

A STUDY OF PROPERTY INHERITANCE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY RED RIVER DELTA

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Abstract

In this article, family structure and land ownership in Vietnam during the first half of the nineteenth century are considered by analyzing two testaments and the land cadastre of the Nguyễn Dynasty. From these, it seems probable that the nineteenth-century Vietnamese village had multi-household compounds that were biased toward patrilocal residence. These compounds share certain characteristics with Southeast Asian multi-household compounds and indicate that paternal kinship groups (*dòng họ*) were formed from cohabitation groups based on bilateral descent owing to the spread of patrilocal marriage with the popularization of Confucianism in the early modern period. Although abundant village documents still exist in Vietnam, they have not been fully utilized as historical materials owing to a lack of cooperation with anthropologists. The analysis in this article incorporates anthropological as well as historical perspectives and offers new possibilities for the utilization of village documents.

Keywords: *Early Modern Vietnam; Lineage; Multi-household compound; Confucianism; Village documents*

1. Introduction

In the society of the Kinh people, a major ethnic group in Vietnam, patrilineal kinship groups called *dòng họ* are widespread. These groups have clear and distinct membership and distinguish between inside [*nội*] and outside [*ngoài*] based on paternal pedigree. In many cases, *dòng họ* have their own ancestral hall [*nhà thờ họ*] in their descent village, and family historical materials such as the family genealogy are stored and managed there. Their ancestral halls often hold hundreds of years of historical material, which shows that patrilineal kinship groups have at least hundreds of years of

historical continuity to this day in Kinh society.

However, looking across the whole of Southeast Asia, such a kinship group with fixed and closed membership and with sustainability for hundred years without depending on personal charisma is not very common. Generally, as represented by the term “loosely structured society,” [1] (pp.185–192), family structure in Southeast Asia is said to be characterized by bilateral kinship. In fact, however, in Southeast Asia, there are many ethnic groups which do not (or originally did not, prior to the early twentieth century) have family names, such as the Bamar, Khmer, Malay, and Thai peoples. The

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term “multi-household compounds” is often used to explain Southeast Asian families. This term was proposed by Mizuno in his study of the rural society of northeastern Thailand: he found that multi-household compounds are plural household groups consisting of a parent household and those of one or more of their children [7] (pp.102–110). These households are established on the site of the parents’ house, and each household pays its own living expenses while contributing to the family’s collective livelihood. Typically, the family cycle follows an established pattern: after the birth of children, the children live together in the parents’ house. As each child marries, the new couple build their own house near or adjoining the parents’ house and establish their own household as an independent economic unit. The core household remains that of the parents and their unmarried children. As a result, a collective household comprising the parents’ home and those of their married children develops on a single site. Even though each child will eventually move out of their parents’ home and become independent, one after another when economic conditions are settled, the last remaining child lives with his/her parents to become an extended family and inherit the property of the parent household. What is important for understanding Southeast Asian social and cultural characteristics is that practices differed across regions as to whether a newly-married couple were expected to choose the patrilocal or matrilocal residence when setting up their own household, but this was not a strong binding custom. Rather, the decision of which residence to move to depended on extrinsic factors such as the amount of land owned by each pair of parents. As a result, multi-household compounds were often formed without any strong genealogical principle such as paternal or maternal pedigree [7] (*ibid*). This flexibility was tied to the family structure: in Southeast Asia there are many ethnic groups characterized by the bilateral kinship system.¹ Naturally, household groups in cycle compounds

are one-time-only groups that belongs to the leader of the household group and usually do not have sustainability for hundreds of years. From a historical perspective, this feature of Southeast Asian society can be explained by the extremely low population density and the high population mobility of the region during the pre-modern period. This gave rise to a loose social structure and an open kinship system based on bilateral descent [23] (p.23).

On the other hand, the Kinh people formed social groups with exclusive membership, such as village communities called *làng* and patrilineal kinship groups called *dòng họ* during the premodern period.² In the Red River Delta, with the exception of the reclamation of coastal areas, large-scale agricultural developments had disappeared by the end of the fifteenth century; there were only small-scale reclamations of vacant land between villages [32] (p.203). In the seventeenth century, the Red River Delta became a society characterized by fierce battles fought over claims to even an inch of land due to high population pressure and land shortage.³ We can suppose that, against this social background, social groups with fixed and closed membership bound by territorial and family connections developed to protect the common vested interests of specific groups. In fact, a case study of the area around Huế village suggests that the stagnation of agricultural development, the establishment of social groups with closed and fixed membership, and the spread of Confucianism among the common people in early modern Vietnam were complementary social phenomena [28] [29]. However, it is not yet clear how Confucianism affected the family structure of the Kinh people and how this structure was linked to the formation of *dòng họ*.⁴ As previous studies have relied primarily on official government documents from the various dynasties, the documents created by villages for local use have not been fully utilized.

In the years since foreign researchers were first permitted to conduct fieldwork in rural

areas in the late twentieth century, a number of studies based on field surveys have been published by anthropologists. For example, concerning contemporary patrilineal kinship groups, Luong Van Hy [4] (pp.746–747) showed that the matrilineal-descent factor was mixed in the process of the household division of the landed gentry class in the first half of the twentieth century. Suenari Michio reported that many members remain in the village of their birth, although there are rare cases of networks being formed across multiple villages.⁵ Furthermore, Miyazawa Chihiro [5] (p.194) also reported that the members of such networks sometimes change their middle name [*tên đệm*], in order to marry someone from the same village who is not already a member of their kinship group. These studies show that contemporary *dòng họ* are not just a reduced copy of Chinese patrilineal lineage, but rather a cultural entity in its own right. In fact, many researchers continue to emphasize the originality of pre-modern Vietnamese society, which is supposed to have been a bilateral-descent-based society before it became patriarchal owing to the influence of Confucianism.⁶ However, no studies have suggested the historical process of how and when Kinh society transformed from bilateral-descent to patrilineal-descent society in the family structure. Many of these assertions are based on the Lê code which includes a regulation concerning gender equality inheritance [17] (pp.121–127) [33] (p.21). However, Trần Nhung Tuyết [19] (pp.136–140) has cast doubt on the validity of those based on an examination of a testament of the eighteenth century; Miyazawa [6] (pp.215–229) has contested this view, providing the counterexample of a woman inheriting property for ancestral rituals. Their argument has not yet been settled.

Discussions based on specific cases such as those outlined above about women's social status should be welcomed, because it means that access to field surveys and historical materials has improved. However, these particular arguments

rely too heavily on factors such as property inheritance and succession of ancestor rituals in their analysis, at the expense of verifying basic factors such as family construction and paternal kinship groups—issues which should comprise the fundamental underpinning of their arguments. To begin with, assuming Vietnamese society before the spread of Confucianism to have been a kind of Southeast Asian “loosely structured society,” we must consider how patrilineal kinship groups with fixed and closed membership appeared and why they are now prevalent in contemporary Vietnam.⁷ In other words, no productive argument can discuss only women's social status without clarifying how the popularization of Confucianism affected the family structure of the common people, and how it brought about the appearance of the current *dòng họ*. However, to date, little research on Vietnam's pre-modern society or evaluations of family structure based on case studies have been published, so in this article I will examine two testaments photographed in a village of the district of Chương Mỹ, Hà Nội (formerly Hà Tây province), and clarify the family structure of early modern Vietnam and the appearance of paternal kinship groups.

