

The Land Problem in KHUC HAO'S Reform in the 10th Century



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ABSTRACT: The reform initiated by Khuc Hao was the first reform in the history of Vietnam carried out in the context that the country had just gained autonomy from the Duong Dynasty (China). With the positive contents of the reform program, it has made many important contributions to the solid construction of the nation's autonomous government after a period of arduous struggle. Accordingly, the land issue has had certain adjustments compared to the Chinese domination period, which has had a strong impact on the economic and social changes of the country. The paper focuses on studying the basic issues of land ownership in Khuc Hao's reform program, through which it outlines the basic characteristics of Vietnam's land ownership in the early days of gaining autonomy. The research results will contribute to adding useful references on land issues in the history of the Vietnamese nation in the early 10th century.

Keywords: land reform, Khuc Hao, land issue, 10th century, Vietnamese history

1. INTRODUCTION

The beginning of the 10th century, in the context of the weakening of the Duong Dynasty along with the ongoing unrest in China, created a favorable opportunity for Khuc Thua Du to lead the Vietnamese people to overthrow the colonial government of China and regain the autonomy for the Vietnamese people. Following Khuc Thua Du's career, his son Khuc Hao set out many important reforms in economic, political and social aspects in order to build a foundation of fundamental independence and unity long-term for the Vietnamese people. According to Tao (2006), "the division of the enemy is an advantage for the Khuc family to take another step forward, consolidate their domination and promote their independence and autonomy through the cause of reform" (p.21). Accordingly, the issues related to land were revised and adjusted by Khuc Hao in the reform policy, creating an important basis for the establishment of land ownership in social relations. According to research by Le (2007), "accept and respect the commune's right to ownership of land, the commune's right to equally distribute land to families, and on that basis, each household contributes an equal tax to the state through the commune. The real content of the policy "Equalization of field taxes" is there" (Le, 2007. p.210). Through this, the content of land and issues related to land has played an important role in the socio-economic development of Vietnam from the very beginning to regain independence and self-reliance.

Therefore, studying the land issue in reform in the 10th century not only presents the basic contents of the land issue in reform, but also analyzes the impacts of land policy on the establishment of autonomy and building a lasting independence of Vietnam. The research results will contribute to supplementing useful references on land issues in Vietnamese national history at the beginning of the 10th century and at the same time drawing lessons from experience land use and management nowadays.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Discussing the reform of the Khuc family in Vietnam at the beginning of the 10th century has been approached from many different angles by researchers. The following studies are typical:

The research of Sy (1991), has recognized that the Khuc family from Khuc Thua Du's reign, together with the people, took advantage of the opportunity of Tang Con to abandon the citadel, and Khuc Thua Du proclaimed himself a "Tiet do su", beginning of the period of national autonomy. Following that career, Khuc Hao made great changes in administrative, economic and social organization, people can stabilize their lives.

Anh (2013), in a republished study, commented on the reform of Khuc Hao in the 10th century, demonstrating the weakening of the colonial government of the Duong Dynasty (China), creating a favorable opportunities for Vietnamese patriarchs to lead the people to seize power and regain land ownership from the colonial government. At the same time, the Khuc family's work opened a turning point in the development of the Vietnamese nation's long-term independence and self-reliance in the future.

In a study by Tao (2006), discussing major reforms in Vietnamese history, the author mentioned the reform of the Khuc family in an overview and systematic way. In particular, the content analyzes the historical context and favorable conditions for Khuc Thua Du to gain autonomy and Khuc Hao to carry out reforms to consolidate and maintain autonomy. By presenting the

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basic issues in the reform content, Tao's research analyzed and the impacts of Khuc Hao's reform on the economic, political, cultural and social situation of the country in the early days of independence.

