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## **MARITIME TRADE RESEARCH IN FIFTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES VIETNAM: ACHIEVEMENTS AND RESEARCH ISSUES TO BE RAISED IN A MODERN APPROACH FROM MANAGEMENT SCIENCE\***

### **1. Achievements in maritime trade researches**

In recent years, researches of marine (maritime history), especially foreign trade activities in Vietnam in history have attracted the great attention of Vietnamese scholars. On the basis of the exploitation of dimentinal sources of material, a good number of researches are brought to Vietnamese readers, by doing so it helps drawing marine and islands economic picture of medieval Vietnam.

Materials on Vietnam economy have earliest recorded in the Chinese historical sources. During the Chinese domination (ten first centuries AD), the fact that North Vietnam was not subject under heavy probation of Northern [Han – 漢] feudal empires. The ancient Chinese sources such as *Tân thư* (秦書), *Lương thư* (梁書), *Hán thư* (漢書)... together with the late histories of *Đường thư* (唐書), *Tân Đường thư* (新唐書), *Tống sử* (宋史), *Nguyên sử* (元史), *Minh sử* (明史), *Thanh sử* (清史)... justify that North Vietnam was the potential economic center with cultural exchange hub regionally<sup>1</sup>.

Otherwise, Vietnamese historical sources have showed clearly sovereignty<sup>2</sup>, background, space, sea and islands cultural tradition of the Vietnamese<sup>3</sup>: motherland and country always involve the concept of “Water”; Water is not only a source of life but also a sense of origin of the Vietnamese people. “Water Soul” is always sacred, cohesive consciousness leading community aggregation. Harmony and mutual recognition of Water power led to behave in tune of consciousness in recognizing universal values “Under heaven nothing is soft water but hard material not win anything with water, it is not what upset the landscape than water” (Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching* – 道德經) of inhabitants who closely linked with water environment and cultural space.

Through historical sources<sup>4</sup> and fact, with the position of sea close country, strongly fragmented by natural conditions as matter of high mountains ranging from the Asian continent and the Northwest – Southeast direction to the East Sea, Vietnam therefore would be shaped in the economic and cultural space which was relatively isolated. Also due to divided terrain and people mostly gathered in relatively moist valleys, deltas, coastal areas and sea-close regions, with Vietnamese people, moving and transportation on riverain and sea lines always played an important role. Waterway transport not only made the lifeline linking the economic and cultural space of a unified Vietnam, but also contributed to turn Vietnam at early time into the outside world.

In the medieval time, together with the development trend of the Asian trade system and the world, the European trade companies began their penetration into the Far-East economic centers. In the course, traders, missionaries, adventurers and so on came to Dai Viet's [大越]<sup>5</sup> sea and islands, and especially left behind invaluable descriptions such as noted by C. Borri, J. B. Tavernier, Samuel Baron, William Dampier, J. Barrow, J. White,

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P. Poivre, A. Richard, Bissaschère... These actually are direct, intuitive and vivid reports on Dai Viet for the time being<sup>6</sup>. Prior to the Nguyen time (19<sup>th</sup> century), general histories such as *Khâm Định Việt sử thông giám cương mục* (欽定越史通鑑綱目, The Imperial Vietnamese Chronicle Schema History), *Đại Nam thực lục* (大南實錄, Chronicle of the Veritable Records of Vietnam)... recorded meticulously on the sea and islands system of Vietnam from North to South. In addition, some maps at this period of time also reflected the sense of national sovereignty over seas and islands<sup>7</sup>. Then, after pacifying and ruling Vietnam, the French colonial government repeatedly voiced claims in confirming Vietnam's sovereignty, and set out positive policies to protect the sovereignty and exploit marine resources in the territorial waters of Vietnam<sup>8</sup>.

There are a good number of researches under various views on tradition, activities, trade position in the area of Vietnam. New studies justify and confirm the important position of Vietnam in the regionally commercial routes and distribution chain of valued commodity. These achievements resulted in workshops and research works have been published in more than 10 years<sup>9</sup>.

Accordingly, in the 11<sup>th</sup>–14<sup>th</sup> centuries, Vietnam actively integrated into the regional trade system. Dai Viet's commercial ports became an important gateway connecting trade with oversea markets simultaneously received goods from external sources into the local markets. That mission of the North commercial ports such as Van Don and some market areas in Thanh – Nghe Tinh, basically just replaced the Asian trade system to change and external economic center shifting deeper into the hinterland with the appearance of such river ports as Domea, Pho Hien<sup>10</sup>... The domestic economic, political, cultural and potentials closely tied to the international trade which was the strength and vitality of Dai Viet<sup>11</sup>.

