

## VIETNAM'S FEUDAL STATE MANAGED PARACEL ISLANDS AND WATERS OF VIETNAM IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA FOR CENTURIES

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Tracking the history, we can find that, since Lý Dynasty, Vietnam's feudal states had been interested in mapping national territory. According to *Khâm định Việt sử thông giám cương mục*: "Spring of 1075,... Lý Thường Kiệt ordered to map river and mountain topography of three mountain districts which were Bồ Chính, Ma Linh and Địa Lý" (*Khâm định Việt sử thông giám cương mục*, Volume 1, 2007, p.332). *Đại Việt sử ký toàn thư* also stated: ... In November of the 22<sup>nd</sup> year of Đại Định (1161), reign of Emperor Lý Anh Tông, the emperor ordered Tô Hiến Thành to be Admiral Captain, Đỗ An Di to be Deputy Admiral Captain, bringing 20 thousand soldiers to patrol Southwest coasts to keep peace in the border regions (*Đại Việt sử ký toàn thư*, Volume 1, 1998, p.323). Also as stated in *Đại Việt sử ký toàn thư*: in the 10<sup>th</sup> year of Chính Long Bảo Ứng (1172), reign of Emperor Lý Anh Tông, in the spring in February, the emperor once again patrolled islands on the boundaries in the Northern and Southern states, mapped and

noted on the scenery to bring back (*Đại Việt sử ký toàn thư*, Volume 1, 1998, p.325).

The later emperors followed Lý Dynasty to continue mapping the country. In the reign of Lê Thánh Tông (year 1470), there was map for the entire country and *Hồng Đức bản đồ*; in the reign of Lê Trung hưng, Đỗ Bá drew *Thiên Nam tứ chí lộ đồ*; in Nguyễn Dynasty, there was map in the reign of Đồng Khánh with the title *Đồng Khánh địa dư chí*. About records on national geography, since Early Lê Dynasty, we had *Nam Việt dư địa chí* of Nguyễn Trãi (1380 - 1442), recording geography of Vietnam since the reign of Kinh Dương Vương until Lê Dynasty. In the following centuries, geography books written by Vietnamese continued to develop: In the reign of Mạc Cảnh Lịch (1548 - 1553), there was *Ô châu cận lục* compiled by Dương Văn An on geography of Ô châu (land from Quảng Bình to Thừa Thiên - Huế). In Lê

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Trung hung dynasty, there was *Phủ biên tạp lục* compiled by Lê Quý Đôn in the 37<sup>th</sup> year of Lê Cảnh Hưng (1776) recording on geography and history, in which there was Quảng Nam. Geography category was especially very developed in Nguyễn Dynasty, such as: *Đại Nam quốc cương giới vịnh biên* of Hoàng Hữu Xứng, *Đại Việt địa dư toàn biên* of Phương Đình Nguyễn Văn Siêu, *Hoàng Việt địa dư chí*, *Nam quốc địa dư chí* of Lương Thúc Đàm (Trịnh Khắc Mạnh, 2009). This proves that, in the history of developing and defending the country, since Lý Dynasty to Nguyễn Dynasty, Vietnam's state was always interested in territory of the country, both land-based and offshore islands. In this article, we would like to introduce: Management of Vietnam's feudal state for Paracel, Spratly and waters of the South China Sea recorded in Hán-Nôm documents.

Until now, we have collected many Hán-Nôm documents recording this subject which shows consistent positions and views that Vietnam's feudal state managed Paracel, Spratly and waters of Vietnam in the South China Sea. These documents are managed by the State, valuable in terms of science and used as legal basis asserting sovereignty of Vietnam over Paracel, Spratly and waters of Vietnam in the South China Sea. The content of these Hán-Nôm documents can be summarized into three main issues as follows:

*First*, every year, the State sent people to Paracel to measure, mark and map to submit to the court (Trịnh Khắc Mạnh,

2013). We would like to outline a number of field trips to Paracel of Vietnamese in the reign of Nguyễn Dynasties as follows:

The *Đại Nam thực lục* was compiled by Nguyễn Dynasty's Historical Office since the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of Minh Mệnh (1821) until the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Duy Tân (1909) and printed in turn from the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Thiệu Trị (1844) until the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Duy Tân (1909). This chronicle of Nguyễn Dynasty recorded historic period of 300 years, since Nguyễn Hoàng proclaimed Lord in Cochinchina (1558), until the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Đồng Khánh (1888). The *Đại Nam thực lục* carved board is being kept in Woodblock storage at Vietnam Center for National Archives no. 4 (Đà Lạt), has been recognized by UNESCO as World Documentary Heritage in 2009 under Memory of the World Program; the printed version is stored at the Institute of Hán-Nôm Studies and in French Republic. According to the records in *Đại Nam thực lục*, after establishing Nguyễn Dynasty, Emperor Gia Long continued works of Nguyễn Lords which were sending people to explore seaways to Paracel, continuing to measure, mark and map to assert sovereignty of Vietnam's state over this archipelago.

In the 14<sup>th</sup> year of the Gia Long (1815), the Emperor sent Hoàng Sa Company to explore seaways to Paracel: "In Year of Ất Hợi – the 14<sup>th</sup> year of the Gia Long (1815),... sent Hoàng Sa Company which included Phạm Quang Ảnh to Paracel to explore and survey seaways/ 乙亥嘉隆十四年... 遣黄沙隊范光影等往黄沙探度水程" (A.2772/9, Part 1,

volume 50, page 6a). In the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Gia Long (1816), Emperor Gia Long continued to send Hoàng Sa Company to explore seaways to Paracel: “In Year of Bính Tý – the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Gia Long (1816), ... sent the naval team and Hoàng Sa Company to sail to Paracel to explore and survey seaways/丙子嘉隆十五年... 命水軍及黃沙隊乘船往黃沙探度水程” (A.2772/9, Part 1, volume 52, page 15a). And a very important thing recorded by *Đại Nam thực lục* was “In Year of Đinh Sửu – the 16<sup>th</sup> year of Gia Long (1817),... a Macau boat parked in Đà Nẵng submitted Paracel map. (Emperor) rewarded 20 ounces of silver/丁丑嘉隆十六年... 瑪羔船泊沱囊以黃沙圖獻賞銀二十兩” (A.2772/9, Part 1, Volume 55, page 19b). Thus, following Nguyễn Lords, Emperor Gia Long was always interested in Paracel and considered it as sacred territory of the country, always sent people there to explore. Especially, boat of Macau of Thanh Dynasty had and submitted Paracel map to Emperor Gia Long without submitting to its state. This suggests that, Paracel belonged to Great Nam at that time and its map should have been submitted to the emperor of Great Nam, the managing state of this archipelago.

In the reign of Emperor Minh Mệnh, exploration, survey and measurement of Paracel were conducted by the state more frequently, on larger scale and more specifically. *Đại Nam thực lục* stated: “In March, spring of Year of Giáp Ngọ - the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Minh Mệnh (1834),... sent Giám thành Đội trưởng

Trương Phúc Sĩ with the naval team of 20 men to sail to Paracel of Quảng Ngãi to map/甲午明命十五年春三月... 遣監城隊長張福仕與水軍二十餘人乘船往廣義黃沙處描取圖本” (A.2772/26, Part 2, volume 122, page 32b). Two years later, the survey of Paracel was ordered by Emperor Minh Mệnh more specifically and on larger scale. Furthermore, Emperor Minh Mệnh also ordered to mark to assert national sovereignty: “In January, spring of Year of Bính Thân – the 17<sup>th</sup> year of Minh Mệnh (1836)... Ministry of Works said: Within our sea boundary, there is Paracel which is very important. In the past, people were sent annually to explore everywhere to get familiar with the seaways. Please allow from this year onwards, on the last ten days of January, to recruit Local naval soldiers and Giám thành to take a boat to Quảng Ngãi and Bình Định provinces on the first ten days of February, following guidance of 4 boats rented from local people to Paracel, regardless of any island or any beach. When arriving, they have to immediately measure length, width, height, perimeter and sea level surrounding, whether it is shallow or deep, whether there is sandbank or reef, how difficult the topography is. Measurement should be done carefully and mapped. Should record clearly the departure date, seaport of departure, arrival date and estimated the number of miles based on the journey. Looking to the shore from that land, should check which county it is directly opposite, which county it is opposite in oblique direction, how many mile it is