2. Inheritance as Described in Two Testaments of the Trương Công Family, Residents of the Village of Phương Bản

The *chúc thư* [囑書] is a kind of testament common in Vietnam's premodern period, used to pre-divide a testator's property while that person is still living so as to prevent inheritance disputes among his heirs after his death. In contemporary Vietnam it has been superseded by the testament for ante-mortem inheritance. Although it originated in China, it is certain that property was inherited in the form of a testament called *chúc thư* at least as early as the 13th century [32] (pp.36–37). The template text for a *chúc thư* is included in boilerplate collections such as the *Quốc Triều Thư Khế* [國朝書契 *National calligraphy form of contracts*]

and the *Chúc Thư Văn Khế* [囑書文契 *Calligraphy form of testaments*], indicating that the custom was practiced regularly in early modern Vietnam. The two testaments discussed in this article belong to the Trương Công lineage [張功族], whose living members still reside in the village of Phương Bản, about 20 km southwest of central Hà Nội.⁸ The first testament was created by Trương Công Kiên [張功鏗] and his wife Nguyễn Thị Thụ [阮氏疇], dated the 11th day of lunar month 11, 1806 (hereafter, Testament A); the second was created by Trương Công Thiếc [張功錫], dated the 8th day of lunar month 10, 1848 (hereafter, Testament B). The beginning of Testament A provides a good example of how such testaments were composed:

I, former commune mayor Trương Công Kiên, and my wife Nguyễn Thị Thụ of Hoa Bản commune [author: now the village of Phương Bản], Yên Sơn district, Quốc Oai prefecture, think that we are already old and do not have much time left, but we have not decided how to divide our property yet and fear that after our death a dispute will occur over the ancestral lands we hold and our newly purchased fields, marshes, and houses. Therefore, we leave this testament in advance to divide our property and to let it pass down to nine persons, including the seven children [of Nguyễn Thị Thụ] and the two children of my concubine. All of these inherited lands are entirely in our possession, and there will be no trouble such as resignation or double-trading with paternal and maternal relatives. After leaving this testament, each of our sons and daughters will inherit their own allocation and must work in a living business to inherit the ancestral rite. If they violate [this testament] and cause any dispute out of indignation, their allocations shall be taken away as recompense for committing the sin of a lack of filial piety. There is a fixed national law. Thus, we leave nine testaments and give them one by one for their reference.⁹

Testament A refers to several technical legal terms and definitions, including a) heir(s), b) inheritance, c) ownership status of the property bequests, d) a declaration certifying that an official document was created according to national law, and e) the number of copies produced. The cover of Testament A bears the statement “the allocation of Trương Công Kịch” [張功劇], indicating that the surviving physical document is the copy of the testament given to the testators’ eldest son, Trương Công Kịch. At the end of the document the testament is signed by the two testators and by all nine heirs, as well as by Nguyễn Danh Chính [阮名政], a witness, and Lê Trí Hiển [黎致顯], the testators’ amanuensis. The wording of the document adheres closely to the format included in the boilerplate collections mentioned above: except for the place names and personal names included, it is almost a verbatim copy of the template included in the *Quốc Triều Thư Khế*, demonstrating that at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when this testament was created, similar manuals must have been readily accessible even in the villages of the Red River Delta.

Despite its stylized text, the latter part of Testament A enumerates many details of the real estate divided among the couple’s heirs, such as those presented in Table 1. The testators divided approximately 29,000 m² (about 8 *mẫu*) of real estate among their heirs:¹⁰ Of this land, about 10 percent was reserved as “rice fields for old age” [養老田 *Ruộng dưỡng lão*], i.e., the property that would continue to provide a living for the testators during the remainder of their lives. The rest was divided among their children. The three sons were allocated bequests of varying sizes, the eldest son (Trương Công Kịch) receiving 4,272 m² but the third son (Trương Công Tước [張功爵]) receiving only 3,552 m². The eldest son’s bequest was larger than those of his younger brothers because he also inherited the responsibility for maintaining the Trương Công lineage’s ancestral rites; the “rice fields for ancestral worship” [香火

田 *Ruộng hương hỏa*] included in his bequest were intended to finance these rites. The testators' six daughters received bequests of roughly equal size (approximately 2,100 m²). The small differences in area of the daughters' allocations were apparently unintentional, a consequence of it being impossible to divide equally the various parcels of land they received. While the average of the three sons' allocations was 3,884 m², that of the six daughters' portions was 2,146 m², so the testators' sons received approximately 1.8 times more land than their sisters. Although the eldest son was favored over his brothers owing to his responsibility for the ancestral rites, all of the brothers were given more than the testators' daughters. As in the case study of Trần Nhung Tuyết [20] (pp.140–160), Testament A evidences the tendency to favor male heirs over daughters. Finally, although the wording of Testament A indicates that two of the nine children were borne by a concubine rather than by Nguyễn Thị Thụ, there is no indication of which two children these were and their portions were no smaller than those of their half-siblings. In other words, the only differences in the children's inheritances were based on gender, not on the marital status of their mother.

Testament B, written in 1848, concerns the division of the property of Trương Công Thiếc among his heirs (see Table 2). In this case the portion of land granted to the eldest son, Trương Công Khoát [張功豁], is smaller than that of his younger brother, Trương Công Đường [張功鏜], because the rice field for ancestral worship was separated from the other bequests and treated as an independent item. Including this rice field in the portion granted to the eldest son, as was done in Testament A, increases his inheritance to 2,904 m², indicating that he was also slightly favored over his siblings, as was done in the bequests listed in Testament A. Of more consequence is the difference between the daughters' bequests in Testaments A and B. Although the sons listed in Testament A received substantially more land than their sisters, in Testament B this gender

gap contracts sharply. Although it is necessary to consider not only the size of the cultivated areas but also the soil conditions of each inherited rice field, it is hard to imagine that there was a great disparity in the land allocated to each heir. The testators in both Testaments A and B forwent the simple method of dividing the land bequeathed to each heir by the simple method of each parcel of land to one child, and instead show a strong tendency to divide each parcel into three sub-parcels, with the result that each of the three children inherited several sub-parcels as shown in Table 3. Presumably this method guaranteed that each heir would receive land of equal soil condition; it is also assumed that such subdivisions of land were related to the family structure and co-cultivation at the time, which is discussed in more detail below. Of particular note in Testament B is the difference in the daughters' bequests: the parcel of land left to Trương Thị Lương [張氏良] was much smaller than those of her sisters. According to one historical record in the possession of the Trương Công family, the testator Trương Công Thiếc had a legal wife whose family name was Nguyễn, as well as two concubines named Ngô and Nguyễn,¹¹ so it is possible that Trương Thị Lương was the daughter of one of the concubines. However, the heirs are described simply as “five sons and daughters” at the beginning of Testament B; there is no mention of the marital status of their mothers.