Prior to the Early Le time (1428–1527), researchers believe that the government especially under the reign of Le Thanh Tong (r. 1460–97), by the pursuit of phisocrat thought and Confucian honoring, created enforcement measures in order to restrict activities of non-agricultural economic sectors. Actually, in the historical context at that time, it was a strong political institution, highly centralized regime, the central government also attached great importance to trade issues and other policies to ensure the development of economics.

Strategically, the Le government at once paid great intention to the territorial opening and to monopolize the management of economic activities. Nevertheless, in the context of domestic and foreign affairs at the time, the Le dynasty's economic policy always attached the national security, territorial integrity of enforcing measures in order to protect all national economic sovereignty.

Through historical sources, besides policy of respecting agriculture, Dai Viet also paid attention to the consolidation and international relations establishment and roles of economic sectors in trade and handicraft aiming to meet needs, lifestyle and stability for the country which was on the way of flourished development<sup>12</sup>. The currency economic attraction and power under informal flow partly broke down barriers, institution of monarchical and bureaucracy Le government which later helped Dai Viet economics, including foreign trade reach exceptional growth, rapid integration in the common environmental and regional economic development, and contributed to create the golden period of the Asian development of maritime trade in the 16<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> centuries (Golden Age of Commerce)<sup>13</sup>.

Through the external economic activity, the Dai Viet government and traders gained knowledge and experience in international trade. Otherwise, based on that realized demand, they also proved great capacity of integrating with regional markets. More importantly, in the context of European and Asian trade competitiveness, pressured although by home political challenges, the Tonkinese and Cochinchinese governments successfully handled complex relationships. Those monarchical regimes selected key partners, neutralized international relationships, on the other hand tried to build strong defense forces.

Overcoming harsh challenges Thang Long (Tonkin) and Thuan Hoa (Cochinchina) governments successfully defended economic privileges and the national sovereignty<sup>14</sup>.

Also, the Nguyen lords established the teams of Hoang Sa and Bac Hai... in order to organize sea and islands exploitation even reaching out to remote islands in the ocean. Giving an impulse to trade and economic resources, the Nguyen Cochinchina government and local authorities had increasingly a deeper sense of space marine economy and for ensuring national security and sovereignty. After Shirahama Akitaka event at the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, besides its significant military, this event justified their capabilities and determination to successfully defend the sea and islands space. At the same time, it also created a precedent for other countries about the Dai Viet's sovereignty over the area of waters and islands<sup>15</sup>. Later, the Nguyen dynasty continued to enforce the sovereignty, exploitation organization, coordinative determination, mapping, sovereign landmark over the marine and islands of Vietnam.

Based on historical fact, according to foreign researchers "to understand Vietnamese history, obviously, we have to look towards the sea", under the Nguyen, through interests in ramparts, sea power boats, the first Nguyen emperors were often interested in the acquisition of European techniques. Moreover, the Nguyen conducted technical innovation and soon adapted the improvement, whether for renovation of ramparts or for ship-repairs. Westerners in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed and appreciated the ability and creativity of Vietnamese people on the basis of science and technology introduction from European engineering. Not only foreign techniques were not denied, but in reality they have been widely accepted in the then Vietnam (at least the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century).

Sea and islands system of Vietnam has long been a living environment, integration and economic exploitation area among regional cultures<sup>16</sup>. The study on nature geography, geology, geomorphology of the sea and islands of Vietnam has called the intention on scholarship. With a big investment, basic data on Vietnam's one have been published in detail. In addition to sea and islands parameters such as area, location, landmarks etc mineral resources in water area, marine resources, maritime trade routes and international areas... have also been attended by home scholarship<sup>17</sup>.

Besides Vietnamese researches, the theme of maritime trade of Vietnam soon attracted great attention by international scholars. The study offers a variety of new approaches on the history of Vietnam, on the other hand to put Vietnam in the regional trade system and interaction linking East Asia with Europe through trading system, ports, international trade centers ect.

To consider the Southeast Asian context from the 9<sup>th</sup> century to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the authors of *Southeast Asia in the 11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> Centuries*<sup>18</sup> believe that until the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Dai Viet society still remained Southeast Asian indigenous cultural factors, even that deeper than influences and imprints of Chinese culture. Around first seven centuries AD (1<sup>st</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> centuries), based on organic growth, endogenous dynamics, the Chinese and Indian cultural influences also had an important significance in promoting the cultural development and the birth of the Southeast Asian countries. But in the first phase of development, Southeast Asia soon had surpassing growth of some countries. And even in the typical forms of development, intermixing between indigenous elements and exogenous factors among highly-developed expression and ancient marks impacted profoundly to social life, culture, development characteristics and powerful changes in every kingdom and the regional entire<sup>19</sup>.

