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## The Integration of Southern China and Northern Vietnam in the Metal Age South China Sea Trade Network

The southern coasts of China and the Tongking Gulf have been known since late antiquity as the main gateway for the importation of southern exotica and natural products to the northern Chinese courts. The desire to control this lucrative trade is seen as one of the main factors behind the invasion of southern China (Lingnan) and northern Vietnam by the Qin and later Han imperial armies. These regions were populated by non-Chinese peoples, largely known under several variations of the name Yue, who retained substantial autonomy and cultural distinctiveness long after their formal incorporation into the Sinitic empires. By the late 1st millennium BC, several ports and cities were involved in maritime trade with the south, such as Guangzhou (Panyu), Hepu or Jiaozhi. Some were also important centers for the production of sophisticated crafts (bronze, glass, jade, ceramics) with specific local characteristics. Some of their products, as well as Han-period ceramics and bronzes, also traveled south and are found as far away as the Thai-Malay Peninsula and the Indonesian archipelago. Based on a review of current historical and archaeological material, this chapter attempts to shed light on the nature and intensity of interactions between Lingnan/northern Vietnam on the one hand, and the South China Sea maritime network on the other. It also questions how they impacted the coastal communities and the extent of their involvement in long-distance travel at the time.

**Keywords:** *southern China; northern Vietnam; Yue; archaeology; Metal Age; maritime networks; South China Sea; crafts; trade.*