeway.

The truly driven could continue this lesson in hands-on topography by climbing two hills which once formed part of the shoreline of the lake itself. These hikes are 'no picnic' either, but the view is key to an understanding of the scale of the city, and its surroundings. These hills are called Tepeyacac, and Cerro de la Estrella.

TEPEYACAC (and Guadalupe) - If you had the energy, you could hike back up the 'cardo' to Canal del Norte, and walk out Calzada de los Misterios (route of another Aztec causeway) to the Basilica of Guadalupe, one of the most sacred shrines

in all Mexico. (If not, take Linea # 3, Direccion Indios Verdes to Metro Basilica and head east).

It is here where a vision of the Virgin appeared (several times) to a humble peasant, and presented him with some flowers to take back to his doubting Bishop. When they shook the flowers out of his cloak, they noticed an image of the Virgin (now patron saint of Mexico) miraculously imprinted upon it. It is this image that now hangs behind the altar of the garish modern Basilica, to which thousands of devout pilgrims flock every December 12. The visit is worthwhile any time, both for the atmosphere and the chance to perceive what a similar shrine (such as Canterbury) might have been like in its day.

The view from the hill is good indeed, if you can come on a rare clear day. If you took note of the tall building we circled at the end of the invisible 'peninsula' of Tlatlolo, you should be able to pick this out even on a smoggy day. This building, more than anything, shows you the distance of the island from the shore, and its setting in the ancient bay of the lake.

CERRO DE LA ESTRELLA - In Aztec times, this hill was the scene of a bizarre ceremony (not that there were ever any shortage of those). At the temple whose humble stones still lie here, a victim would be sacrificed, his heart torn out and a fire built in the cavity. From this flame, torches would be lit and a line of fire would extend along the

causeway, all the way to the Templo Mayor. It must have been something to see.

A recent addition to the Metro system, Dark Green line (# 8) will drop you at the foot of this hill, if you go in Direccion Constitucion de 1917. From there simply pick your way uphill, and you will find pathways through a wooded park, and the eventual asphalt leading to the top.

Alas, I cannot recommend the view, as the 'contaminacion' was so bad on the day I climbed up here, that I could not even see the Latin American Tower, in the center of town. On a clear day, I'm sure you could see everything you'd need to give you further geographic placement of the 'island'...

Now, if nothing else, we can imagine the effort it must have taken Cortes and his native allies to fight their way onto and through all the enclosed territory, destroying everything in their path. What's harder to summon up is an image of how beautiful the city must have been before they did so (like Venice-with-temples, many streets running alongside canals lined with tall straight trees, and framed by little bridges, but always the smell of smoke from the nearly daily human sacrifices...)

TEMPLO MAYOR - It's best to visit this site on Sunday, when it is free, but there is always a charge for cameras. The modern museum at the back is still so badly lit that photography without flash is virtually impossible, but the

tallest buildings. (The Torre Latino-americano, visible from Plaza Garibaldi (just 8 very interesting blocks south on Lazzaro Cardenas) offers a remarkable view of the city, especially at night (fee: 22 pesos). A sea of lights now completely covers what once was the Aztec lake. If you have walked the entire periphery of Tenochtitlan, here are some landmarks to help you identify its 'shoreline'...

Look straight east, and eventually you will see the lights of a subway-train running along elevated Linea # 4, just above Ave. Congres de la Union, the eastern shore. Look diagonally north from there, imagining the great sloping 'shoulder' of Ave. Trabajo, and try to pick out a building that says 'Vyana'. This is the top of the 'cardo'.

To the west is that distinctively-shaped tall building we circled at the end of the 'peninsula' of Tlatlolco. Draw a line straight east from there to the bright street which stretches north below you, and imagine a Lagoon full of native canoes. The southwest quadrant is the hardest to see, though a large, yellow, looping sculpture on Buccarelli should help you find its western edge. Brightly-lit Ave. Chapultepec marks the point at which it meets the southern shore.

Panning clock-wise (south to north) across the sea of lights to where the landscape begins to rise, and you can easily visualize the ancient lake-side towns of Iztapalapa, Coyoacan, Chapultepec, Tacuba, Tlacopan, and Tepeyacac in their ancient contexts. Now imagine long, narrow causeways

connecting those points to the outline of the island, and you should begin to feel, even miss the glory of Aztec Tenochtitlan.

THE CERAMICS - Should you be lucky enough (as I was on my first visit) to come across a building site or telephone line excavation, talk your way on and look for the following local types of pottery frags (these are my own names...) :

- Aztec Buff (Tan un-glazed fabric with graphite-colored geometric designs)
- Aztec Red (Dark-red shiny fabric with pale silver lines)
- Spanish Colonial (Hard, sandy orange fabric with green splashed glaze)
- Majolica (Cream fabric with blue and white glaze)
- Ching Dynasty China (Limpid and thin with pale blue designs)
- Obsidian (Black volcanic glass used in Aztec weapons)

CHAPULTEPEC - If you are not lucky enough to find any frags, you can see complete vessels in all different styles of native ceramics at another of Mexico City's finest attractions, the National Museum of Anthropology. Take Linea # 1, Direccion Observatorio to Metro Chapultepec. Cross the busy intersection westward into the park, and head north to Paseo de la Reforma. The museum is several shady blocks west (14 pesos for admission, and 10 pesos for each camera).