With a study on Dai Viet in the 15<sup>th</sup> century especially under the reign of Le Thanh Tong, J. K. Whitmore has commented that the economic policy of Hong Duc (1470–1497) basically satisfied the masses' needs and ensured its own economic function in both trade and agriculture<sup>20</sup>.

From the Early Le, the social structure included four sub-classes and classes: Confucian scholars – peasants – handicraftmen and merchants which established and strictly

drawn up in range. Dai Viet society then was strongly influenced by Chinese model. In the historical context and political environment, both Vietnam and the entire Southeast Asia were strongly influenced by Indian civilization with dominant roles of Brahmanism, Buddhism and Hinduism etc. Dai Viet continued to stick with a traditional Southeast Asian on the cultural and economic layer and intergrated strongly into the Northeast Asia cultural and political environment at the elite level. It enables to recognize the transformation of Vietnamese society from various approaches: both serving as a bridge connecting Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia, and creating a specially-growing phenomenon “*dualism*” in the region.

As mentioned above, given a view from the area (area studies), foreign scholars provide readers with a great deal with comparisons and relationship among kingdoms in the region<sup>21</sup>. The history of East Asian development witnessed simultaneously the movement of two structural systems or in other words of two development models: “Agricultural country” and “Trade country”. Most of the former were formed in continental geographical area, in central or lower section of a river. The latter were established in islands or coastal areas. Historically, both did not exist independently but they in fact had intimate links and mutual influences. The former supplied agricultural exporting products to the latter, in turn, the latter operated as a function of resource consumption and resupplied agricultural products to hand-made products, materials and many other luxury products from regional and international markets<sup>22</sup>.

Prior to the 16<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries, in the golden period of the Asian system of commerce, together with Oriental kingdoms, commercial ports of Vietnam proceeded with the destination of many merchants around the world. In recognizing world changes of economic and political situation, the government Le/Trinh in Tonkin and especially the Nguyen Lords in Cochinchina had policies on increase of trade. As a result, during two centuries, Dai Viet’s foreign trade gained a flourished development. Many commercial ports, new economic centers appeared. Vietnam market not just imported products of regional and international trade, as a hub for cargo but also actively exported commercial sources such as spices, silk, ceramics... to the exterior. Many products served not only domestic consumers created “internationalized” merchandises, high price on the world market<sup>23</sup>. Evidently, ceramics, potteries “An Nam” in the restorations of citadels of Sakai, Osaka, Edo as well as excavations in Nagasaki with the participation of Vietnam ceramics were discovered a lot in Japan<sup>24</sup>. Academic researches by such foreign scholars as A. Reid, Momoki Shiro, Kikuchi Seiichi, Li Tana, N. Cooke, C. Wheeler...<sup>25</sup> given historical records and archeological results have proved and justified that.

As described above, with seeing and hearing data of the 16<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> centuries about Vietnam by P. Poivre, J. White, Après de Manneville, J. B. Chaigneau..., or notes of Western missions to Vietnam by the delegations of J. Barrow, J. Crawford, G. Macartney; materials of George Taboulet, J. M. Buch, C. Maybon, A. Launay, H. Cucheroumet, Pierre Yves Manguin, E. Vo Duc Hanh, Cao Huy Thuan... attempted to examine the interaction of Vietnam with the Western countries, the implementation of establishing the sovereignty of Vietnamese monarchical states. By doing so diplomatic economic activities have been identified through Western voluminous sources.

## **2. An approach from management science: theoretical issues**

As a peninsula country, the convergence of many communities, crossroad of great cultures and civilizations, Vietnam had the early maritime tradition and thinking, strong sense on livelihoods. Thanks to geo-economic and strategic position, economic potentials and cultural environment Vietnam soon formed the famous marine culture. That culture in the course of development, through trade routes and islands chain, had many intimate exchanges with the outside world<sup>26</sup>.

In regard of natural conditions and ecological environment, Vietnam is a peninsula with a natural area of over 33 thousand km<sup>2</sup> and more than 3,000 km of coastline, its Index



of Sea Coastal Line (ISCL) reaches 106<sup>27</sup>. With measuring 5 of ISCL<sup>28</sup>, in comparison to four regions of Asia and the world, Southeast Asia is the place of highest region of ISCL. The high ISCL and the peninsula and islands area geographically become favorable conditions for Southeast Asian countries which enable to establish and expand trade relations with the outside world. Along with agricultural institutions, Southeast Asia formed handicraft and trade based countries, especially maritime trade.