from the coast, record everything, explain clearly and submit when returning. The emperor approved the request, ordered Commander of Naval team Phạm Hữu Nhật to bring warships, also let them bring 10 wooden poles to mark wherever they went. (Each pole was 5 feet long, 5 inches wide, 1 inch thick. The surfaces of the poles were inscribed with words Year of Bính Thân, the 17<sup>th</sup> year of Minh Mệnh (1836), Chief Commander of Naval team Phạm Hữu Nhật followed the order to go to Paracel to measure and mark/丙申明命十七年春正月... 工部奏言本國海疆黃沙處最是險要前者曾晰所應年常派往遍探以熟海程請自本年以後每屆正月下旬遴派水軍弁兵及監城乘烏船一艘以二月上旬抵廣義據廣義平定二省雇撥民船四艘向引駛往黃沙的處不拘何島嶼沙洲凡駛到者即照此處長橫高廣周圍及四近海水淺深有無暗沙石磧險易形勢如何詳加相度描取圖本再照起行日由何海口出洋望何方向駛到此處據所歷水程計算約得幾里又於其處望入海岸正對是何省轄何方向斜對是何省轄何方向約略隔岸幾里一一貼說明白遞回呈進帝允其奏遣水軍率隊范有日率兵船往準帶隨木牌十到處豎立為誌(牌長五尺闊五寸厚一寸面刻明命十七年丙申水軍正隊長率隊范有日奉命往黃沙相度至此留誌等字)” (A. 2772/32, Part 2, Volume 165, page 24b-25a). With the interest of Emperor Minh Mệnh and efforts of mandarins, in 1838, Emperor Minh Mệnh had a more detailed drawing of Paracel: “On the 1<sup>st</sup> of July, autumn of Year of Mậu Tuất – the 19<sup>th</sup> year of Minh Mệnh (1838),... Junior mandarin

of Ministry of Works who was Đỗ Mậu Thường followed order to perform public service in Paracel, returned and submitted the map. The Emperor found [this mandarin] explored many places, measured and mapped thoroughly, more superior than previous envoys. Đỗ Mậu Thường and other fellow colleagues were awarded with more clothes and money/戊戌 明命十九年秋七月朔... 工部員外郎杜懋賞奉派往黃沙公回以圖進帝以其經歷多所相度詳悉比節次派員稍勝杜懋賞及在行人等各加賞衣褲錢文” (A.2772/32, Part 2, volume 194, page 7b-8a).

Another historical record of Nguyễn Dynasty which is *Quốc triều chính biên toát yếu* also recorded quite detailed about Vietnamese measured and mapped Paracel: “Suất đội thủy quân of the Naval team who was Phạm Hữu Nhật brought warships to Quảng Ngãi, directly to Paracel, regardless of any islands or sand dunes, to measure length, width, height, perimeter and checked whether there was any sandy beach, reef surrounding and how dangerous the topography was. How many miles it was from the estuary by waterways, which local coast it belonged to, recorded everything clearly, approved to bring wooden poles to mark, measured and mapped to submit when returning/遣水軍率隊范有日率兵船往廣義駛往黃沙的處不拘何島嶼何沙洲凡長橫高廣周圍及四近有無暗沙石磧險易形勢如何海口所歷水程算約幾里海嶼是何處地方一一明白準帶隨木牌到處豎立為誌描繪圖本遞回呈進” (VHv. 1581/2, page 118a-118b).

