

Ho Quy Ly's Thought of National Self-strengthening and Renovation

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Abstract: Ho Quy Ly (Hò Quý Lý) was a leader, who had the thought of national self-strengthening and renovation in the Medieval history of Vietnam. Although his attempts could not save the national independence eventually, his sound ideas on national renovation did satisfy objective requirements for national development afterwards.

Key words: Hò Quý Ly; leader, Đổi mới (renovation), national self-strengthening.

1. Hò Quý Ly had a high sense of patriotism and a brilliant mind. Having innovative ideas, he was always enterprising and was bravely responsible for decisions. He devoted all his life to the national fate. From the second half of the 14th century, the Trần Dynasty encountered a severe crisis. At that time, Hò Quý Ly took part in politics of the Trần Dynasty. He was the very witness of the period, when our nation faced critical difficulties and challenges both internally and externally.

Keeping a high position in the Court of the Trần Dynasty since 1371, Hò Quý Ly gradually became more and more important. Eventually, he became the king of the Hồ Dynasty in 1400. He realized clearly his responsibility in strengthening national development in all aspects. Especially, it was necessary to recover national economy, which was inherently going rapidly downhill. The economic deterioration stemmed from neither ravages of aggressors nor overuse of human and materials for the war against invaders. Actually, it resulted from shortcomings in management and administration of

governments at all levels, from the grass-roots to the Central one. After great victories against three Mongol invasions (in 1258, 1285, and 1288), the Trần Dynasty started to fall in a total crisis in the middle of the 14th century, when Trần Dụ Tông came to the throne. The government was incapable of taking control over the country. In 1361, furthermore, the Kingdom of Champa (*Chiêm Thành*) started to launch attacks along the Southern border and coastal areas of Đại Việt. The army of Đại Việt revealed itself as weak and ineffective in the face of the Cham invasions.

In 1371, the Cham troops carried out an attack on Đại An seaport (located in modern Nam Định Province) and then marched towards Thăng Long Imperial City. The King of the Trần Dynasty had to flee to Đông Ngàn (located in the modern area of Đuống River). The Cham troops sacked the Imperial City, destroying the Royal Palace and robbing women as well as valuable

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property such as jewels and clothes to be brought to Champa. In 1377, King Trần Duệ Tông personally commanded troops to carry out attacks on the Champa. When he moved to Trà Bàn Citadel (Vijaya), his troops fell in an ambush of the Cham troops and he died in battle. In the middle of 1377, Champa again launched an offensive on Thần Phù seaport (located in modern Ninh Bình Province) and then came in Thăng Long Imperial City. Yet, they retreated, after occupying Thăng Long for a few days. The Trần Dynasty worried much about invasions of the Champa Kingdom. In 1379, thus the King of Trần Dynasty twice decided to hide valuable havings such as money, jewels etc. far away from the Imperial City, because he was afraid that the Cham troops would attack and sack the Royal Palace again.

In the early 1380, the Cham troops carried out attacks on Nghệ An, Diên Châu and Thanh Hóa. Hồ Quý Ly commanded the naval force and Đỗ Tử Bình commanded the infantry to battle against the Cham troops. Hồ Quý Ly won the battle, so the King of Champa – Chế Bồng Nga (Che Bunga) had to retreat. In early 1382, however, the Cham troops made an incursion into Thanh Hóa. In the middle of 1382, Chế Bồng Nga directly commanded the army to attack Thăng Long. The Trần Royal Court fled to Tiên Du (located in the mountain of modern Tiên Sơn District, Bắc Ninh Province) and set up its temporary Royal Step-over Palace there. In early 1384, the Cham troops retreated from Thăng Long, but the Trần Royal Court still

remained in Tiên Du until 1387, before it moved back to Thăng Long.

In 1389, the Cham troops occupied Thanh Hóa. The Trần Dynasty commanded Hồ Quý Ly and then Trần Khát Chân to take the army to fight against the Cham troops. Owing to assistance of a Cham turncoat, Trần Khát Chân got a success in directing his troops to kill Chế Bồng Nga. The Cham troops then fled south. Since Chế Bồng Nga was killed, the southern territory of Đại Việt became peaceful. In conclusion, for the two last decades of the 14th century (from 1371 to 1389), people of Đại Việt suffered from a lot of difficulties and miseries due to invasion of the Cham troops. The historical document describes How Thăng Long Imperial City was sacked by the Cham troops in 1371, as below: “They came in the Imperial City, arresting men and women, robbing valuable property such as pearls, gold, and silk, and burning the Court Palace as well as literature. There was, consequently, nothing left in the Imperial City afterwards” (The Imerially Ordered Annotated Text Completely Reflecting the History of Việt, 1958: 60).