At a glance, Testaments A and B give very different impressions of how daughters within the same kinship group were treated, although they do imply that 2000 m² (5-6 *sào*) was a common size for parcels of land bequeathed to daughters. It is supposed that most such bequests were marriage gifts from parents to daughters (*của hồi môn*)¹² and that approximately 2,000 m² of land was the usual form of such gifts in nineteenth-century Phương Bản. We can thus assume that a 2,000 m² rice field was considered the minimum amount of land necessary to ensure the survival of one

female in Phương Bản at that time, and it may be that these bequests were intended to provide a lifetime of financial security for a daughter who married into another family. If this was the case, the considerable amount of land divided up in Testament A implies that that family's daughters received only a minimum, whereas the daughters provided for in Testament B were assured of their financial independence via their marriage gift despite the relatively small amount of land their parents owned. This effort to treat all siblings equally in terms of their inheritances reflects a belief in gender equality, at least to a certain extent.

The two testaments suggest that allocating rice fields of approximately 2000 m² as marriage gifts for unmarried daughters in Phương Bản was strongly socially regulated.¹³ This leads to the question of the rights of property and inheritance granted to a married woman. This question can be answered by looking at the mentions of Nguyễn Thị Niên [阮氏年] in Testament A and Nguyễn Hữu Dụng [阮有用] in Testament B. According to Testament A, Nguyễn Thị Niên was the testators' granddaughter. In Kinh culture, children are usually given their father's family name, so we can assume that the eldest daughter of Trương Công Kiên married a man from the Nguyễn family. Nguyễn Thị Niên's father, Nguyễn Văn Bản, was bequeathed a small rice field, described as a "rice field for son-in-law" [義子田]; further evidence that she was the daughter of the testator's eldest daughter is that the family's eldest daughter¹⁴ is not included as an heir with her siblings, presumably because she had already received her portion upon marrying Nguyễn Văn Bản. Testament A thus provides evidence that a daughter who married into a different family received a marriage gift but relinquished her right to any further inheritance from her parents. Even if a testator chose to bequeath her more property, any such bequest took the form of a gift to her husband, the testators' son-in-law.

The case of Nguyễn Hữu Dụng in Testament B is similar. The text states that he was the testator's son-in-law [婿子] but does not specify which daughter he was married to, so we can only guess who his wife was. If he was married to either Trương Thị Lương or Trương Thị Đạt, the couple would have inherited a much larger portion of land than the other siblings. However, it can be assumed that these two daughters were not yet married, because their bequests are the size of marriage gifts, indicating that there was probably another daughter, possibly the elder sister of Trương Thị Lương and Trương Thị Đạt, and it was she who was married to Nguyễn Hữu Dụng. If this was the case, then Testament B also did not grant independent inheritance rights to women who married into another family; as a householder, her husband also received the land in her place.

Both testaments clearly emphasize ancestral worship by the male blood line, especially by the eldest son, indicating that in the early nineteenth century the Trương Công lineage was a patrilineal kinship group who observed Confucian principles. When a couple divided their property, unmarried daughters were granted marriage gifts but had no rights to any further property inheritance. Upon marriage her inheritance rights were transferred to her husband, as a householder himself. However, if the Trương Công lineage was a Confucian patrilineal kinship group, this raises a new question: why did Trương Công Kiên and his wife bequeath a marriage gift to their granddaughter Nguyễn Thị Niên? For the couple of Trương Công Kiên, Nguyễn Thị Niên was a grandchild from a daughter married into another family [*cháu ngoại* 外孫]. If the Trương Công lineage was a patrilineal kinship group who emphasized passing ancestral worship responsibilities down through the male blood line, a daughter of a daughter, even the eldest, who married into a different lineage would be a member of her father's lineage, not her maternal

grandparents, and so Trương Công Kiên and his wife would have had no need to provide her with a marriage gift. In Nguyễn Thị Niên's case, it should have been her father Nguyễn Văn Bản or Nguyễn Văn lineage who provided her marriage gift. In the next chapter, we will consider this question by examining the land cadastres of the Nguyễn Dynasty in the early nineteenth century.

3. Women's Land Ownership and the Family Structure

3.1. Land Ownership in the Land Cadastres of the Nguyễn Dynasty

As established in the preceding section, the Trương Công lineage in the early nineteenth century was basically a patrilineal kinship group, but their documents raise questions. We will now look at the land cadastre maintained for Phương Bản in the early nineteenth century to answer these questions.

When the territories that comprise present-day Vietnam were unified in 1802, the Nguyễn Dynasty began to conduct surveys throughout the country and compiled land cadastres [*địa bạ* 地簿] for every village. The Phương Bản called *Hoa Bản xã* [花板社] at that time, and its land cadastre was compiled in the third lunar month of 1805, predating Testament A by only a year and a half. Table 4 presents an overview of how the land in Phương Bản was cultivated, according to this cadastre. The total cultivated area owned by the village was divided as follows: 26 percent of the land was taken up by public rice fields [公田 *công điền*], 36 percent was private rice fields [私田 *tư điền*] cultivated by the residents of the village, and the remaining 33 percent were private rice fields cultivated by residents of neighboring villages [寄在(其在) *kì tại*].¹⁵ From a philosophical perspective, a public rice field is essentially a national rice field, so its proceeds were allocated to the men of the village according to their status and age based on the law of equal division of rice fields defined by the state, but the actual management of these fields

was entrusted to each village.¹⁶ After a farmer's death, in principle, his public rice field returned to the state (in practice, the village managing the field)—these lands could not be passed on to a farmer's heirs. Only private rice fields could be passed down through families. Private rice fields made up approximately 13,400 m² per capita of cultivated land. The total amount of land owned by Trương Công Kiên and his wife in Testament A was about 29,500 m², which means that they owned an average amount of farmland for the village. It is notable that the data presented in Table 4 indicate that the total area of the private rice fields cultivated by women is larger than that of the men, although only 19 men are listed as cultivators of private rice fields compared to 41 women, meaning that men cultivated an average of 19,500 m² per person, 1.7 times more than the average amount farmed by each of the 41 women (11,000 m²); this is almost an exact parallel to the gender gap of 1.8 calculated for Testament A. In short, the cultivated area per man was larger than that of women, but more farmland was cultivated by women because they outnumbered men.

It is possible that this situation was a result of an effort to avoid taxes. In Northern Vietnam, the Lê-Trịnh government had instituted a village contracting system that imposed taxes on each village, so villages tended to underreport the number of adult men who were subject to poll tax and conscription as often as possible [26] (pp.99–100). This practice means that there is a small possibility that Phương Bản also underreported the number of adult men living in the village and deliberately reversed the numbers of male and female farmers recorded in the land cadastre to make their story seem plausible. If this is the case, then the Nguyễn Dynasty's land cadastre does not accurately reflect the property details it was intended to reflect. However, two of the parcels of land recorded in Testament A as belonging to Trung Đồng xứ and Đồng Dục xứ are recorded in the land cadastre as private rice fields belonging to

Trương Công Kiên. The land cadaster also lists Ô Beo xứ as owning one of Nguyễn Thị Thự's (阮氏書, not 囍) private rice fields. The Vietnamese pronunciations of 囍 [Thự] and 書 [Thu] are very similar; it is possible that the Nguyễn Thị Thự of the land cadastre and the Nguyễn Thị Thự of Testament A are the same person¹⁷. It was not uncommon for written characters to be altered each time in a new document, as either Chữ Nôm or Chinese characters could be used to represent a name phonetically. Given how similar the descriptions recorded in the land cadastre and Testament A are,¹⁸ it can be assumed that the land cadastre was at least partially accurate when it was compiled, but if the descriptions there are correct then we must consider why women outnumber men to such an extent in the land records.

