

## **Reading for ancient maps: Transformation of the outline of Trincomalee - Koddiyar Bay and its vicinity**

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Map is a document which physical as well as cultural features on earth are depicted. Ancient maps of Sri Lanka were depicted on different map projections. These maps were produced in the 'age of discovery' which has been at Europe since 15<sup>th</sup> century and continued into early 17<sup>th</sup> century. The maps and charts created in this period about trading routes gradually became the global mapping of the world with more accurate details by bringing up to date. Cartographers are promptly engage in this work. The different map projections they prepared gave a difficult or impossible task to present researchers while locating exact places or when compare them with the present day maps, because the geographical entities on ancient maps are not corresponded well with those in the modern atlases. But decoding of the ancient maps with its existing traces is opening a way to study ancient maps.

Aim of this research is to study significant historic places from ancient maps accordingly with the changes of cartography. For this we have selected Trincomalee - Koddiyar bay and its vicinity area for example of study. Area selected due to its immense value all along the political, economical and naval history of the country. Two methods used to identify the changes accurately. First is made comparison of coordinators and outline of the land with the modern maps and secondly made the comparison the names marked in the map. The gradual unfolding outline of the Trincomalee can be studied with maps belong to the period before 18<sup>th</sup> century (from Ptolemy's Taprobana Insula of 14<sup>th</sup> cent. CE and Cantino Planisphere (1502), one of the earliest surviving charts of world which showing the Trincomalee for the first time to Johannes II Van Keulen's (1704-1755) map). Since the map of Hondius Mercator's of 1619, Trincomalee was very primarily outlined and it was marked significantly in all later maps. Dozens of maps from varying time gaps are selected. It can see that the settlers pressed forward, the previously unmapped land appeared on the new maps. Besides this, the maps show some of the geographical changes occurred in the Trincomalee bay, e.g., possible expansion of Tambalagam area which might occur in 17<sup>th</sup> century. The maps are arranged chronologically so far as possible, as indeed are the descriptions of the cartographers. All maps are represents the illustrations of general style of each period well as the distinct style of each cartographer.

Key words: Maps, Trincomalee, Cartography, Keulen