At that time, However, the greatest worry for the Trần Court was the threat to the national independence from the North.

Since Zhu Yuanzhang enthroned in 1368, he already schemed to invade Vietnam. At that time, China was not completely liberated and united. After the Yongle Emperor came to the throne of the Ming Dynasty in Jin-lang, he ordered a messenger to bring the Royal Proclamation to the King of Vietnam. Two years later, in

1370, the King of the Ming Dynasty himself wrote an oration and ordered Di Yan Fu (閻原復), a Taoist hermit, to take it together with buffaloes and silk to Vietnam to offer sacrifices to the god of Tản Viên mountain range and the nymphs of Lô River. In April, Di Yan Fu came to the capital of Vietnam. After he made the sacrifices and carved letters in the stone to record his visit, he came back China (Completed Annals of Đại Việt, 1971: 172-173).

The Ming Dynasty's intention of taking over Vietnam was increasingly more obvious. It sent men to Vietnam on reconnaissance; it conducted activities of provocation; and, it asked Vietnam to offer tributes. Before attacking Yunnan, in 1384, the Ming Emperor sent a messenger to Vietnam, making a requisition for food. The Trần King had to order people to carry 5 thousands *thạch* of food to the border (*1 thạch is equivalent to 120kg*). According to historical documents, it was very hard to carry the food to the border. A lot of officers and soldiers died from this mission. Two years later (1386), the Ming Emperor asked the Trần King to prepare a way, food and 50 elephants for the reason that it would carry out attacks on the Kingdom of Champa. The Trần King had to order the people to set up supply stations, which would give food and elephants to the Ming troops, along the way from Nghệ An due north to Yunnan. In 1394, the Ming Emperor sent a messenger to Vietnam, asking for provision of 50 thousands men, 50 elephants, and 500 thousands *thạch* of food to be provided for the Ming troops,

when they made incursions on the “betrayal” Mán community. At that time, the Trần King rejected to provide men and elephants, but he commanded people to carry some rice to Đông Đăng (Lạng Sơn Province) to be given to the Ming troops. The Ming Dynasty still exacted a tribute for many times: It sometimes asked for eunuchs and monks; sometimes for expensive fruit trees such as litchi, longan, jackfruit, oranges, pine apples etc. to be grown in China. The Ming Dynasty even asked the Trần Dynasty to give castrated boys and beautiful girls. The risk of being invaded was really obvious for Vietnam at that time.

Apart from the scheme to take over Vietnam, the Ming Dynasty also carried out the policy of expansionism to Southeast Asian countries. The Yongle Emperor, a warlike king, is the very person who actively implemented the policy of expansionism. In 1403, he sent a battle fleet to Java and Calieut Islands (Indonesia). In 1405, he sent another battle fleet to do exploration along the offshore areas of Southern Vietnam, Java, Sumatra, Thailand and Cambodia. In 1406, the Ming troops started to invade Vietnam⁽¹⁾.

The invasion of Vietnam was one of the activities in the foreign policy of the Ming Emperor. Furthermore, Vietnam was the first target in its plan of extensionism. For

⁽¹⁾ In 1408, after setting up the ruling yoke over Vietnam, the Ming Dynasty sent more battle fleets to other Southeast Asian countries, aiming at expanding the Chinese influence due south on faraway wealthy islands. The Yongle Emperor intended to show the power of the Ming Dynasty by armed ships, while making threats, doing trading activities, and setting up the ruling domination where possible.

each Asian country, the Ming Dynasty set up an appropriate target for extensionism, depending on specific situations. At least, it was necessary to set up diplomacy and force the country to acknowledge allegiance to the Ming Emperor via submitting a tribute every year. At most, a system of domination would be set up, making the country become a colony of China. In the name of inheritors of the Han and Tang Dynasties, the Ming Emperor continued the scheme to take over Vietnam, merging it into China as a district and deleting its name forever in the world map; i.e. the Ming Emperor wanted to apply ethnic assimilation.