To resolve this problem, we must consider the family structure of that time. so we will first return to Suenari's study of family division in the Red River Delta during the late twentieth century, mentioned above [16] (pp.232–249).¹⁹ Suenari described the family cycle in the Red River Delta as follows. He started with the core household, two parents who bear and raise their children. For as long as the children are unmarried, they eat together with their parents. When the situation changed—e.g., when one of the couple's sons is ready to marry, the son and his wife live in the same home, but they cook and eat their meals separately, comprising an independent economic unit. Once they can afford it, the younger couple build or move into an existing separate house adjoining that of the husband's parents. As each son marries, multiple households are established around the core parent household on a single site. If the family continues to proliferate, a fence can be built between two households to divide one residential site, separating the household(s) of one or more of the sons from that of the parents. Compared with the process of multi-household compounds discussed at the beginning of this article, these household division processes are

very similar. However, in the case of the Kinh people of the Red River Delta, most marriages lead to patrilocal residence. In particular, the eldest son must inherit the ancestral ritual, so it is not desirable to matrilocal residence. Furthermore, in the process of household division described above, procedures for transferring ownership, such as notification of and registration with public institutions, were rarely performed, especially legal procedures regarding which parent survived his or her spouse. Given these similarities and differences, we can suppose that the process of household division practiced by the Kinh people was biased toward patrilocal residence in the multi household compound, in accordance with Confucianism.

Although Suenari rediscovered these details at the end of the twentieth century, they are reflected in some of the similarities shared by Testaments A and B. For example, in Testament A, the eldest son, Trương Công Kịch, inherited one house, assumed to have been his parents' residence, while the second son, Trương Công Châu, and the third son, Trương Công Tước, inherited parcels of land located in Trì Miếu xứ [池廟處] and Trung Đồng chiếu [中同沼], regarding which there was an instruction that they be allowed to use these parcels to build their own homes. They also inherited two more parcels of land located in Dựng Lăng xứ [樺陵處], to be used as *sính lễ* [聘禮], a betrothal gift presented by a husband's family to that of his wife. These details indicate that, at the time Testament A was written, the testators' second and third sons were unmarried, and those parcels of land were given to them for when they were ready to marry. If they were positioned in the process of household division, as discussed in Suenari's study, the second and third sons could still be living their parents' home, but they were expected to set up their own household when they married. According to Suenari, the household division process remained confined to household compounds; it did not require legal procedures or the involvement of public

institutions. Furthermore, in the first half of the nineteenth century, Confucian filial piety was more strongly emphasized than it is today, so legal procedures were rarely necessary between parents and their children. It is possible that formal household divisions made in the parents' lifetime, such as these two testaments, were rare, but in many cases parcels of land owned by the core household (mostly the parents) were used by several semi-independent sons and their households, such as the second and third sons mentioned in Testament A, without any legal procedures, and these multi-household compounds also shared the work of making a living for the whole family.

Assuming that this was a common practice in *Phường Bản* during the first half of the nineteenth century, how was this situation recorded in the Nguyễn Dynasty's land cadastre? It is possible that the men who were listed as cultivators of private rice fields in *Phường Bản*'s land cadastre were regarded as the heads of multi-household compounds, but practically they might have included several semi-independent sons' households. Those semi-independent households could be regarded as completely independent economic units following either the death of their father (or surviving parent) or the formal division of their parents' properties in a testament.

On the other hand, daughters were separated from their parents' household compounds at a relatively earlier age than sons owing to the 2,000 m² rice fields they were given as bride gifts. In *Phường Bản*, bride gifts were not regarded as the shared property of the woman's new parents-in-law but as her own property. This may be what caused the striking gender ratio of private rice field cultivators in the *Phường Bản* land cadastre. When a husband's father died or his parents' property was divided, rendering his household completely independent, he and his wife could begin to construct their own multi-household compound based on his inheritance and his wife's bride gift. Assuming that the existence of

multi-household compound groups were biased toward patrilocal residences explains to some extent the pattern of ownership of private rice fields in *Phường Bản*.

3.2. Patrilocal Residence and Multi-household Compounds

Given the evidence presented above, it can be assumed that the residents of nineteenth-century *Phường Bản* were biased toward patrilocal residence, and that the spread of Confucianism in the Red River Delta during the seventeenth century promoted this bias. However, how normative or binding these Confucian principles were considered by such villagers at that time must be questioned. In fact, there is some evidence of matrilocal residence after marriage in nineteenth-century *Phường Bản*. For example, *Phường Bản*'s communal hall [亭 Đình] features a stone monument built to commemorate its renovation in 1843. According to this monument, Nguyễn Đồng Môn [阮仝門] and his wife Hoàng Thị Đễ [黃氏悌] paid for renovation costs. Hoàng Thị Đễ was born in *Phường Bản* but her husband came from *Phụng Thiên*, a village 2–3 km to the southeast, hinting that Nguyễn Đồng Môn may have moved in with Hoàng Thị Đễ's family when they married.²⁰

Here we must return to the question of why Testament A records *Trương Công Kiên* and his wife bequeathing a bride gift for their granddaughter, who belonged to the Nguyễn Văn lineage. First of all, regarding Nguyễn Văn Bản, presumably married to *Trương Công Kiên*'s eldest daughter, it should be noted that the Nguyễn Văn lineage name held a special position in *Phường Bản*. The following members of the lineage still live in the village today: Nguyễn Xuân, Đào, Nguyễn Đình (two lineages sharing the same name), Nguyễn Trí, *Trương Công*, Nguyễn Kim, Nguyễn Duy, Ngô, Hoàng, and Nguyễn Văn (12 lineages sharing the same name). Of these, the *Trương Công* lineage discussed in this article has lived in *Phường Bản* for many generations, as the names of a person supposed to be of this lineage

appear in seventeenth-century inscriptions in the village.²¹ Although there are many kinship groups named “Nguyễn Văn”, most of them are relatively small and rarely stay long in the village. The ancestors of different lineages and their death days [*ngày giỗ*] differ; the family name is same, but there are no cognates among them. Furthermore, these groups often have unclear histories, so we cannot confirm all cases, but many emigrated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As an example, let us look at the case of one particular Nguyễn Văn lineage. According to the chief of this lineage, six generations ago their ancestor moved to Phương Bản from the village of Tân Hòa, located about 3 km northeast. His family name was “Vương Đình” at that time, but he was required to change his family name to Nguyễn Văn in order to be permitted to live in Phương Bản; the family name he was given at the time of his birth in Tân Hòa connected him to that village’s community, so when he first arrived in Phương Bản he was treated as *Dân Ngụ cư* (寓居民), an outsider who has been permitted to stay only temporarily. Today the members of this Nguyễn Văn lineage still give their name as Vương Đình when participating in ancestral rituals in Tân Hòa and as Nguyễn Văn when participating in community rituals in Phương Bản. In other words, outsiders who moved to Phương Bản were required to formally sever ties with their birth kinship group by changing their family name and obtain memberships of Phương Bản instead. In the case of Phương Bản, the family name Nguyễn Văn was often used by newcomers who changed their family name, and there are many small Nguyễn Văn lineages in the village. Considering the existence of this tradition, it is possible that Nguyễn Văn Bản came from a nearby village to marry, becoming a member of his father-in-law’s multi-household compound according to matrilineal residence. This could explain why Trương Công Kiên and his wife bequeathed a bride gift for their granddaughter instead of her paternal grandparents.