Le (2007), with Vietnamese History and Culture Access to Department has had important contents in the study of the career of the Khuc family. Accordingly, this study has confirmed the role and importance of the Khuc family in the history of Vietnam in the 10th century. Khuc Thua Du's struggle for autonomy and the reform of Khuc Hao is a characteristic in strategies for building and consolidating solid autonomy at the beginning of the 10th century.

According to the research of Luong (2020), the research content analyzed the objective requirements of history about gaining independence for the Vietnamese nation and the Khuc family's career has met that history tasks. On that basis, the study argues that Khuc Hao's reform is an excellent continuation of history and at the same time lays the foundation for the protection and promotion of the country's long-term independence and self-reliance in the next historical period.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This research was conducted on the basis of applying two basic methods of historical science:

- + The historical method is a typical research method applied to present the historical context, the basic contents of Khuc Hao's reform, especially the land issue in Vietnam in the early 10th century.

- + Logical method to systematize and connect relevant research contents. On that basis, the study builds scientific comments and assessments on the impacts of land reform in Khuc Hao's reform program at the beginning of the 10th century.

In addition, in this study, historical document analysis techniques were applied to systematize documents and identify the core contents of historical issues to be studied. Accordingly, evaluation and analysis techniques for historical documents are conducted, critique of historical documents' constituent elements, and determination of the authenticity and reliability of historical documents in research.

4. LAND ISSUE IN KHUC HAO'S REFORM

Overview of the process of building autonomy and reforming the Khuc government

The Duong Dynasty concentrated its forces to take care of the country, and a political and power vacuum appeared. Seizing that opportunity, Khuc Thua Du was originally a prestigious leader in Cuc Bo locality (present-day Hai Duong), with his prestige and talent, he led the people to revolt and conquer citadel of Tong Binh (Hanoi), claiming to be the "Tiet Do Su" of Annam. The renaissance of Khuc Thua Du marked a glorious victory in the history of Vietnam over 1,000 years against the North's domination. Since then, people's life has gradually stabilized. It was a stepping stone for the victory in two resistance wars against the invading Southern Han army by Duong Dinh Nghe and Ngo Quyen, contributing to firmly defending the country's autonomy. According to Sy (1991), "The Khuc family is from Hong Chau, the last name to inherit, the ancestor is Thua Du, gentleness, love for people, many people submit to him, when Tang Con abandoned the citadel, Thua Du claiming to be the "Tiet Do Su" of An Nam, asked the Duong court and to accept it" (p.30).

In 906, the Duong Dynasty was forced to recognize the government of Khuc Thua Du and made him the Tinh Hai Quan Tiet Do Su, Dong Binh Chuong Su. According to the National History of the Nguyen Dynasty (1998), "The Year of the Tiger (906), (Duong, Emperor Chieu Tuyen, 3rd Thien Huu year). In January and spring, the Duong Dynasty conferred the title of "Dong Binh Chuong Su" on the Tinh Hai Tiet Do Su was Khuc Thua Du" (p.72). Although in name he still received the title and official position of the Duong Dynasty, in essence, the government of Khuc Thua Du was an autonomous government, laying the basis for a long-term independence of the nation. According to Le (2007), "Khuc Thua Du was the one who had the merit of gaining self-government, starting a struggle towards complete independence" (p.202). Khuc Thua Du worked as a Tiet Do Su for a year, then died, and his son Khuc Hao took over. Khuc Hao succeeded his father in reforming the country in order to consolidate power and secure people's lives. According to Sy (1991), "Khuc Hao, thanks to his old inheritance, occupied La citadel, proclaimed himself as the "Tiet Do Su" and divided the country into regions, provinces, districts, continents and communes; appointing chief and deputy commanders, dividing the field tax equally, and not forcing people to work as laborers; make a household book, record the full name and the year of the year, the local head is responsible. It is leniency and simplicity that people can do business in peace" (p.30).