Before such a situation, the only way for Vietnam was to prepare material and spiritual resources, getting ready to fight against the Northern aggressors for national defense. The question was, however, who could direct the people to accomplish successfully this mission. Although Royal members in the Trần Court still reserved the patriotic tradition, none of them was able to undertake well this mission.

In 1371, when the King of the Trần Dynasty bestowed a very high title in the Court on Hồ Quý Ly, the Ming Dynasty showed clearly its evil ambition of invading Vietnam. It carried out perverse activities to get the ambition. In 1370 especially, officials in the Ministry of Rites of the Ming Dynasty recommended that the worship to the gods of Vietnamese mountains and rivers would be carried out as an additional part of the Chinese ritual orchestra. It was then approved by the Yongle Emperor. He made an oration and ordered the Ming

officials to set up an altar of worship in Tản Mountain and Đà River (Black River). What does it mean? According to historians, the Chinese ritual orchestra carried out rituals to worship gods of mountains and rivers, including five mountains and four rivers of China. At that time, they wanted to include Tản Mountain and Black River, which were symbolic of Vietnam, in the land of China through a common worship (Vietnam Committee of Social Sciences, 1980:22). In the war against the Song invasion at the time of the Lý Dynasty, Lý Thường Kiệt confidently declared the sovereignty over the territory of Vietnam, as below: *“The Southern country’s mountain and river the Southern Emperor inhabits; The separation is natural and allotted in Heaven’s Book”*. It was very groundless that the Ming Dynasty wanted to revise “the Heaven’s Book”, “re-declaring” that those mountains and rivers belong to China. The scheme to take over Vietnam was clearly perverse and malicious. There was, however, no reaction from the Trần Dynasty at all. Hồ Quý Ly couldn’t stand witnessing the perversion of the Ming Dynasty and the feebleness of the Trần Dynasty. This helps us to understand why feudal historians accused Hồ Quý Ly of “usurping the throne”, but they did not forget to record his famous proclamation in the historical documents: “I always wish to have a million troops to fight against aggressors from the North”.

2. To fight against aggressors from the North is the very spiritual nature that encouraged Hồ Quý Ly to seize the power

and carry out a range of innovative policies for national development. Obviously, political ideas on national independence and sovereignty were realized in practice by Hồ Quý Ly at a higher extent of thinking. According to him, to break out of the feeble fate and to keep independence beside a bigger nation, particularly an empire, we have no way but to make ourselves more powerful; we have to carry out innovative and creative activities to strengthen the national power. It is a sound and positive measure of self-defense.

For 30 years of involvement in the state affairs, Hồ Quý Ly spent over 10 years on initiating and implementing innovative policies, aiming at improving national economy and defense. He actively applied the traditional political ideology as below: “*national building must go together with national defense*”. Many new policies of economic renovation (such as the farmland limitation and the enslavement limitation) caused hard hits on the aristocracy of the Trần Dynasty, from which he used to benefit much. For the farmland limitation policy, Hồ Quý Ly carried out a farmland reform – the first large-scaled revolution involved with farmland in the history of Vietnamese feudal systems. With this economic – political breakthrough, he got over his social class, when he implemented the policy of “*dispossessing things from despoilers*”. At least, it was the germ of the democracy that aimed at executing social justice and minimizing social injustice. At the ruling time of Hồ Quý Ly, especially at the late period of the Trần Dynasty, our

country was extremely poor; the national budget and treasury were almost empty; whereas, royal members and local mandarins were wealthy with a lot of castles, farmland and food; they wasted money on luxurious life etc. In the meanwhile, the people were suffering from miserable living conditions; looting took place very often everywhere; and, social stratification became severer and severer. The country obviously encountered economic deterioration and the social injustice became serious: “*this man has much to eat but that man finds no small piece*”. Hồ Quý Ly soon realized this would cause a negative impact on all aspects of social life. He understood that the State played a decisive role in stabilizing society and accelerating economic development. According to him, the Trần Dynasty could not maintain its previous ruling system; it was necessary to replace it with a new state and sound guidelines; knowledge and talent must be respected and highly appreciated; the country must be ruled with new institutions, new policy and laws.