It is unclear how many such matrilineal

changes of residence occurred in nineteenth-century Phương Bản, but it is doubtful how strongly the Confucian style could have been observed by the early modern Kinh. However, it is also possible that labor shortages and other economic pressures had promoted the absorption of the male labor force by means of matrilineal residence.²² On the other hand, when overpopulation significantly reduced the amount of available farmland, gender-based disparities in the division of bequests tended to decrease in order to ensure that a family’s daughters were provided with a bride gift. In the process of the construction of multi-household compounds and property division among the early modern Kinh people, the observance of Confucian patriarchy could depend strongly on a family’s circumstances.

3.3. Multi-household Compounds and the Ownership of Land

As we have seen, there is a strong possibility that nineteenth-century Phương Bản had multi-household compounds based on patrilineal residence. I will now return to the Phương Bản land cadastre to demonstrate that this was indeed the case.

Table 5 shows how much land in the form of private rice fields each farmer cultivated. Fifteen people, all women, owned 7,200 m² (2 *mẫu*) or less; 26 people (seven men and 19 women) owned 7,200–14,400 m² (2–4 *mẫu*), indicating that more owners of small private rice fields were women. The evidence presented indicates that the small scale of women’s land ownership was based on the fact that their rice fields were bride gifts, which were of a relatively small size; however, women could also own relatively large farms, such as the parcels of land measuring 14,400–21,600 m² (4–6 *mẫu*) owned by 11 people (six men and five women) and 21,600 m² (6 *mẫu*~) or more owned by nine people (five men and four women). The women owning these larger parcels of farmland did not outnumber men, but the two groups are roughly equal in terms

of gender ratio. In particular, the largest private rice field in the village (approximately 70,000 m²) was owned by a woman named Nguyễn Thị Long; the next largest parcel of land owned by a single farmer was much smaller, approximately 47,000 m², owned by a man named Đào Xuân Vực. To summarize, in Phương Bản the average woman who owned land had a much smaller farm compared to those of men, but there was considerable disparity between the many female landowners who possessed only the rice fields they received as a bride gift and those whose lands were very large compared to those of men. How should we understand this?

The existence of the multi-household compound is key here. The men listed in the land cadastre who owned private rice fields were considered the heads of multi-household compounds, as semi-independent sons were not listed as landowners even if they worked in their parents' land and would eventually inherit some of it, meaning that fewer men were recorded in the land cadastre. Thus, we must suppose that men who possessed relatively large amounts of land, e.g., Đào Xuân Vực and Nguyễn Danh Chính, did not cultivate all of their rice fields themselves but were assisted by other members of semi-independent households attached to their parents' core household: This is not a case of one large landholder employing many peasants, as is usually implied by the term "large landholder", but a large rice-field cultivated cooperatively or semi-independently by all of the households included in the household compounds of which Đào Xuân Vực and Nguyễn Danh Chính were the heads, and all of these households shared the harvest.²³ It was rare for such families to employ tenant farmers; this was only done in the event of a shortage of labor within the household compound group. We can thus assume that the men listed in the cadastre as holding large amounts of land were older, and the size of their holdings was temporary - just before they would be divided up among heirs upon their death or by a testament.

This situation explains the existence of women who were large landowners to some extent. If a family owned a large amount of land only during the period before a household compound was divided, the head of such a compound was likely to be an aged father presiding over a core household. However, if such a man died before his wife, the multi-household compound group would have two choices: The children's households could become independent by dismantling the multi-household compound and establishing their own multi-household compounds on the property inherited by a son combined with his wife's bride gift, or they could maintain the multi-household compound as long as the patriarch's wife lived, transferring the land to her name. If this was the case with Nguyễn Thị Long as recorded in the land cadastre, it explains why some women owned so much land when most owned so little.

However, does this practice mean that women could inherit their husband's property? I do not think so. Strictly speaking, the Nguyễn Dynasty land cadastres were not a land register that records land ownership, but were a tax collection ledger that records the cultivation status for taxation [14] (p.382).²⁴ It is dangerous to immediately regard it as "inheritance by female" based solely on the description in the land cadastre. Rather, the bequests recorded in Testaments A and B were bride gifts for unmarried daughters; married daughters were not given anything. A woman mentioned as the head of a household compound in the land cadastre should be regarded as a temporary or transitional state that lasted only until her sons married and became independent. However, even if this was only temporary and did not constitute legal inheritance, the fact a woman could be recorded as the head of a multi-household compound in an administrative public document can be taken as evidence of the social status of women in Vietnam. It should be regarded as a mixed state of patrilineal-descent and matrilineal-descent in the landed gentry

class in line with Luong Van Hy's suggestion [4] (pp.754).

4. Conclusion

It is necessary to rely on inference for some important aspects of this case, as the Trương Công lineage does not have a detailed family genealogy, but in order to understand the various, short, and complementary historical materials such as the testaments, the land cadastre, inscriptions, field surveys, etc., it is entirely reasonable to suppose that the multi-household compounds and kinship groups of Phương Bản were based on patrilocal residence. Prior to the spread of Confucianism, family structure in the Red River Delta was very similar to the more varied multi-household compounds found in Thailand, Cambodia, Malaysia, and so on. Generally speaking, it was difficult for these populations to develop kinship groups with fixed and closed membership based on specific paternal and maternal lineage, because patrilocal and matrilineal residence were not established norms. However, in Vietnam, the popularization of Confucianism promoted the shift of such multi-household compounds into patrilineal kinship groups called *dòng họ* based on patrilocal residence. Since we have only considered a single village rich in historical materials, it is certainly questionable how applicable the conclusions of this article are to the villages of the Red River Delta. However, in the Red River Delta, there are many villages where kinship groups tend to be concentrated in small areas, a remnant of the many generations of division of multi-household compounds based on patrilocal residence. It is supposed that the mixture of bilateral elements in the kinship group and family structure of the Kinh people, which have been insisted upon by many scholars, was brought about by the transformation from the multi-household compound group based on bilateral kinship to the paternal relative group owing to the spread of patrilocal residence marriage through the penetration of Confucianism. It is currently still

difficult to confirm when the transformation from multi-household compounds to patrilineal kinship groups occurred, but with the exception of some political elites, the influence of Confucianism on most the region's population began at least as early as the Lê Thánh Tông period. Most extant genealogies were compiled no earlier than the seventeenth century, roughly the same time as the transformation to patrilineal kinship groups or slightly earlier. At least, the social transformation described such above should not be considered uniform for all Vietnamese regions. This is because it is presumed that the paternalization process of multi-household compound groups was closely related to the limitation of membership of village communities and kinship groups owing to the limits of agricultural development and increasing population pressure. This may be the reason why the most typical *dòng họ* are established in the Red River Delta, where agriculture has grown fastest and reached its limits.

However, *dòng họ* established in this way were a composite of the Southeast Asian household compound and the Confucian patrilineal kinship group, so it is doubtful how strong a norm the Confucian patrilineal principle was for this population. The matrilineal residence identified in Phương Bản was not unique; we have evidence of several other similar cases. For example, in the village of Thanh Phước, men who married women of another lineage could be adopted by offering a formal request to join the wife's kinship group [28] (pp.41–47). Moreover, some scholar-officials who served under the Lê-Trịnh government had double family names, such as Trương Nguyễn Điều [張阮條] and Hoàng Nguyễn Thự [黃阮署],²⁵ indicating that men were often absorbed into their wives' kinship groups. Such choices were largely based on social and economic conditions and became a common feature of Southeast Asian household compounds.