Looking back the history of medieval Vietnam, the common operational structure of management of foreign trade was carried out as follows:

– Foreign merchants were gathered in fixed areas such as in citadel ports, commercial ports: Van Don, Hoi Thong... The court enabled to consider and allowed foreign merchant ships coming in Thang Long or other important positions.

– The court appointed officials in management of foreign trade activities such as *Sát hải sứ* [察海使], authority bodies such as *An phủ ty* [安府司], *Đề bạc ty* [題帕司], *Thông mậu trường* [通貿長]...<sup>29</sup>

– Mandarins in court and local officials in charge of foreign trade guided and requested traders in their operations according to the regulations of the state and local authorities<sup>30</sup>. Noticeably that management is to ensure that trade was prescribed but in many cases, kings/lords or local chiefs directly involved in such a trade network.

Based on the study of organizational management, the author of work *Navy in history against invaders*<sup>31</sup> has reviewed the government operations of Cochinchina on four dimensions:

- Systematic organization of sea and islands exploitation;
- Organization of patrols, maritime patrol;
- Organization of coastal defense;
- Organizations of tax collection and foreign trade, troubleshooting ships at sea<sup>32</sup>.

It should be stressed that, the aim of expansion, multilateralisation and diversification of external relations through various activities is to explore, manage and protect economic resources, strength and guarantee of political and military power. Through trade, both East Asian and Western kingdoms sensed in mind the sovereignty of the Annam Kingdom (Dai Nam) over marine and islands space thereby providing credent evidences for that. The central government sent mandarins, managed and issued directly in many cases policies with detailed provisions applying for trade fleets or mission fleets on behalf of the court.

Overall, the Nguyen Cochinchina's management and exploitation of economic resources (16<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries) followed the pattern from upland to low-land or wet areas and dry areas, combining coastal economy and commerce with ocean (international) shore on the East-West route<sup>33</sup>. Nguyen Lords exploited resources from mountains through the network of “*Nguồn*”<sup>34</sup> which played a key role in goods rotation, or the connection between mountainous area with plains (including plain, coastal, sea, islands).

In the following centuries, that pattern was still remained, moreover the Nguyen Lords, Le-Trinh court and Tay Son government gained further dynamic and initiative development in attracting foreign traders. Later, the Nguyen court maintained the sea and islands management with diverse activities. More specifically it was highly institutionalized and codified in order to confirm the unified and absolute management of the centralized government.

In fact, approaches to sea and islands management organization and medieval foreign trade of medieval Vietnam have not so far been resulted in systematic researches. With sources of material and endogenous approach, researchers sought to draw an economic, political and social picture with multidimensional agents, interactive power and needs of expanding the expansion in each country. However, studying on this topic as well as obtaining general, scientific and objective examination of management organization, similarities and dissimilarities in each historical period or regional comparison actually

needs for more multi-dimensional approaches and methods, endogenous and exogenous combination, modern theories such as system and structure, core and periphery, policy science and management science and so on<sup>35</sup>.

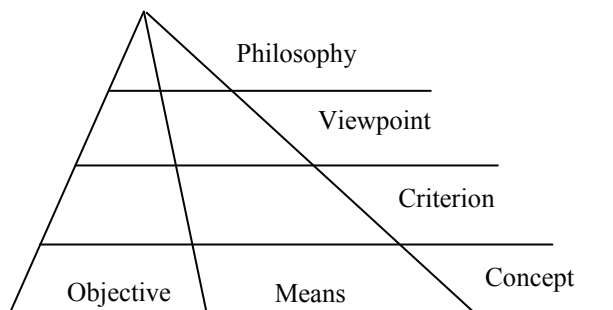
Yet, in modern scholarship, that methodology is conducted on the basis of applying the methods of policy science and management science<sup>36</sup>. Policy is a tool, management institution, and management is a means to implement policy. This uses all methods of posteriori science<sup>37</sup>. With the historical events in the past, this approach seeks to broaden sociological approach as a tool of examining social construction (social constructive method). The other methods involve textual linguistics research, discourse in linguistics (such as diplomatic documents, letters exchanged among kingdoms)...

To evaluate agents, policy effectiveness, besides such methods of assessment as *before-after*, *cost-benefit*..., in terms of historical researches, although there are a good number of methods on textbook description, historical event explanation etc, analysis of matrix (9 cells), or SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats), expected scenario (hypothesis on games), changes of *paradigm* with its four contents: *philosophy*, *viewpoint*, *criterion*, *concepts*<sup>38</sup> and so on should be used to recognize and compare the process of making, implementation, effectiveness and assessment of policy, guideline and strategy of Vietnamese monarchical states.