3. To make the State powerful, it is necessary to have good human resources as well as effective social management and national administration; the national governance must be done with laws. This advanced political thought of Hồ Quý Ly was then realized via significant reforms in the State structure and institutions. The Aristocratic Monarchy (the State power was seized by the Royal and aristocratic members of the Trần Dynasty) was replaced by a Completely Confucian Centralized Monarchy, in which the key power at all

levels, from the Central to the local, was not considered as the privilege of the Trần Royal members. Those, who would be appointed to fill management positions, were screened from national Confucian examinations. The family relationship was replaced by the relationship between king and subject. In order to get success in building the new political institutions, Hồ Quý Ly carried out an educational reform, appreciating highly Confucianism and encouraging people to learn it. Confucianism became a spiritual foundation to strengthen the power of the centrally ruling state. Thus, a lot of researchers have agreed that “at the time of the Hồ Dynasty, Confucianism was encouraged by the State more vigorously than ever before. Certainly, Confucianism got absolute advantage in the State apparatus of the Hồ Dynasty” (Trần Văn Giàu, 2008: 71).

In addition, Hồ Quý Ly promulgated many innovative policies synchronously and systematically, aiming at achieving the political goal of national independence and equality with China. He encouraged people to use Nom language and national culture in daily life as well as in official documents. Hồ Quý Ly wanted Vietnamese people to use Vietnamese scripts. This shows his outstanding awareness and his profound national spirit as well.

4. Looking at Hồ Quý Ly's life and career, we can find unforgettable hallmarks in the military field. In reality, Hồ Quý Ly built an army with a lot of troops. The number of troops amounted to 800 thousands - the highest number in the history of fighting against invasions. In

terms of weapons and military techniques, a lot of improvements were made. The cannon, which was powerful like a heavy artillery, was created. The naval force was equipped with large battleships named *Cổ Lâu*, which consisted two storeys nailed firmly together. Those battleships could move very conveniently in battles. etc. Hồ Quý Ly also built many steady lines of defense in important positions, in order to fight against the Ming troops. Especially, the citadel of the Hồ Dynasty was constructed before Hồ Quý Ly took the throne. And then, it was called *Tây Đô* Castle. This is a grandiose architecture with all walls built of stone blocks⁽²⁾. The Citadel of the Hồ Dynasty is now recognized as the World Cultural Heritage by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The World Heritage Committee highly appreciated this architecture, particularly its originality and perfect constructional technique. At the time of the Hồ Dynasty, which was over 6 centuries ago, the citadel was considered as “an unprecedented castle” in the world. With the construction of this citadel, the armed forces were based in Thanh Hóa and

⁽²⁾ Hồ Quý Ly constructed a large-sized An Tôn Castle, of which all the walls were built of stone blocks. It is almost square in shape. The main gate faces Southeast. The main direction is Northeast – Southwest, making an angle of 45 degree due north. The length of its north, south, east, and west sides is 877.1, 870.5, 879.3 and 880 m respectively. The circumference is 3513.4 m and the total area is 769,086 m² (about 77 ha). Hồ Quý Ly left a really large architecture to next generations – The Citadel of the Hồ Dynasty. It was inscribed on UNESCO World Heritage Sites on June 27, 2011.

Nghệ An Province instead of surrounding areas of Thăng Long as before. This shows a strategic view of Hồ Quý Ly. Owing to this strategic position, for the period from 1400 to 1404, Hồ Quý Ly launched a lot of military operations to attack on the Kingdom of Champa. He assumed that it was necessary to move the border between Vietnam and Champa further to the south, since it would help to stop disasters like those in the past, when the Cham troops often harassed the area of Thanh Hóa and Nghệ An, and even attacked across the Red River Delta to sack the Thăng Long Imperial City for many times. In addition, Hồ Quý Ly wanted to show the military power in order to get more motives to apply the current political and economic measures.

The reform was stopped, when the Hồ Dynasty was defeated by the Ming troops in 1407. The heritage left by Hồ Quý Ly was relatively voluminous, both spiritually and materially. To make an assessment of Hồ Quý Ly and his career as well as his political and innovative thinking, we have to do it from the perspective of the Marxist – Leninist comprehensive, specific historical, and development viewpoints. Only when we see everything in the context at the time of Hồ Quý Ly, can we make objective, impartial and multifaceted assessments of the practical values that Hồ Quý Ly dedicated to our nation at the late 14th and early 15th centuries – a difficult period as “the eve of the second period of domination by Northern invaders”, like a disaster of our nation in the period of the Ming domination.