Khuc Hao implemented administrative reforms such as resetting the Lo - Phu - Chau - Giap - Xa system to replace the Chau - Huyen - Huong - Xa system of the previous Duong Dynasty. Accordingly, Giap and Xa are the grassroots administrative units, with rural communes as the foundation and highly autonomous. To be strict in management, Khuc Hao made a population declaration, made a household registration book and assigned Giap Chief to take care of it. According to Le (2007), "the independent government since its inception has shown special interest in organizing the local government at the village, border and commune levels. These grassroots administrative units are built on the existing socio-economic structure of rural communes and aim to manage those communes" (p.208). It can be said that Khuc Hao's government for the first time established and managed a unified administrative system from the central to the local, thereby affirming the high independence and autonomy of the Vietnamese people. According to Khoi (2014), "the measures Khuc Hao used showed that the authority of the Duong Dynasty

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(China) had completely disappeared and the new administration of Vietnam covered the entire country and down to at the commune level, which had been beyond the reach of the Chinese until now” (p.139).

In terms of economy, Khuc Hao modified the land rent and tax regime, and at the same time removed the heavy translation force imposed by the Duong colonial government, and averaged the field tax for each household. It is these actions of Khuc Hao that have reduced the burden on the people. According to Luong (2020), “Starting up Khuc Thua Du was already a patriotic patriot who loved the people and was respected and supported by the people, then Khuc Thua Hao continued to show his patriotism and love for the country. with the goal of liberating the people from the yoke of exploitation and brutal rule of the enemy, tolerating the people's strength, strengthening the internal strength of the country, and bringing peace to the people” (p.420).

Basically, Khuc Hao's reforms created conditions to consolidate territorial unity and bring peace to the people while clearly demonstrating the spirit of an independent and self-reliant nation. According to research by Tao (2006), “All of the above measures have brought stability and stability to the country. Internal affairs are consolidating and promoting the right to independence and self-reliance. Foreign policy is to fight against all enemies, retain the government for decades, and create favorable conditions for the country's next steps of development” (p.28-29).

Khuc Hao's land division method

In Khuc Hao's method of division, he did not classify households, did not rely on caste in society to divide, and did not allocate fields in the order of priority like during the colonial period. “The State accepts and respects the communes' actual right to land ownership, and the commune's right to equally distribute land to families” (Le, 2007. p.203-204). Khuc Hao advocates equal division of land for each household to ensure that every family has land to cultivate. The poor farmers who had been taken over by landlords and powerful men before were now re-divided. This is a new point and a more progressive point than the previous colonial government's division method.

Khuc Hao implemented an equal distribution of land for the people by household, which has similarities with the policy of equally dividing land in China, but it is more equal. The colonial government of China specified the division, “Dinh Nam (21 years old or older) and Trung Nam (aged 18 years and older) each provide a field plot (100 acres), of which 80% are “ration fields”, 20% are “Vinh Nghiep Rice Fields”. The elderly and disabled are granted forty acres, widows and concubines are granted thirty acres...” (Hung, 2005. p.302), this regulation is intended to ensure that all social classes have land for farming. Khuc Hao's reform did not specify details, but the division of land by households, without dividing classes and hierarchies in society, brought about equality in society. It can be seen that Khuc Hao's land policy is basically “with the equality of communal community relations” (Le, 2007. p.203).

Theoretically, in Khuc Hao's land policy, the largest ownership right to land in the whole country belongs to the state, “the nominal supreme ownership of the State and the actual ownership of the land of the commune” (Le, 2007. p. 204). This is an ownership regime suitable for the situation of a young autonomous government, while private ownership of land is not really popular and well developed in society, “the presence of private ownership of land is not clear yet” (Le, 2007. p.203). With this policy, people have slightly reduced the payment of land tax compared to the yoke of the previous Duong dynasty. In addition, the land policy brings positive effects to the economy, “overcoming the harassment of the officials as well as the multi-tiered tax collection, avoiding the loss of revenue for the budget Giao Chau” (Tao, 2006. p.27).