Based on the existence of the multi-household compound, we must question the

hierarchical distinctions between farmers imposed by the Lê-Trịnh, which Trương Hữu Quỳnh [22] (pp.389–401) and Sakurai [14] (pp.361–387) have emphasized. In the Red River Delta, landholdings exceeding 10 hectares were extremely rare; most such holdings were no more than 72,000 m² (20 mẫu), as was the case in Phương Bản.²⁶ Although the land cadastre only registered the head of a household compound as the farmer of its collective lands, these large holdings were in practice cultivated by the members of all the households in the group, meaning that the cultivated area per household becomes very average. On this issue, conventional historical studies need to take account of the criticism from the viewpoint of anthropology seriously. Trần Từ [21] (p.25) once criticized the historical view that assumed the perpetual existence of class struggle, and in this light it is clear that examining how much farmland was cultivated by each person listed on the land cadastre without regard to family structure or how the land was cultivated has led past studies to mistake multi-household compounds for large landholders and assume the existence of a landed gentry in the Red River Delta that never actually existed. It is more likely that the supposed “large landholding” class in the land cadastres is a misunderstanding of multi-household compound groups biased toward patrilocal residence in the final stage before property division, and that small-scale land accumulation and decomposition accompanying the generation and decomposition of multi-household compounds was repeated.

Studies of women’s property rights in pre-modern Vietnam so far have not sufficiently incorporated anthropological viewpoints which should be the premise for the discussion of topics such as family cycle, family structure, and the formation and transformation of dòng họ. However, local documents are currently being collected by researchers, and it is expected that new studies of social history based on these previously unviewed historical materials will

appear in the future. The author hope that the model suggested in this article may prove useful for those analyses. Probably, those studies will lead to revealing the historical entity of Vietnam, which was neither China nor Southeast Asia.

Notes

- ¹ For the multi-household compounds in Southeast Asian main ethnic groups, see the researches by Tsubouchi Yoshihiro [24] (pp.112–116), Kobayashi Satoru [3] (pp.142–151), and Takahashi Akio [18] (pp.15–19).
- ² In the Red River Delta, village membership was managed by an organization called “giáp” (甲). Its membership was inherited following paternal blood line, not living place. That is to say, “giáp” was an organization located between land connected community and kinship lineage. However, its historical formation process is not yet clear. See Nguyễn Đông Chí [11] (p.196); Trần Từ [21] (pp.47–53). Regarding specific example of “giáp”, see Ueda [25] (p.262).
- ³ See Sakurai [14] (pp.351–357). He speculates that the high population pressure has led to the development of land with unstable agricultural conditions in the 17th and 18th centuries, resulting in social instability due to instable agricultural production and numbers of refugees. Regarding land dispute between autonomous villages, see Ueda [25] (pp.235–256). Furthermore, according to a study by Vietnamese scholars who are strongly influenced by Marxism-Leninism, in the Red River Delta during the Lê-Trịnh government, the development of private fields and the preferential treatment of officials in the public fields led to the stratification of peasants, however they have little emphasis on population pressure and conflict between villages. See Trương Hữu Quỳnh [22] (pp.351–361).
- ⁴ Compared to some elite classes, such as imperial scholar officials, the common people were quite slow to accept Confucianism, and sustained Southeast Asian feature represented bilateral kinship. However, no concrete examination has been made on the process of pouparlization of Cofucianism and the transformation of the

traditional *dòng họ* in the common people. See Yu Insun [33] (pp.100–133), [34] (pp.215–231).

⁵ See Sunari's study [16] (pp.311). Many of *dòng họ* have an ambiguous genealogy, so if a part of its members migrated to another village, a new *dòng họ* was founded with the migrant as the founder, and the relationship with their hoe village would be rapidly weak. Furthermore, Suenari's another article suggests the concept of "patrilineal kindred" to grasp the premodern *dòng họ* from the analysis of the Vietnamese family genealogies. See Suenari [15] (pp.22–23).

⁶ For example, see Yamamoto [31] (pp.71–72); Nguyễn Đồng Chỉ [10] (pp.184–186); Woodside [30] (p.45); Luong Van Hy [4] (p.747); Taylor [19] (p.77). Especially, Nguyễn Đồng Chỉ argues that the large family was gradually broken down into small families due to the development of private possession. Although his article was made before the development of the studies of family structure of Southeast Asia, the kinship relationship before the penetration of Confucianism seems to be imaged a bilateral household group which resembles multi-household compound. He also speculates from the Vietnamese language that the former Kin people had have a bilateral-decent society.

⁷ Studies of socio-economic history argued that in the 17th-18th century, widening economic disparities in the rural area and olive rule by landowner was established in the Red River Delta villages. This villages are considered prototype of "autonomous village" of 19th century, See [22] (p.364), [14] (pp.237–248).

⁸ Phương Bản village, Phụng Châu commune, Chương Mỹ district, Hà Nội (thôn Phương Bản, xã Phụng Châu, huyện Chương Mỹ, TP Hà Nội). This village was called 花板社 [Hoa Bản xã] until the middle nineteenth century, but renamed 芳板社 [Phương Bản xã] following the naming taboo of the Nguyễn Dynasty. In this article, the village name is unified in "Phương Bản".

⁹ Original text: 國威府安山縣花板社前社長張功鏗妻阮氏嚙等,自念行年衰老,旦夕靡常,遺下田產,未有定分,恐於身後,或起爭端所有祖業及新買田土池沼房屋等項,預造囑書,分爲逐分,留與生男女柒人與妻子貳人共筵人,永爲產業.其田土等物,委是夫妻已物,與內外親屬之人,別無關涉瞞

昧重複交易等事.遺囑書之後,男女照依本分,各勤生業,以承祭祀.敢有違悖妄起爭端,定坐不孝之罪,奪其本分.國有常法.故立囑書筵道,付諸子各執壹道,爲照用者.

¹⁰ In contemporary northern Vietnam, 1 mẫu = 3,600m², 1 sào = 240m², 1 thước = 24m², and 1 tấc = 2.4m². In this article, area unit in historical materials is converted to square meter according to this rate.

¹¹ The present Trương Công lineage has one "family genealogy" that records their ancestors' names and dates of death on a 30 cm × 60 cm wooden board, but the genealogical relationships have not been recorded.

¹² For bridal gift, see [11] (p.108), [20] (p.151).

¹³ Yamamoto [31] (pp.62–63) also discussed the substantial regulations governing bride gifts in the Lê Code.

¹⁴ Eldest daughter was perhaps named Trương Thị Ngọc [張氏玉], and alive until at least 1848. Her land, presumed to be a marriage gifts from parents to daughters, was registered in the land cadastre of 1805 (see Table 5). According to Testament in 1848, some lands of Trương Công Thiếc were close to the lands of Trương Thị Ngọc.

¹⁵ This village is characterized by a large area of *Kì tại* ricefield, but its origin of is not clear [14] (p.323), [2] (pp.220–223). According to the inscription of the neighboring village that recorded the land conflict with Phương Bản, it already existed at the South area of the village in the second half of the 17th century. Concerning the land conflict between Phương Bản and neighboring village, see Ueda's study [27] (pp.241–253).