5. After taking the throne, Hồ Quý Ly did not focus on strengthening the government of the new dynasty. There were still hostile forces inside the country. Although large-scaled purges were carried out, some courtiers of the Trần Dynasty still kept important positions in the State. In the Court as well as the local governments, a number of previous officials and military generals remained loyal to the former dynasty. Some officials were not aware of the significance of Hồ Quý Ly's renovation in the Confucian political thinking. Land area of Buddhist temples were cut down. Furthermore, they were also overwhelmed by the Confucian. The Buddhist force, therefore, started to rise up against the Hồ Dynasty. As we all know, most of the people in Đại Việt were Buddhist believers and the Buddhist influence was very great in society, although Confucianism got absolute advantage in the Court and the Central government. Due to activities carried out by Hồ Quý Ly, consequently, the new dynasty did not get support from the people. The renovation aimed at national self-strengthening though, it did not bring practical results. They are the very causes of the failure of the Hồ Dynasty in the war against the Ming Dynasty. Herein, we have to acknowledge that the Hồ Dynasty lacked a military brilliant leader like Lý Thường Kiệt or Trần Hưng Đạo. Another cause of the Hồ Dynasty's quick failure is that the Hồ military generals committed a lot of errors in the resistance against the Ming invasion; moreover, many military generals went over to the enemy.

The political career of Hồ Quý Ly lasted for about 30 years in the late of the Trần Dynasty and 7 years of the Hồ Dynasty. In the context that the Ming Dynasty schemed to invade our country, while the Court was too feeble, Hồ Quý Ly step-by-step usurped power of the Trần Court. In 1400, the Trần Dynasty was completely replaced by the Hồ Dynasty. Hồ Quý Ly established a new reign, when the Central State of the Trần Dynasty was so weak that it could not take control over the country. Hồ Quý Ly carried out a profound reform, aiming at overcoming the socio-economic crisis and making preparations for the resistance war against the Ming invasion. This demonstrates that Hồ Quý Ly was a patriot and a great reformer in the Medieval history of Vietnam. Yet, the Hồ Dynasty got failure in the resistance war, resulting in the collapse of the Hồ Dynasty and ending the reform that was being incompletely implemented by Hồ Quý Ly (Hồ Văn Thông, 1999: 126-127).

In November 1406, the Ming Emperor sent 800 thousands troops operating by two ways from Guangxi and Yunnan to invade Vietnam. In December 1306, they already occupied Bạch Hạc (modern Việt Trì City). It took one month for them to attack and occupy Đa Bang Citadel - one of the strongest citadels. Two days later, they came into Thăng Long Imperial City. In March 1407, the Hồ troops suffered a bitter defeat in Mộc Hoàn (Lý Nhân District, Hà Nam Province) and Mụn Hải (Nam Định Province). In April 1407, Hồ Quý Ly mustered all forces to launch a counter-

attack in Hàm Tử seaport, but it was routed by the Ming troops. By two ways - one on land and the other in the sea - the Ming troops attacked towards Thanh Hóa. Hồ Quý Ly had to flee to the south, but he was caught in Kỳ La seaport (Nghệ An Province). In July 1407, the army of the Hồ Dynasty was completely defeated. Hồ Quý Ly and his son as well as almost all courtiers and generals were arrested to be taken to China. At that time, Hồ Quý Ly was 71 years old (according to historical documents, he was born in 1336, but the date of death was not clearly recorded). Nguyễn Phi Khanh, father of Nguyễn Trãi, was one of the arrested courtiers and generals. At that time, Hồ Quý Ly could not imagine that Nguyễn Trãi, a young man, who passed the doctoral exam at the age of 20, a son of Nguyễn Phi Khanh (a second laureate in the doctoral exam), a maternal grandson of Trần Nguyên Đán (a great royal member of the Trần Dynasty) was the very person, who would then continue successfully his will to fight against the Northern invaders.