**Matrix (9 cells) in policy analysis (category)**

Sequence Category	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
Positives	1	2	3
Negatives	4	5	6
Peripherals	7	8	9

**Structure of policy**



The application of this method is not only to shed lights on important developmental steps, to find connections, interactions between related fields of research but also to clarify regional and inter-regional relations among commercial ports and islands management organizations and production areas, economic centers, commercial port system and domestic and international trade network. The development and relationship of sea oriented policy take into consideration analysis of constant changes of trading system as well as relations and power interaction between Dai Viet and East Asian countries.

Also in regard to “management organization”, on the basis of theoretical research in management science, the concept of paradigm (by Thomas Kuhn), aiming at assessing the implementing organization and management, reasonably considering it in accordance with social practices and accepted by society in a certain historical period should be considered one of key theoretical tools.

In the present-day region and international tendency, with strategic potentials and position, Vietnam is fully able to integrate into a dynamic region of economic development, getting abundant resources but also it leaves behind risks in the preservation and

promotion of traditional cultural values. An approach of macroeconomic policy and management is to consider seas and islands management in social policy perspective of the states. Policy is considered the most important resource in the sustainable development, including marine and islands management resources.

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To conclude, Vietnam's marine and medieval trade researches have achieved remarkable results. Towards a general view of marine economy and to reach a comprehensive awareness, besides traditional approaches, it needs to open up further different approaches, especially modern and multi-disciplinary theories as urgent demands in science and practice. Analyzing policy making, effective management of the monarchical states in foreign trade and sea and islands management clarifies the management organization system, sea-exploited tradition and sea-oriented thinking of the Vietnamese. It also justifies the struggle and establishment of the sovereignty at sea, opening policy in the foreign economic activities of Vietnam in history, or roles and impacts of state institutions for management activities. It more meaningfully results in the process of strengthening and expanding international research cooperation for successfully implementing the Sea Strategy of Vietnam at present.

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<sup>1</sup> Looking back in searching of the root, Vietnamese and foreign scholars meanwhile have mentioned a lot about the nation building of Vietnamese. They have justified the strongest tie of ancient records with water as it considers a birth of first kingdom. There are legendary stories on Lạc Long Quân, King of Lạc region (Nước – Water) married Âu Cơ (Núi-Mountain), gave birth to a hundred sons then splitting them into two parts: a half went with Mẹ (mother) up to Núi (Land Nation), the rest following Cha (Father) down to Biển (Sea) (Water Nation). In thinking about the cosmology of the nation-building dawn, it is not an absolute separation between Núi and Biển, or Yin (陰) and Yang (陽) but a division for coordination. Temporarily and relatively separate for a mutual agreement “while up to land, while down water to inquire after each other” *Vu Quỳnh. Tân Định Lĩnh Nam Chích Quái* (新訂嶺南摘怪, Selection of Strange Tales in Lĩnh Nam). Hanoi, 1993. P. 47. Obviously, in the nation-building dawn of time, the Vietnamese history was connected closely with water. It is easy to find water related history in historical stories, private and oral histories on this period of time. In his article entitled *Wondering around salted fish*, Tran Quoc Vuong stressed, “Salted fish is Southeast Asian special food... nutrition of the ancient civilization base on mainly animals in water life”. *Tran Quoc Vuong. Vietnamese Culture: Study and Interpretations*. Hanoi, 2000. P. 416.

General speaking, under 1,000 years of Chinese domination, Sino-ways of thinking and methods of compilation deeply engraved in Vietnamese scholarship. At once, Vietnamese history reflected in Han [漢] historiography imprinted the Chinese dominated thought. All filled with veritable and daily-recorded information.

<sup>2</sup> See more: *Dinh Kim Phuc (Eds.). Hoang Sa – Trung Sa in Ancient Records*. Ho Chi Minh City, 2014.

<sup>3</sup> Such as researches by the *Institute of Southeast Asian Studies. Sea with ancient Vietnamese*. Hanoi, 1996; *Tran Quoc Vuong. Vietnamese Culture – Seeking and Pondering*. Hanoi, 2000; *Nguyen Thanh Loi. A Perspective of Marine Culture*. Ho Chi Minh City, 2014.

<sup>4</sup> Annals of this period can be referred *Đại Việt Sử Ký Toàn Thư* (大越史記全書, Complete Book of the Historical Records of Đại Việt); *Hồng Đức Thiệu Chính Thư* (洪德善政書, Book of Good Government of the Hồng Đức Period); *Quốc triều hình luật* (國朝刑律, The National Penal Law)...