Besides historical documents recording surveys, measurements and markings on Parcel of Vietnamese during Nguyễn Dynasty, there are legal documents issued by the state recording this issue very thoroughly, it is *Administrative documents*. They recorded quite adequately and detailed about Nguyễn Lords and Emperors sending people to explore, survey seaways, mark and map on Parcel.

**Picture 1: Administrative document from the 17<sup>th</sup> year of Minh Mệnh (1836)**



- *Administrative document no. 1*, recorded on February 12<sup>th</sup>, the 17<sup>th</sup> year of Minh Mệnh reigned (1836) (Picture 1).

*Translation:*

February 12<sup>th</sup>, the 17<sup>th</sup> year of Minh Mệnh (1836)

Ministry of Works reported:

Today received documents of the Cabinet following order to assign the Ministry (in which) the document said: Boats are dispatched to Parcel, each boat shall carry 10 wooden posts

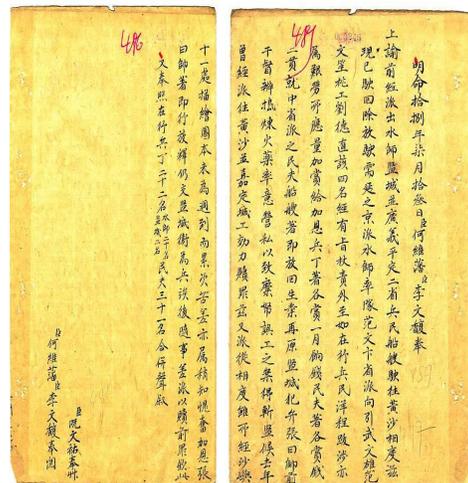
(wooden poles, each pole was 4-5 feet long, 1 inch thick – this was written by Emperor Minh Mệnh on the side) written in big fonts and inscribed deeply the words: Write the name of foreman of the naval team, year of Bình Thân, the 17<sup>th</sup> year of Minh Mệnh reign (1836), followed order to survey Parcel. When reaching Parcel, decarmate to mark. Please follow the order.

This time, Chánh đội trưởng of Naval team sent to Parcel was Phạm Hữu Nhật, at Mão hour yesterday, he took a boat from Thuận An estuary to (Quảng Ngãi province. The Ministry please prepare urgently sufficient wooden poles, inform Quảng Ngãi immediately, deliver urgently (that number of wooden poles) to this mandarin. So would like to report: - *Administrative document no. 2*, recorded on July 13<sup>th</sup>, the 18<sup>th</sup> year of Minh Mệnh (1837) (Picture 2).

*Translation:*

Hà Duy Phiên, Lý Văn Phúc followed

**Picture 2: Administrative document from the 18<sup>th</sup> year of Minh Mệnh (1837)**



the order:

Previously sent the Fleet, Giám thành with soldiers from Bình Định, Quảng Ngãi provinces to survey Paracel. Now, they have returned. Except Thủy sư Suất đội Phạm Văn Biện was dispatched by the Capital to return after the date, navigator dispatched by the province were Vũ Văn Hùng, Phạm Văn Sinh and boatman Lư Đức Trực, all 4 people received order to be punished, scourged. About soldiers who were sailing with the team, they were very strenuous, so award each soldier 1 month of salary, each labor worker 2 strings of 1000 coins, in which crew members dispatched by the province are let to return to hometown to work. Particularly, fouled Biện chức Giám thành who was Trương Việt Soái, previously a Proveditor overseeing gunpowder-making had been found guilty and sanctioned post-prison behead (beheaded but being jailed until trial in autumn). Last year, he was sent to Paracel and to construct Gia Định city for atonement, now he was sent to survey Paracel. Although 11 sandy beaches and islands were surveyed, mapping was not done carefully so he was exiled to do slave work many times and repented, hence spare Trương Việt Soái, let him be soldier protecting Giám thành, atoning previous guilt depending on orders later. Please follow the order.

The Ministry followed the order, wrote down clearly full names of 22 soldiers, 20 Fleet members, 2 viên Giám thành and 31 labor workers going to Paracel this time, enclosed hereby.

