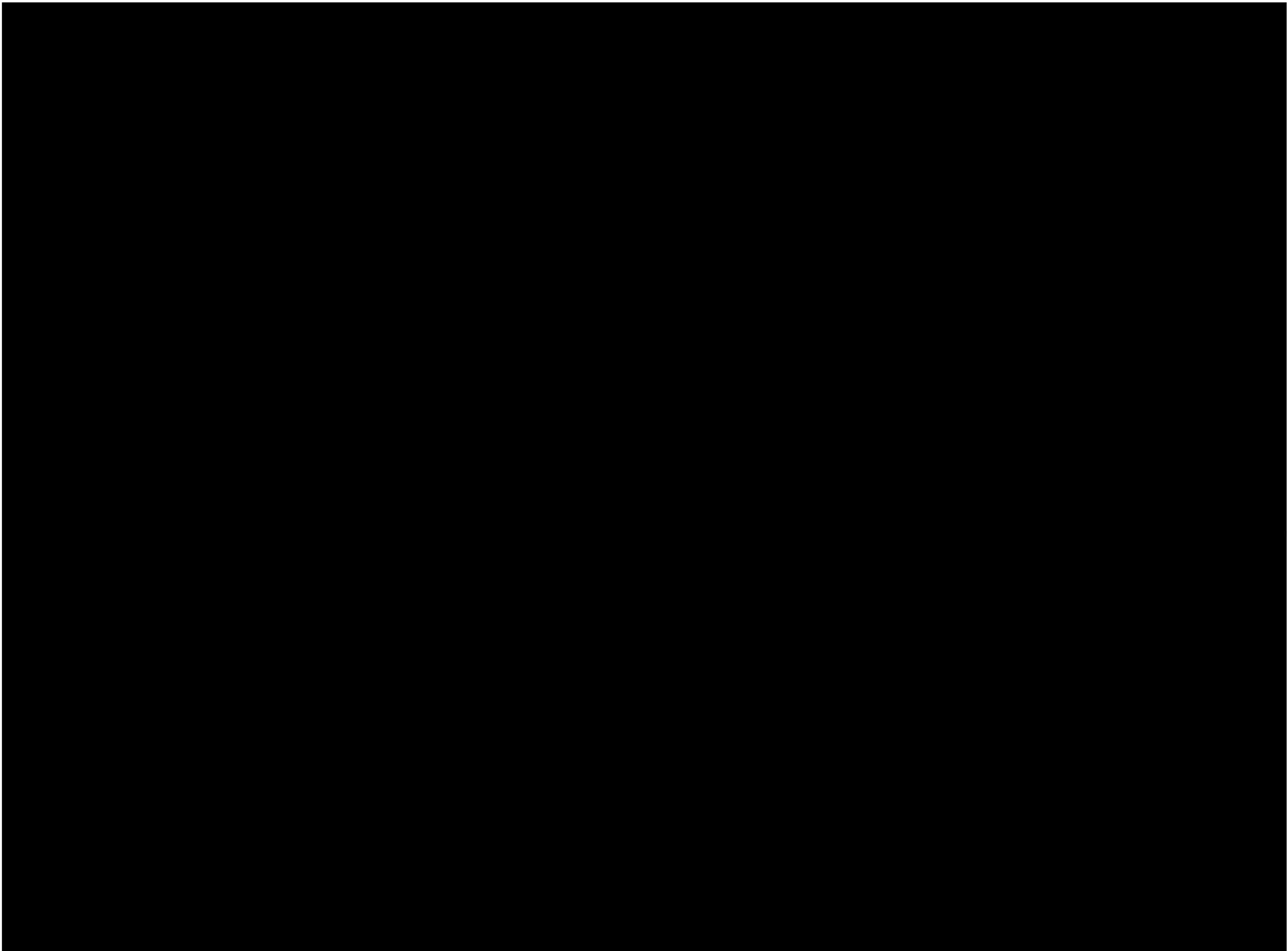


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AN ANCIENT MAP

This map stems from Abraham Ortelius (1527–1598), royal geographer of Philip II of Spain. The collection's original Latin edition of 1570 was entitled *Theatrum orbis terrarum*. Until 1612, forty-two ever updated and enlarged editions of this work appeared. The one reproduced here is an early hand-colored German edition of 1573, entitled *Theatrum oder Schawplatz des erdbodems, warin die Landttafell der gantzen weldt, mit sambt aine der selben kurtze erklarung zu sehen ist*.

The map carries the title "Tartariae sive magni chami regni" (Tartary or the empire of the Great Khan). Japan (which is still hardly explored and ends not far north of Osaka) is squeezed between America and the huge yellow land-mass of Tartary. The severe underestimation of the distance between Asia and the American West coast is of Ptolemaic origin; among other effects, it led Columbus to think that he had found Japan when he was actually approaching Cuba. The identity of Marco Polo's "Cathay" (Cataio; on this map near Tibet) and of "China" (on this map South of the Yangtze river) with "Tartary" is not yet realized.

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