<sup>5</sup> Đại Việt (Great Viet) is most used for eight centuries (from the 11<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries), except shortly-used names: Đại Ngu – 大虞, or Đàng Trong (Cochinchina), Đàng Ngoài (Tonkin) and so on.

<sup>6</sup> A part of books' contents has been translated in *Documents on Culture of Thang Long – Hanoi*. Hanoi, 2010.

<sup>7</sup> World Atlas by Philippe Vandermaelen (1795–1869) published in 1827 in Brussels; maps of Spain, Portugal, England, Holland, France... such by Peter Goss (1666), Blaen (1666), Zhorton

(1669), P. du Val (1686), Herman Moll (1732), Anville (1752), Huggle Clifford, A. de Manneville (1775), J. Barrow, L. Taberd... See more in: *Nguyen Thua Hy*. Paracel Islands and the Portuguese navigators // **Journal of Science – VNU**, 1998, No. 3; *Nguyen Thua Hy*. Hoang Sa – Truong Sa Islands in the 17<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> Centuries through Western Sources // **Journal of Historical Studies**, 2011, No. 9 (425); *Tran Duc Anh Son (Ed.)*. **Hoang Sa – Truong Sa: Data and Viewpoints of International Scholars**. Writers Association publishers, 2014.

<sup>8</sup> *Nguyen Quang Ngoc*. Protection of Sovereignty over East Sea – An Outstanding Performance of the Tay Son Dynasty // **Journal of Military History**, 1995, No 115; *Nguyen Nha (Eds.)*. **Special Issue on Hoang Sa – Truong Sa. East Sea and Sovereignty over Hoang Sa – Truong Sa of Vietnam**. Ho Chi Minh, 2014; *Tran Duc Anh Son (Eds.)*. **Documents about the Sovereignty over Hoang Sa Islands**. Ho Chi Minh, 2014...; Other sources exploited in Chinese annals (*Ming Shi*, *Ming Shi-lu*, *Qing Shi...*), Japan (*Rekidai hoan...*), Thailand (*Siam Shi-lu...*), partially published in English; or in Vietnamese (**Ming Shi-lu: Chinese and Vietnamese Relations in 14<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> Centuries**, 3 volumes, Hanoi, 2010; **Qing Shi-lu: Qing-Tay Son Relations in Late 18<sup>th</sup> – Early 19<sup>th</sup> Century**. Hanoi, 2010); exploitation of Chinese historical documents related to the sea and islands space of Vietnam (*Pham Hoang Quan*. **Hoang Sa – Truong Sa. Findings from Chinese Historical Sources**. Ho Chi Minh, 2014).

<sup>9</sup> **East Asia – Southeast Asia: Historical and Present Issues**. Hanoi, 2004; **Southeast Asia – Tradition and Modernity**. Hanoi, 2007; **Vietnam in the System of Asian Commerce in 16<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> Centuries**. Hanoi, 2007; **Van Don – Economic Potentials and Cultural Exchanges**. Hanoi, 2008; **Lion and Dragon – Four Centuries of Dutch and Vietnamese Relations**. Hanoi, 2008.

<sup>10</sup> *Do Thi Thuy Lan*. **Commercial Port System on the Tonkin River in the 17<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> Centuries**. Dissertation. Hanoi, 2013. *Nguyen Van Kim*. **Van Don – The International Commercial Port of Vietnam**. Hanoi, 2014. In connection with the Sea and Continent, many types of commercial ports, town ports formed can be separated into four basic types: 1. River ports: Thang Long (Hanoi), Pho Hien (Hung Yen), Cu Lao Pho (Dong Nai), Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City), Oc Eo (An Giang); 2. Estuary Port: Van Ninh (Quang Ninh), Do Me (Domea, Haiphong), Lach Truong (Thanh Hoa), Hoi Thong (Nghe An), Thanh Ha (Thua Thien – Hue), Chiem Cang – Hoi An (Quang Nam); 3. Sea Port: Ky Anh (Ha Tinh province), Thi Nai – Nuoc Man (Binh Dinh)...; And, 4. Island Port: Van Don (Quang Ninh), Cu Lao Cham (Quang Nam), Con Dao, Phu Quoc... *Nguyen Van Kim (Ed.)*. **Vietnamese and the Sea**. Hanoi, 2011.

<sup>11</sup> *Nguyen Van Kim*. The external position of Thang Long-Dai Viet with South East Asian Countries under the Ly-Tran Dynasties // **Journal of Historical Studies**, 2010, No. 7 (411).

<sup>12</sup> *Nguyen Van Kim, Nguyen Manh Dung*. Tradition and Trade Activities of the Vietnamese – Historical Fact and Understandings // **Journal of Historical Studies**, 2007, No. 8 (376) and 9 (377); **Journal of the World of the Orient** (Ukraine), 2013, No. 4. P. 27–49.