Nguyễn Văn Hựu followed the order to draft.

Hà Duy Phiên, Lý Văn Phúc followed the order to proofread.

- *Administrative document no. 3*, recorded on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the 19<sup>th</sup> year of Minh Mệnh (1838) (Picture 3).

**Picture 3: Administrative document from the 19<sup>th</sup> year of Minh Mệnh (1838)**



*Translation:*

Ministry of Works reported

Following the order to send men to Paracel, the Ministry would request to sail to (Paracel) in the last 10 days of March to measure and survey the land, returning in the last 10 days of June. Following the approval of the emperor, the Ministry sent Bình Định, Quảng Ngãi provinces order to implement and select guards, Giám thành astrologers and Fleet, warships to go first. Today received document from Quảng Ngãi province presenting each item

specifically that warships sent by the capital arrived on March 21<sup>st</sup>. Civil ships of Bình Định province also arrived on April 3<sup>rd</sup>. Navigator Phạm Văn Sênh also arrived on the 9<sup>th</sup> of that month. According to the detailed presentation of Envoy, from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup> of April, East wind blew continuously, it was not convenient for sailing. Provincial governor observed and found that so he urgently asked for delay until there was favorable South wind for sailing immediately and continue to report. The Ministry followed the order to review: The survey and measurement in Paracel had clear sailing schedule which was the last 10 days of March, however, due to wind direction and water were not favorable, (the schedule) was extended until the last 10 days of April, if sailing was not conducted by that time, it would be overdue. (The Ministry) based on the fact to report fully.

Lê Văn Côn followed order to draft.

Hà Duy Phiên, Phạm Thê Trung followed order to proofread.

- *Administrative document no. 4*, recorded on June 21<sup>st</sup>, the 19<sup>th</sup> year of Minh Mệnh (1838) (Picture 4).

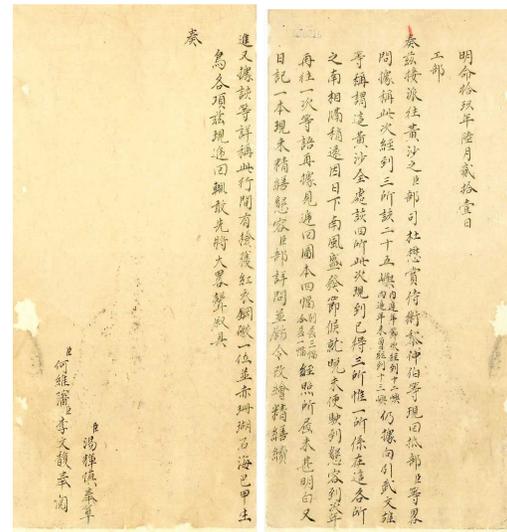
*Translation:*

Ministry of Works reported

Today received Đỗ Mậu Thường, Guard Lê Trọng Bá under the agency of the Ministry (went to perform public service in Paracel) returning. The Ministry has asked, these officials said that this time (the survey team) had gone to 25 islands in 3 regions (in which, after checking,

12 islands had been visited by the teams every year, 13 islands had never been visited). However, according to navigator Vũ Văn Hùng, Paracel had 4 regions. This time, 3 regions were surveyed, there was 1 region in the South, quite far away from another regions, South wind also blew very strongly, sailing to that place was not convenient, if waiting for favorable wind, it would be very late, please wait until next year (to send boat) to that place. Again reviewed 4 maps brought (3 specific maps of the regions, 1 general map), and 1 incomplete diary, requested the Ministry's subject to carefully examine and urge them to modify and complete to submit. According to the report of these people, during the trip, they had collected 1 copper cannon, red corals, sea birds and turtles. Now they have brought here. Respectfully submit document to report.

**Picture 4: Administrative document from the 19th year of Minh Mệnh (1838)**



Thang Huy Thận followed order to draft. Hà Duy Phiên, Lý Văn Phúc followed order to proofread.