At the dark time of our national history, Nguyễn Trãi was just 27 years old. He had worked for the Hồ Dynasty for 7 years, from 1400 (when he passed the doctoral exam - the first Confucian exam held by Hồ Quý Ly after he took the throne) to 1407. Following Nguyễn Phi Khanh's advice, Nguyễn Trãi moved from Nam Quan border pass (Lạng Sơn Province) to Thăng Long Imperial City, where he led a secluded life for several years, as the city

was under occupation of the Ming invaders. He witnessed a lot of cruelties caused by the Ming invaders to Vietnamese people. He then condemned the Ming invaders for those cruelties in his work titled *Bình Ngô đại cáo* (Great Proclamation upon the Pacification of the Wu) as below: “to bake the grassroots over cruel fire and bury helpless people in the cellar of misfortunes etc. Even though all water in the East Sea is dried up, it is not enough to wash their disgrace; even though all bamboos in Nam Son Mountain are cut down, they are not enough to used to write their crimes; both gods and people felt a deep resentment; their offences cannot be forgiven” (Nguyễn Trãi, 1976: 78). In 1417, Nguyễn Trãi joined the uprising of Lê Lợi in Lam Son (Thanh Hóa) and then he became one of the two leaders of the insurgent army. Ten years later, the Lam Son uprising won a victory, owing to significant contribution of Nguyễn Trãi, who was a brilliant strategist, a genius politician, a preeminent diplomat, a poet, a cultural researcher, a great patriot, a national hero, and the world personality.

Although Nguyễn Trãi suffered from a lot of gross injustice and misfortune at the time of the Later Lê Dynasty early period, he certainly experienced the happiest moment, when all the Ming troops were driven away from our country and the Later Lê Dynasty early period was established (1428). Better than anybody, he witnessed the shame and misery when our nation was under the yoke of foreign domination. Furthermore, it also means that he accomplished his promise to

his father, Nguyễn Phi Khanh, 20 years before: “To avenge the father’s animosity and the nation’s disgrace”.

Nguyễn Trãi opportunely summarized the national political life at the late 14th and early 15th centuries, drawing lessons from the failure of Hồ Quý Ly – a greatly significant lesson for those who were seizing the national fate: “*The Hồ Dynasty lost the country, because it lost the people; in the meanwhile, the power of the people is the same great as the power of water; a boat is sailed by the people, but it can be capsized by the people, too*”.

In other words, the thinking of building a state of welfare, which highly appreciates the people and relies on the people for national development and defense, was considered by Nguyễn Trãi as a political basis and a key to success in the resistance war against invaders from the North (called the Wu enemies by Nguyễn Trãi). In order to “pacify the Wu enemies”, it was necessary to gather people from all over the country; it was essential to rely on the people. Theoretically, Nguyễn Trãi was the first person, who pointed out the error in Hồ Quý Ly’s political thinking: “*The Hồ Dynasty lost the country, because it lost the people*”. According to Nguyễn Trãi, when a state lost the people’s trust, it would lose power and would be unable to exist for long. It was an inevitable consequence of Hồ Quý Ly and the Hồ Dynasty.

Based on an objective viewpoint, in the 15th century, Nguyễn Trãi made a just assessment of the failure of Hồ Quý Ly; he viewed it as a failure of a patriotic person

and a hero, who had a strong will to fight against invaders; he did not see Hồ Quý Ly as a surrender or a traitor to the country. The sentiments towards Hồ Quý Ly were shown through sympathy for a person, who dedicated life to the country but could not achieve the great ambition, as described in following verses: “Enjoy happy time with bottles of wine; Where is the time, when living a hero’s life” (Hoàng Khôi, 1970: 109).

The reform of Hồ Quý Ly already became an event in the past. It has been over 600 years till now. At present, in the light of the Communist Party’s guidelines on renovation that has been carried out since the 1980s, researchers in various fields, such as historical, cultural, educational, legal, economic, ideological, and political) have been continuing to study the life and career of Hồ Quý Ly, aiming at making correct assessments for his position in the history of Vietnam. On the basis of scientific evaluation as well as the progressive and humane viewpoint inherited from Nguyễn Trãi, researchers are getting a more and more objective view about what Hồ Quý Ly dedicated to the national development and defense.

In the history of Vietnamese political ideologies, the thinking of renovation and reform for national self-strengthening is always very significant. Hồ Quý Ly’s political thinking shown in various innovative policies are, therefore, particularly outstanding in the Medieval history of Vietnam. It started a period of the Completely Confucian Centralized Feudal State. The sound ideas of the reform conducted by Hồ Quý Ly could meet social objective requirements

and ensure development afterwards. What Hồ Quý Ly did not fully accomplish was then carried out by the King Lê Thánh Tông (1460 - 1497) in the second half of the 15th century, making the feudal regime reach its pinnacle of development. In other words, the prosperity of Đại Việt at the Later Lê Dynasty in the 15th century was achieved, owing to the continuity and perfection of the innovative ideas initiated by Hồ Quý Ly.

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