<sup>13</sup> *Reid, Anthony*. **Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce**. Vol. II. Expansion and crisis. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1993.

<sup>14</sup> *Nguyen Van Kim*. East Sea – Issues of Security and Regional Cooperation (A Historical Approach and View from the Sea Position of Vietnam) // **Proceedings: ASEAN – 40 Years in Retrospect and Looking Forward**. VNU-University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Hanoi, 2007; *Duong Van Huy*. Foreign Trade Management of Nguyen Lords in the 17<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> Centuries // *Nguyen Van Kim (Ed.)*. **Vietnamese and the Sea**. Hanoi, 2011.

<sup>15</sup> Based on letters exchanged between the Nguyen Lords and the Tokugawa Shogunate both sides paid great intention to build relationship. More see: *Phan Thanh Hai*. Letters Exchanged between the Nguyen Lords and Tokugawa Japan (16<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> Centuries) // **Journal of Historical Studies**, 2007, No. 7; *Phan Thanh Hai*. Letters Exchanged between Le – Trinh Government and Tokugawa Japan in 17<sup>th</sup> Century // **Journal of Historical Studies**, 2008, No. 1.

<sup>16</sup> *Institute of Southeast Asian Studies*, **Sea with the Ancient Vietnamese**, Hanoi, 1996. P. 64–95. *Nguyen Khac Su*. Cultural Exchanges in the Prehistoric Time in Northeastern Coastal Vietnam through Archaeological Sources and *Trinh Nang Chung*. Prehistoric Cultural Vestiges in Van Don, Quang Ninh: Documents and Understandings // **Proceedings Van Don Commercial Port: History, Economic Potentials, and Cultural Exchanges**. Quang Ninh, 2008. P. 461–474 & P. 475–489.

<sup>17</sup> *Vu Huu San*. **East Sea Geography with Hoang Sa – Truong Sa**. Ho Chi Minh City, 2014. In natural sciences, there are so far a good number of Vietnamese researchers in studying on such this as Pham Huy Tien (on potentials and roles of the sea and islands of Vietnam), Le Duc An, Tran Duc Thanh (on resources and potentials for marine economic development, sea and is-



lands geology and geomorphology), Le Duc To (on natural resources and environment)... In general, these studies just focus on geographical aspects, geomorphology, geology based on natural science.

<sup>18</sup> Marr, David G., Milner, A. C. (Ed.). **Southeast Asia in the 11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> Centuries**. Singapore Press, 1986.

<sup>19</sup> Nguyen Van Kim. Ancient Imprints of Southeast Asian Societies // **Journal of Historical Studies**, 2008, No. 6 (386).

<sup>20</sup> Basically, it could be inferred that the stability and prosperous bureaucratic state of Dai Viet in 15<sup>th</sup> century stimulated and supported handicraft production and trade systems as part of *Jiao-zhi-yang* (交趾洋) network. In fact, Van Don became mostly a key node in this network to replace Thi Nai. John K. Whitmore. The Disappearance of Van-don: Trade and State in Dai Viet Fifteenth Century: A Changing Regime? In **International conference Proceedings A Mini Mediterranean Sea: Gulf of Tongking through History**. Guangxi, Nanning (China). 2008, 14–15 May; Nguyen Manh Dung. Northeast Region of Vietnam in East Asian Itinerary in 8<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> Centuries // **Journal of Southeast Asian Studies**. 2009, No. 9 (114). P. 40–53.

<sup>21</sup> Trocki, Carl. **Chinese Eighteenth-Century Pioneering in Southeast Asia**. London – New York: MacMillan, 1997; Brook, T. **The Confusions of Pleasure: Commerce and Culture in Ming China**. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London 1998; Yone Ishii. **The Junk Trade from Southeast Asia**, Institute of SEA. 1998; Wyatt, David K. **Thailand: A Short History** (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). Yale University Press, 2003.

<sup>22</sup> Nguyen Van Kim. Some Thoughts on Economic Characteristics, Political Institutions and Power Structures of Ancient and Medieval Time Southeast Asia Countries // **Proceedings: Research and Training of Social Sciences and Humanities in Vietnam – Achievements and Experiences**. Hanoi, 2010.