- Document no. 5 (Lý Sơn document), recorded on April 15<sup>th</sup>, the 19<sup>th</sup> year of Minh Mệnh (1834) (Picture 5).

*Translation:*

Financial mandarin, legal mandarin of Quảng Ngãi province conducted licensing.

According to document of Ministry of Defense received last month: Following the (the Emperor's) decree for the Ministry, first please dispatch 3 ships, repair them carefully and wait in the Capital. Envoys and Local naval team shall go first to coordinate to explore lands of Paracel. Please follow the order.

(Following the order to) select, dispatch 3 fast, light ships in the province with essential items for ships, all those items were repaired. Again selected Vũ Văn Hùng, who had been sent previously and selected men who were marine proficient amongst coastal labor workers to recruit as sailors to row at the front and the back. Each boat had 8 people, so there were 24 people. When it came to last 10 days of March and the wind was favorable, the ships set sail.

Now everything has been taken care of, envoys have sailed on light ships there. Now considering that marine proficient men who is Đặng Văn Xiêm can take responsibility of boatman, deserves a license, please take a ship with sailors following soldiers and Vũ Văn Hùng to Paracel to perform public services. This trip is especially significant, should be

devoted to perform well. If there is negligence, felony shall be set.

*Second*, the state set a naval team called Hoàng Sa, Bắc Hải to perform voyages to manage sea, islands.

**Picture 5: Administrative document from the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Minh Mệnh (1834)**



*Đại Việt sử ký tục biên* wrote in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Cảnh Hưng reign (1754), Hoàng Sa Company included 70 men, added men from the village of An Vĩnh: “Bình Sơn in Quảng Ngãi prefecture sailed to Paracel beach, found 2 fossils on the island, drifted to Thanh Lan estuary of Văn Xương district, Lô Châu province (Thanh country) by the wind. Local government questioned then returned them home. Emperor Thế Tông Hiếu Vũ Hoàng [i.e. Nguyễn Phúc Khoát (1738 - 1765)] ordered Governor of Thuận Hóa who was Thúc Lượng to send reply. On the sea of An Vĩnh village, there are more than 130 islands, one day or few hours away from each

other if travelling by boat. On the island, there is fresh water spring. There is Hoàng Sa beach on the island, estimated 30 miles long, flat and has clear water. There are numerous nests on the island. On the sandbank, there are also zebra snails which are also called elephant-ear snails by the native, turban snails, babylon snails, sea worms, sea cucumbers, sea turtles etc. Hoàng Sa Company included 70 men from the village of An Vĩnh, in turn taking boat to the island to find products. Annually, in March, they would out to the sea, bringing 6 months of foods, sail for 3 days and 3 nights before reaching the island. They could find freely there, whatever they found, they had to submit to Phú Xuân when returning to Eo estuary in August. During that time, there were people who found money, lead, tin, copper pots, guns, weapons, ivories, porcelain bowls etc./ 廣義府平山縣黃沙隊安永社人八員乘小艇往海島中黃沙渚覓取貨物遇風漂入廬州府文昌縣清瀾港地方官查送回籍我世宗孝武皇帝令順化該簿識量侯為書以復安永社海外有島嶼一百三十餘頂相去或

一日程或數更島上有甘泉島之中黃沙渚長約三十餘里平廣水清島[]燕窩無數沙渚間有文螺俗名沃腮沃渠沃香及海虫海參玳瑁等物令黃沙隊七十率以安永社人充之輪番泛艇到此處余取貨物歲以三月發付回齋六月口糧駕艇出洋三日三夜始至此島居住恣意採取所得若干以八期間回入腰門將就富春為授納其間亦有余得銀錢鉛錫錢器象牙碗等物" (HV.119, volume 3, page 3a). *Phủ biên tạp lục* wrote: "Lord Nguyễn established Bắc Hải

Company, there was no fixed number of men. Men were either taken from Từ Chính village or Cảnh Dương commune of Bình Thuận province. Who volunteered would be granted to go. The Ministry ordered Hoàng Sa Company to manage.../ 阮氏又置北海隊無定率或平順府四政村人或景陽社人有情願者付示行差亦令該黃沙隊官併管" (A.184/1, volume 2, page 28b1, page 28b/4, and 28b/6).

