

## **Drawing and Historical Background of “Fujian Coastal Defense Map” of Late Ming Dynasty**

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### **ABSTRACT**

In 2012, a late-Ming military map was partially reprinted in *A descriptive catalogue of the antique maps collected in the Library of Chinese Academy of Sciences* “輿圖指要”. This large map depicts the waters around Fujian and Ryukyu, Taiwan as well as Luzon as outlying islands. Despite little attention by contemporary historians, the map is actually a rare and precious historical material that demonstrates knowledge of Fujian officials on the maritime geography in the early seventeen century.

To explore the map-making historical background, this study examined issues regarding when the map was drawn, who drew it, and what was depicted including harbors, forts, bays and offshore islands. Analyzing the geographical representations and spatial configuration of the map indicated that it was made around 1616 A.D. by officials or related personnel of Fujian government in response to frequent attacks by Japanese pirates in the coastal region. Moreover, the map portrayed vividly the ideas of Fujian officials on coastal defense, as well as their knowledge of offshore topography and pirate activities in the eastern islands. In addition, the depiction on the map not only revealed commercial interests of neighboring countries in the coastal region but also shed light on the political situation of Fujian waters in the 1610s.

**Keywords:** Coastal Defense, Fujian Navy, Governor of Fujian, Map of Taiwan, Japanese Pirates