<sup>23</sup> There are many scholars who have further mentioned on the maritime trade history of Vietnam in the 17<sup>th</sup> century on the basis of Western materials such as from Netherlands, France, UK... Kleinen, John. Towards a Maritime History of Vietnam: Vietnamese-Dutch Seventeenth-Century Confrontations // Gabrowsky Volkert (ed.). **Unravelling the Myths of Southeast Asian Historiography: Essays in Honour of the Barents Jan Terwiell**. Bangkok, 2011. P. 276–293; Lieberman, Victor. **Strange Parallels-Southeast Asia in Global Context, c. 800–1830**. Cambridge University Press, 2003.

<sup>24</sup> Pho Hien - **Symposium Proceedings**. Hai Hung, 1992. On the other hand Vietnamese ceramics also found in more than 30 locations in Southeast Asia and some international commercial ports. Aoyagi Yoji. Vietnamese Pottery in Southeast Asian Archipelago // **Ancient Town of Hoi An**. Hanoi, 1991; Japanese scholars' researches: Kin Seiki, Ojiura Masayoshi, Tsuzuki Shinchiro and Tsuyoshi Mori about the discoveries of ceramics, porcelains of Vietnam in Japan. *Proceedings of the International Workshop. Vietnamese and Japanese Relations in 15<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> Century through Pottery, Ceramics Exchanges*. Hanoi, 1999, brought many new insights about Vietnamese trade relations in the region.

<sup>25</sup> Such as Reid, Anthony. **Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce**, 2 vols., Yale University Press. 1988, 1993; Li Tana. **Nguyen Cochinchina: Southern Vietnam in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century**. NY. 1998; Cooke Nola. Southern Regionalism and the composition of the ruling elite Nguyen (1802–83) // **Asian Studies Review**. 1999. Vol. 23, No. 2; Charles Wheeler. **A Maritime History to Vietnamese Logic? Littoral Society in Hoi An's Trading World c. 1550–1830**. – <http://www.historycooperative.org/proceedings/seascapes/wheeler.html>

<sup>26</sup> During the prehistory and proto-history, Vietnam's northern is the gateway between South China and Southeast Asian world. The continuous development on broader geographical region mounted in regional trade network in the early trading period (Early Maritime Trade), and especially the Age of Commerce. The commercial ports of Vietnam played roles as transfer station, the destination of many international trade envoys such as Japan, China, Siam, European countries...

<sup>27</sup> ISCL is calculated by the calculation of natural area with the division of total length of the coastline. Japan's ISCL is 13, Vietnam – 106.

<sup>28</sup> Sakurai Yumio. Another Try to Sketch the Historical Structure of Southeast Asia (through Marine and Continental) // **Journal of Southeast Asian Studies**, 1996, No. 4.

<sup>29</sup> Under the Nguyen time, the Ship Control Office, the first specialized organization was established. Nguyen Viet, Vu Minh Giang, Nguyen Manh Hung. **Navy in History against Invaders**. Hanoi, 2012. P. 266.

<sup>30</sup> The Nguyen Lords organized the “International Fair” annually in Hoi An. According to Le Quy Don, their management apparatus of foreign trade was pretty tight as many as 12 officers directly assigned to be supervisors to each specific task whenever foreign merchant ships came into. See more: *Li Tana. Cochinchina. Economic and Social History in the 17<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> Century*. Ho Chi Minh City, 1999.

<sup>31</sup> *Nguyen Viet, Vu Minh Giang, Nguyen Manh Hung. Navy in History Against Invaders*. Hanoi, 2012. P. 259.

<sup>32</sup> See more: *Le Tien Cong. Organization of Defense of Marine Area Central Vietnam in the Early Nguyen Time // Journal of Research and Development*, 2013, No. 1 (99).

<sup>33</sup> See more models proposed by *Charles Wheeler. A Maritime History to Vietnamese Logic? Littoral Society in Hoi An’s Trading World c. 1550–1830*. – <http://www.historycooperative.org/proceedings/seascapes/wheeler.html>

<sup>34</sup> “Nguồn” played various roles such as market center for merchandise exchanges, security-controlling station, cultural exchanges place...

<sup>35</sup> Theoretically, center-periphery can be referred in *Wallerstein I. The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*. New York, 1976; *Marshall G. A Dictionary of Sociology*. Oxford, 1998; *Ngo Duc Thin. “Theory of Core and Periphery” in a Study of Cultural Space // Journal of Cultural Studies*, 2007, No. 1.

<sup>36</sup> This is a new approach such as system theory, decision theory, game theory, risk management, change management... for objects of historical study.

<sup>37</sup> “Policy is a set of measures to be institutionalized issued by own managers’ subjects in order to orient system in making a certain goal in the strategic development of all system”. *Vu Cao Dam. Policy Science*. Hanoi, 2011.

<sup>38</sup> See: *Vu Cao Dam. Policy Science*. Hanoi, 2011.

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