In addition to send men to Paracel, the state also ordered to build shrine and place stone tablets on Paracel. It was clearly stated in *Đại Nam thực lục* as follows: "The Emperor told the Ministry of Works: it is difficult to distinguish the shallowness of a strip of Paracel located in waters of Quảng Ngãi where the water and the sky have the same color when looking from far away. Recently, many merchant boats have had accidents. Now, we should prepare boats, next year, we will send men there to build shrine, place stone tablets and plant more trees " (A.2772/23, volume 104, page 18b/6). Again, *Khâm định Đại Nam hội điển sự lệ* also recorded this event: "In the 17<sup>th</sup> year, as it was reported that Paracel was an important sea boundary. In the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Minh Mệnh, once sent Local naval soldier and Giám thành to review together, due to strong wind, exploration of this place could not be done. Last year, (men) was sent there again to build shrine, place stone tablets and map.../ 十七年奏准海疆之黃沙處最是險要明命十五年經派水軍弁兵並監城前往相視因以風濤未能探得的處去年再派間已建廟立碑其描取畫圖僅得一處未得明哲似應年常派往遍探以熟

海程茲應行咨廣義平定二省照去年例雇撥...” (VHv.1570/36, volume 221, page 26a/6).

*Third*, Vietnam's feudal state were always interested in educating Vietnamese generations the respect towards sovereignty over Paracel, Spratly and waters of the South China Sea. In Hán-Nôm documents, books teaching Hán characters for first grade, there was also content about sovereignty of Vietnam over Paracel, Spratly and waters of the South China Sea.

- *Khải đồng thuyết ước*, printed in the reign of Emperor Tự Đức, Year of Tân Ty (1881), was the book teaching about society, history, geography..., in which there was a map stating Paracel was under sovereignty of Vietnam.

- *Tu thân luân lý khoa*, recording behaviors between emperor and subject, husband and wife, friends etc., there were examples in the history of Vietnam. Section about geography of Quảng Ngãi province stated Paracel under sovereignty of Vietnam “Quảng Ngãi province, adjacent to Quảng Nam in the North, Bình Định in the South, Ai Lao in the west, sea in the East, has prefecture called Tư Nghĩa, including Mộ Đức, Chương Mỹ, Bình Sơn districts. It is mountainous with more than 130 mountains, belonged to Bình Sơn country. It has Paracel with about 10 miles long/廣義省北夾廣南南夾平定西夾哀牢東夾海有一府曰思義府縣則有慕德彰美平山等縣山則有群山重疊一百三十餘嶺屬平

山轄水則有黃沙長約十里 (VHv.2645, page 11b).

The above evidences show that, Vietnam's feudal state was always aware of protecting sovereignty over Paracel and waters of the South China Sea. Thus, it is obvious that Paracel was the archipelago located in the South China Sea within territory of Vietnam which was managed by feudal states of dynasties. For a long time, these two archipelagoes have become the location where Vietnamese residents live and exploit products, become the subject for record and research of Vietnamese scientists. Based on Hán-Nôm documents, we have had sufficient valuable evidences, proving convincingly the sovereignty of Vietnam's state over Paracel and waters of the South China Sea. These are solid bases in terms of history, science and law □

#### Remarks

1. *Khâm định Việt sử thông giám cương mục*, Vol.1, Education Publishing House, 2007, p.332
2. *Đại Việt sử ký toàn thư*, Vol.1, translated version, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi, 1998, p.323
3. Trịnh Khắc Mạnh (2009), “Survey of Hán-Nôm documents on geography currently stored in Institute of Hán-Nôm Studies”, *Journal of Hán Nôm*, no.3 (94).
4. Trịnh Khắc Mạnh (2013), “Survey trips to Paracel in Nguyễn Dynasty of Vietnamese through Hán Nôm documents”, *Journal of Hán Nôm*, no.4.