¹⁶ However, it is considered that the supply of public rice fields to the commoners had been reduced due to the reduction of the area of public rice fields, the preferential allocation to officials, and the depostic land-gentry in the village community. See [13] (pp.388–421), [21] (pp.336–361).

¹⁷ According to Nguyễn Thị Oanh, the pronunciation of "口薯" is "Thwa", and may have been misread the pronunciation of 書 [Thu].

¹⁸ Land names such as "Triền Mèo", "Mã Canh", "Pha Hồ", and "Dụng Lăng" in Testament A are not included in the land cadastre, but they may

appear in the Ô Beo xứ.

- ¹⁹ Luong Van Hy [4] (pp.742–744) also suggest the household division model of land-gentry class. However, land possession of the couple of Trương Công Kiên and Nguyễn Thị Thụ was middle class in the village such mentioned above. For the nineteenth century Trương Công lineage, Suenari's household division model [16] (pp.232–249) is more appropriate, because his model is based on more general cases of household division.
- ²⁰ Case study of Thanh Phước village of Huế also suggests some cases of the matrilineal residence of newcomers and their application for adoption to wife's lineage [28] (pp.44–46).
- ²¹ See inscription No. 1935 in *Tổng tập Thác bản Văn khắc Hán Nôm*, vol. 2.
- ²² For further details concerning the transformation from an open migrant society to a closed village community [29] (pp.53–55).
- ²³ Probably, for these land gentry classes, the model of living style and household division presented by Luong Van Hy [4] (pp.742–749) is more appropriate than Suenari's model [16] (pp.232–249).
- ²⁴ On the other hand, the study of land cadastre by Vietnamese researchers tends to perform statistical processing without giving much consideration to the nature of historical materials. Typical studies by Vietnamese researcher are Phan Huy Lê [12] (pp.23–34); [13] (pp.401–486), Nguyễn Đình Đầu [9]. Their analysis is only a superficial macro analysis and does not pay any attention to the "quality" of the description in the land cadastre.
- ²⁵ Trương Nguyễn Điều and Hoàng Nguyễn Thụ were imperial scholars who passed their exams in 1733 and 1787 [8] (p.598, p.647). "Nguyễn" is one of the most popular family names in Vietnam, but it is not usually used as a middle name. There are also a number of other suspicious persons who qualified as imperial scholars who held double family names during the Lê-Trịnh administration.
- ²⁶ The Statistics on the land cadastre of Sơn Tây Province has not been published yet. However, Phương Bản's land cadastre shows almost the

same trend with statistics on the land cadastre of Hà Đông and Hà Nội [12] (pp.23–34).

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Appendix

Table 1. Inheritance of Testament A in 1806

Trương Công Kịch (eldest son) 4272m²

Place name	Area (m ²)	Remark
Đồng Dục xứ	540	
Đồng Dục xứ	540	
Mả Nghè xứ	480	
Chúc Đế xứ	240	
Đồng Dục xứ	360	
Đồng Dục xứ	1212	Rice-field for ancestral ritual (huong hoa)
Ngõ Đình xứ	360	Garden
Ngõ Đình xứ	540	Swamp
Gia cư	–	House

Trương Công Châu (second son) 3828m²

Place name	Area (m ²)	Remark
Nịnh Cây xứ	720	
Mả Nghè xứ	360	
Mả Canh xứ	408	
Pha Hồ xứ	360	
Ngõ Đình xứ	360	
Tri Miếu xứ	540	House building site
Dụng Lăng xứ	1080	Betrothal gift

Trương Thị Ninh (fourth daughter) 2064m²

Place name	Area (m ²)	Remark
Dụng Lăng xứ	720	
Mả Nghè xứ	360	
Mả Nghè xứ	288	
Mả Nghè xứ	288	
Chúc Đế xứ	72	
Mả Canh (?) xứ	336	

Nguyễn Thị Niên (daughter of the eldest daughter) 2160m²

Place name	Area (m ²)	Remark
Đồng Dục xứ	808.8	
Trung Đồng xứ	360	
Mả Nghè xứ	271.2	
Bồ Lô xứ	360	

Trương Thị Chiên (fifth daughter) 2148m²

Place name	Area (m ²)	Remark
Đồng Dục Triền xứ	808.8	
Đồng Dục Đầm Sau xứ	432	
Mả Canh (?) xứ	336	
Mả Nghè xứ	271.2	
Pha Hồ xứ	300	

Trương Công Tước (third son) 3552m²

Place name	Area (m ²)	Remark
Triền Mèo xứ	1008	
Mả Cà xứ	312	
Mả Nghè xứ	192	
Chúc Đế xứ	240	
Ngõ Đình xứ	360	
Trung Đồng chiều	360	House building site
Dụng Lăng xứ	1080	Betrothal gift

Trương Thị Thao (second daughter) 2148m²

Place name	Area (m ²)	Remark
Triền Mèo xứ	600	
Mả Canh (?) xứ	480	
Mả Nghè xứ	408	
Pha Hồ xứ	300	
Đồng Dục xứ	360	

Trương Thị Khang (third daughter) 2124m²

Place name	Area (m ²)	Remark
Đồng Dục xứ	540	
Đồng Dục xứ	408	
Mả Nghè xứ	360	
Dụng Lăng xứ	480	
Đồng Dục xứ	360	

Trương Thị Thiêm (sixth daughter) 2232m²

Place name	Area (m ²)	Remark
Triền Mèo xứ	960	
Mả Nghè xứ	432	
Trung Đồng xứ	480	
Đồng Dục xứ	360	

Rice field reserved for parents 3072m²

Place name	Area (m ²)	Remark
Đồng Dục xứ	360	
Đồng Dục xứ	360	
Đồng Dục xứ	408	
Mả Nghè xứ	360	
Ngõ Chùa xứ	72	Garden
Pha Hồ xứ	1440	
Ngõ Giữa xứ	72	Garden

Rice field for the sons-in-law 936m²

Place name	Area (m ²)	Remark
Dụng Lăng xứ	480	Inherited by Trương Công Phan
Man (Manh?) xứ	456	Inherited by Nguyễn Văn Bàn

* Conversion: 1 mẫu = 3600m²

* (?) is unclear in pronunciation of chữ Nôm

Table 2 Inheritance of Testament B in 1848
Rice field for ancestral ritual (Hương Hỏa)Đồng Dục xứ 960m²**Trương Thị Lương (daughter) 1800m²**

Place name	Area (m ²)	Remark
Mả Nghè xứ	360	
Lọc xứ	1080	
Dụng Tranh xứ	360	

Trương Công Khoát (the eldest son) 1944m²

Place name	Area (m ²)	Remark
Triền Beo xứ	1080	
Ồ Gà xứ	288	
Đồng Cháy xứ	576	

Trương Thị Đạt (daughter) 2184m²

Place name	Area (m ²)	Remark
Mả Nghè xứ	480	
Đồng Dục xứ	312	
Cây Sòi xứ	240	
Ồ Gà xứ	432	
Trung Đồng xứ	720	

Table 2 Inheritance of Testament B in 1848 (cont.)

