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La Gran Tartaria., Cantelli da Vignola, 1693

This is Cantelli da Vignola's 1693 map of central and northeastern Asia. It embraces Asia from the Caspian Sea eastwards to the Kuril Islands, and from the Mogul Empire of Northern India to the Arctic. It focuses primarily on Tartar lands, spanning from the Russian frontier to the Great Wall of China.

Cantelli credits three sources in his cartouche: The Jesuit Society and the Monsieurs Tavernier and Thevenot. The former certainly included Martino Martini, whose rendition of Japan is reproduced here; the rendition of China and Korea is also reminiscent of his work. Of the latter two, the first is certainly the famed gem merchant and traveler Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, who long traveled in the east and published his travels in 1677. The second is Jean Thevenot, who also ventured east and who in 1664 and 1665 accompanied Tavernier on his travels. Thevenot's journeys were published posthumously in 1674. Thevenot's travels were confined to the Mogul Empire in the south. However, his last two voyages had secured the gem trader extraordinary knowledge of Eastern trade routes and close correspondence with Oriental potentates. The two travelers' accounts represented some of the most up-to-date information available to a mapmaker in the early 1680s. Likely this work's novel mapping of the Gobi Desert and the Great Wall of China come from these contemporary travelogues. Likewise, important centers of the Silk Route, including Samarkand, Kashgar, Lahore, and Bokhara are identified.

Thus, Cantelli faced the task of presenting the up-to-date travelers' reports of the Mogul Empire, and its trade connections to China and Central Asia, but reconciling that new information with the maps of established authorities like Martini and Sanson, along with the reports of Dutch explorers. By placing the new information in the context of earlier works, Cantelli produced a map of even broader interest far to the north, *Nova Zembla* appears as not an island but a peninsula, perhaps taking a pessimistic view of reports of ice-bound channels. Japan is shown following Sanson's model: A peninsula extending from northeastern Asia corresponds with the location of Hokkaido, which had not yet been understood to be an island.

In the east, not only are Martini's China, Japan, and Korea included, but also *Staten Island* and *Van Compagnies' Land* (here named *Terra di Jesso*). These derive from the 1643 explorations of Maerten de Vries and Cornel is Jansz Coen, who explored the coast of Sakhalin - here attached to the Yupi peninsula. The islands extending to the northeast likely represent Vries and Coen's discovery of the Japanese Kuril Islands of Kunashir and Iturop (*Terra di Jesso*). The Asian Pacific coast north of the Yupi Peninsula appears to be drawn largely from Jaillot's 1674 map of Asia (which indeed may be the channel by which the Martini geography came to the present work.)

The central Asian plains had long been feared by Europeans as the source of conquering hordes, and this image is embodied by the dramatic depiction of fierce Tatar warriors in the cartouche. A child, clad in crude furs, gazes up at his mother as she points to a braided foot-soldier and a stern, longhaired chieftain on horseback, as if to indicate the child's future career. Widman's beautifully engraved cartouche paints a vivid picture of a Tartar warrior society that had long struck fear into European readers. A chieftain on horseback peers at the reader; beyond him is a fierce, braided foot soldier. In the foreground, a fur-clad child gazes up at his mother, who points at the fearsome pair as if to say 'this is what to be when you grow up.'

DI NIVLHAN
VCHE
YVPI.
Lago Bianco
Brema
Matsimay
Canteburi
Stretto
Terra di Iesso
Aqui I.
Isola di Niphon
Iendo
Vosu
Matacuxima I.
Tey. I.
Tinoxima I.
ISOLE DEL GIAPPONE
Ximo Sivo
Saycock I.
55
50
45
40
35
30

ENDVC
Camul
Campiton
Ezima
Peking
Leaotung
Nanking
Xansi
Xantung
Kensi
Honan
PARTE DEL CATAY Ó CHINA
Peninsola di Corea
Huquang
Suchuen
Nanking
Funama I.

#487


LA GRAN TARTARIA
diuisa nelle sue parti pricipali
da Giacomo Cantelli da Vignola
conforme le relazioni, che s' hanno
da gl' Itinerarij
de P.P. della Comp.a di Giesù
di Monsù Tauernier
e dalle Raccolte di Monsù Theuenot
e data in Luce da Gio: Giacomo de Rossi
in Roma alla Pace con Priu. del S. P.
l'Anno 1683
MARE DE KAIMACHITI
MACHITI
Chianre
Mosthana
Chacan et Kaimack
Levante
180
185
190
195
200
80
75
70
65
60
55