

COMPLETION REPORT

Nguyen Van Kim
University of Social Sciences and Humanities
Vietnam National University, Hanoi

"Bridging The Isolated Gulf": A Study of The Japanese-Spanish Alliance to Establish The Tonkin - Manila Trade Route in the Middle of the Seventeenth Century

This research project examines the commercial alliance between Tonkin and Manila during the middle of the seventeenth century. It focuses on three major aspects: 1) the general context of trade and diplomacy in Asia in the seventeenth century, especially the formation and operation of triangular trade between Nagasaki, Cachao (Hanoi) and Manila; 2) the commercial alliance between the Japanese and the Spanish traders in Tonkin and Manila during the 1650s-1660s; 3) the conflict between the Dutch and the Japanese-Spanish trading alliance and the impacts of this conflict on the Tonkin trade. Thanks to the support of the SUMITOMO foundation, we have obtained satisfactory results.

We have compiled a bibliography containing references to books, journal articles and archival documents relating to the trade between Japan, Vietnam and the Philippines in the seventeenth century. Particularly, we have collected numerous archival sources from European archives such as archives in the Netherlands and Spain. These documents provide various new insights into the trading activities of the Japanese, Dutch, Spanish, Chinese, and Vietnamese in Tonkin in the seventeenth century. In addition to written sources, we also conducted fieldworks along the sites, where foreign merchants resided and traded in the seventeenth century, such as Manila in the Philippines, Hanoi and Hung Yen in Vietnam. These field-works helped substantiating the information obtained from the written sources.

Based on the above-mentioned activities and following the questions asked in the research proposal, we have reached some conclusions:

1. The Tonkin and Manila trade took place in the context of dramatic changes in the East Asian countries following the European Age of Discoveries and the Age of Commerce in Southeast Asia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The 'closed-door' policy of the Chinese governments, the *Shuinsen* and subsequent *Sakoku* of the Japanese government eventually promoted trade in Southeast Asia. As a result of trade restrictions in the Northeast Asian region, merchants came to exchange their commodities in the Southeast Asian ports, such as Batavia, Bantam, Makassar, Manila, Faifo (Hoi An), Tonkin, Melaka, and Penang....A network of trade relations and alliance was established among merchants, in which Nagasaki, Cachao and Manila was a typical triangular alliance.

2. The idea of forming the Nagasaki – Tonkin – Manila alliance was initiated by Resimon, a Japanese merchant who remained in Tonkin after the promulgation of *Sakoku*. Acting as a broker and a trading agent, Resimon established his relationship with the local authorities to gather cargoes, such as raw silk, piece-goods, cinnamon, musk, and gold. These Tonkinese commodities were originally sold to the Chinese and the Dutch who then shipped them to various destinations, such as Nagasaki, Batavia, Bantam, and India... In some favourable occasions, Resimon cooperated with the Vietnamese mandarins to organize their own cargo to be shipped to Nagasaki.

3. The Spanish in Manila came to Tonkin right at the moment when Resimon was trying to expand his

trade. Resimon steadily negotiated with the Spanish to found the trading link between Tonkin and Manila. The Tonkin – Manila trade went on rather smoothly during the 1650s and the 1660s. Attempts were made by the Dutch trading post in Tonkin to stop the Japanese and Spanish trade alliance. Under the supports of Vietnamese high-ranking mandarins who had for long invested money in his businesses, Resimon still maintained his close ties with the Spanish. However, after the death of Resimon in 1667, the Tonkin – Manila trade went into decline and was eventually abandoned in the late 1660s.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

1. Pham Van Thuy, “The Presence of the Europeans in Vietnam in early modern period”, paper presented at *A Symposium on the beginnings of European colonization of Southeast Asia* organized by Asia Japan Alumni (ASJA) (October 16, 2021),
2. Nguyen Van Kim, *Một số suy nghĩ về vai trò và đặc tính của không gian biển Bắc Trung Bộ* [Some thoughts on the role and characteristic of Tonkin’s maritime space], paper presented at the national conference “Hệ thống thương cảng Bắc Trung Bộ - Tiềm năng, vị thế và các mối giao lưu vùng, liên vùng” [Port system in Tonkin: Potentials, Position and Regional and Inter-Regional Relations], Hanoi, 2021, pp.7-26.
3. Nguyen Van Kim, *Thương cảng quốc tế Vân Đồn - Tiềm năng, vị thế và các quan hệ vùng, liên vùng* [Van Don port: Potential, Position and Regional and Inter-Regional Relations], paper presented at the conference “Nhận diện giá trị, bảo tồn và phát huy quần thể di tích thương cảng Vân Đồn” [Identifying the values and preservation and promotion of the heritage of Van Don port], Quảng Ninh Province, 2022, pp.7-26.

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

1. Nguyen Van Kim, Tran Van Manh, *Cham Islands in Champa Maritime Space from 11th to 15th Century*, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, Vietnam Social Sciences, No.1 (195), 2020, pp.13-30.
2. Nguyen Van Kim, *Strategic Position of Cô Tô Island in Northeast Sea of Vietnam*. Vietnam Social Sciences, No.2 (208), 2022, pp.18-41.
3. Nguyen Van Kim, *Một số suy nghĩ về vai trò và đặc tính của không gian biển Bắc Trung Bộ* [Some thoughts on the role and characteristic of Tonkin’s maritime space], Journal of Research and Development, no.4 (177), 2022, pp. 53-70.
4. Hoang Anh Tuan, 从“跨越大陆的一杯茶”窥探 17—18 世纪“全球大众消费”, 历史教学问题 2020 年第 1 期 (pp. 94-98).
5. Hoang Anh Tuan – Tran Ngoc Dung, “Tư liệu lưu trữ Anh về quan hệ Việt Nam – Anh (thế kỷ XVII-XVIII) [The archival documents on England- Vietnam relations (17th-18th century), Vietnam Journal of Historical Studies, No.3 92021), pp58-68.
6. Hoang Anh Tuan, Nguyen Thua Hy “Kinh đô Thăng Long thời vua Lê- chúa Trịnh” (Thang Long citadel in the Le- Trinh Period] in: Định đô Thăng Long: Tầm nhìn thiên niên kỷ [Founding Thanglong: A Millennium Vision], Hanoi: Hanoi Publishing House, 2020 (chapter 5).

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)

1. Nguyen Van Kim, *Việt Nam - Tiềm năng và vị thế* [Vietnam: Potential and Position]. Hanoi: Vietnam National University Hanoi Press, 2021.