Rice field for ancestral ritual (Hương Hỏa)
 Đồng Dục xứ 960m²

Trương Công Đường (the second son) 2688m ²		
Place name	Area (m ²)	Remark
Mả Nghè xứ	408	
Đá Truật (?) xứ	720	
Cầu Quán xứ	600	
Cửa Chùa xứ	360	
Mả Lỗi (?) xứ	600	As betrothal gift

*Conversion rate: 1mẫu = 3600m²

Nguyễn Hữu Dụng (son-in-law) 2388m ²		
Place name	Area (m ²)	Remark
Đồng Dục xứ	480	
Miếu xứ	360	
Mả Nghè xứ	288	
Pha Ao xứ	540	
Trung Đồng xứ	720	

* (?) is unclear in pronunciation of chữ Nôm

Table 3 Inheritance model on Testament A and Testament B

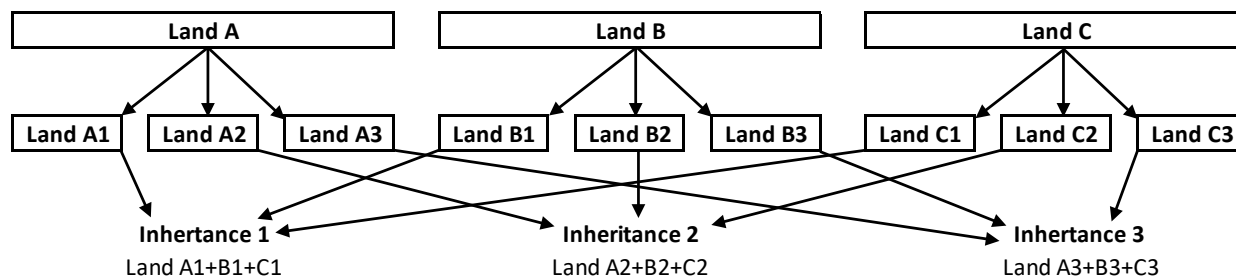


Table 4 Cultivation status of the Phương Bản village in 1805

Classification	Area (m ²)	%
Public rice-fields	564,456	27%
Village common rice-fields	62,400	3%
Private rice-fields (19 males)	370,536 (19,501 / male)	17%
Private rice-fields (41 females)	453,336 (11,056 / female)	21%
Private rice-fields cultivated by other village	376,248	18%
Kỳ Tại rice-field of Long Châu village*	314,592	15%
Total	2,141,568	100%

* This administratively belongs to the Phương Bản hamlet, but its cultivation right belongs to the Long Châu village (Southward of the Phương Bản village)

Source: 花板社地簿 [The land cadastre of the Hoa Bản xã], National Archives Centre N1 (Hà Nội), Q.6990.

Table 5 Cultivation area of the Phuong Bản people

*Grey: Female

Cultivator	Area				Total (m ²)
	mẫu	sào	thư ớc	tắc	
Co-cultivation of Phuong Bản village	4				67,399.2
	4	4			
Co-cultivation of four Giáp	4	2	5		
	2	7			
Temple and shrine	1	3	13	3	
Nguyễn Thị Long	12	1	5		70,056.0
	2	4	14		
	3	3			
	1	5	5		
Đào Xuân Vực	1	1	10		47,184.0
	3	7			
	4	2			
	3	6	1		
Nguyễn Danh Chính	3				43,008.0
	2				
	1	8			
	1	4			
Hoàng Như Du	3	7	7		29,760.0
	2	2	10		
	1	1	6		
	1	6			
Nguyễn Thị Huân	3	2	9		28,320.0
	3	5			
	2	5	10		
	1	8			
Nguyễn Bá Toại	1	6			27,240.0
	2	2			
	1	8			
	1	9	10		
Nguyễn Đình Đạt	3	6			24,120.0
	3	1			
Đào Thị Khiên	3	6			23,760.0
	2	10			
Hoàng Thị Lãnh	2	5			22,056.0
	1	6	8		
	1	9	11		
Nguyễn Thị Vĩnh	3		5		20,280.0
	2	6			
Nguyễn Văn Nhân	2	5			19,440.0
	2	9			
Nguyễn Văn Bằng	3	7			18,720.0
	1	5			
Nguyễn Thị Khê	2	6			16,920.0
	2	1			
Nguyễn Đăng Tiên	2	5			16,560.0
	2	1			
Hoàng Thị Nữ	3	5	6		16,344.0
	1				
Nguyễn Thị Thổ	2	5			16,200.0
	2				
Trương Công Kiên	2		11		15,744.0
	2	3			
Nguyễn Thị Doãn	2	5			15,648.0

Cultivator	Area				Total (m ²)
	mẫu	sào	thư ớc	tắc	
Nguyễn Bá Hiên	2	3			15,480.0
Trương Công Hòe	2	1			14,760.0
	2				
Nguyễn Thị Lợi	3	9	5		14,160.0
Nguyễn Đình Quý	1	7			13,320.0
	2				
Nguyễn Đình Giai	3	7			13,320.0
Nguyễn Thị Đăng	3	5	5		12,720.0
Nguyễn Thị Diễm	3	5			12,600.0
Nguyễn Thị Khiết		9	6		12,384.0
	2	5			
Nguyễn Thị Bách	2	3	7		12,312.0
	1		11		
Nguyễn Văn Tài	3	4			12,240.0
Nguyễn Thị Can	2	3	12		11,808.0
		9			
Nguyễn Thị Dương	3	1			11,160.0
Nguyễn Thị Tiết	2	3			11,880.0
	1				
Nguyễn Thị Mạch	3				10,800.0
Nguyễn Thị Quan	3				10,800.0
Nguyễn Bá Hoàn	1	4	5		10,560.0
	1	5			
Nguyễn Thị Miên	2	8	10		10,320.0
Nguyễn Thị Đăng	2	6			9,360.0
Nguyễn Đình Luyện	2				9,360.0
		6			
Nguyễn Thị Viên		3	13		8,952.0
	2	1			
Nguyễn Thị Dụ	2	4			8,640.0
Hoàng Thị Từu	2	2	14		8,256.0
Trương Thị Đăng	2	2	8		8,112.0
Nguyễn Văn Vĩnh	2	2			7,920.0
Nguyễn Thị Luyện	2	2			7,920.0
Nguyễn Thị Đăng	2	1			7,560.0
Nguyễn Bá Thánh	2				7,200.0
Đào Thị Tiêm	2				7,200.0
Nguyễn Thị Hàn	1	9	8		7,032.0
Nguyễn Thị Hậu	1	9	8		7,032.0
Hoàng Thị Cừ	1	9	6		6,984.0
Nguyễn Thị Tiên	1	7	5		6,240.0
Nguyễn Thị Ngân	1	6	5		5,880.0
Nguyễn Thị Cừ	1	6			5,760.0
Nguyễn Thị Hoàn	1	5			5,400.0
Nguyễn Thị Đò	1	5			5,400.0
Nguyễn Thị Tị	1	3	1		4,704.0
Nguyễn Thị Tụ	1	3			4,680.0
Nguyễn Thị Đệ	1	2	8		4,512.0
Nguyễn Thị Thư	1	1	5		4,080.0
Trương Thị Ngọc	1				3,600.0
Vương Thị Thạch	1				3,600.0
Nguyễn Thị Tri		3			1,080.0

Source: 花板社地簿 [The land cadastre of the Hoa Bản village], National Archives Centre N1 (Hà Nội), Q.6990.

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