Khuc Hao's way of managing land

The content of Khuc Hao's reform established the nominal form of public land ownership, “The Khuc family is based on the communal distribution of land according to the Asian mode of production (i.e., all land) are all public property and are distributed among farming households” (Tao, 2006. p.27). Although, the form of private land has tended to form since the Northern period in the hands of Han Chinese landlords, but “its proportion is still small and was imported and imposed on our country by the power of invaders foreign strategy and domination” (Le, 2007. p.201). Therefore, under the domination of the colonial government, it created opportunities for the private land of Han Chinese landowners in Annam to develop more and more. When the Khuc family gained their autonomy, it was inevitable that the farms and land owned by the Han Chinese landowners were abolished, which means that the privately owned land did not have the conditions to develop before.

In addition, in the early days of national construction, Khuc Hao did not conduct the form of granting or conferring mandarins with land in order to protect the ownership and management rights of land belonging to the state. Therefore, in the early days of building the country, Khuc Hao did not conduct the form of granting and granting to mandarins with land in order to protect the ownership and management rights of land belonging to the state.

Land is managed and divided by the state throughout the country, thus creating a unified basis for the Khuc government. Because land greatly affects economic development, social stability and political regime consolidation, the unification of the way land management belongs to the state will create synergy in the nation building in the first stage. Meanwhile, privately managed and exploited land is still limited, “until the 10th century, in rural communes in our country, the presence of private ownership of land was still not clear, if any, it is only present in certain communes and is still of an individual nature” (Le, 2007. p.203). So, the

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unification of how to manage land owned by the state will be of positive value in the beginning of national construction in the 10th century.

Land management is associated with rural communes and implemented according to the people-based mechanism and management from the local grassroots level, “a national government, based on the people, must stick to the people, must “grasping from the bottom up”, grasping from the grassroots is the commune level” (Tao, 2006. p.24). According to regulations, “at the commune level, Giap chief is the person who manages the household registration and is also responsible for collecting taxes and paying taxes to his superiors” (Le, 2007. p.203). Land management up to the grassroots level contributes to creating a common uniformity in land throughout the country. During the rule of Vietnam, the Chinese feudal dynasties did not directly govern at the commune level, meaning that the colonial government could not interfere in the land management mechanism of the peasant communes because this is a strong stronghold of the nation. Therefore, the Khuc's government has implemented a policy of land management associated with rural communes, both contributing to linking the central state with rural communes, and promoting the important role of rural communes in the economic and social construction and development of an autonomous country. According to Le (2007), “with that policy, the Khuc government restored the role and tradition of the commune, implementing an exploitative method consistent with the real socio-economic structure of the country, creating a satisfactory fusion between the State and the Commune” [Phan Huy Le, p.210].

How to collect land tax from Khuc Hao

The Khuc's government implemented a policy of renting tax on the basis of the average of the field tax. “The Khuc family based on the communal distribution of land according to the Asian mode of production... taxed on an average basis. according to the land that the households are divided” (Tao, 2006. p.27). Unlike the colonial period, the government of Khuc Hao advocated an equal division of land among the people, each family had land for agricultural production and had to collect taxes according to the household. This division is not based on the number of family members, so soldiers do not have to pay land tax, which both reduces taxes for the people and eliminates the tax collection system for the soldiers as practiced by the colonial government.

The domination government of the Chinese feudal dynasties “exercises super-economic exploitation, plunders from the people at will, has many layers of revenue, and many kinds of taxes” (Tao,2006. p.26). However, the autonomous government of the Khuc family has devised a tax policy suitable to the contemporary social situation. Khuc Hao's policy of averaging land tax is based on households to collect taxes, without dividing each household class to collect taxes in order to relieve pressure on the people. The land was divided equally, the tax rate for the land was equal for each household, the nail tax was abolished, reducing the level of exploitation for the people. The average land tax set forth is consistent with the contemporary social context. “The Khuc government restored the traditional role of the commune, implementing an exploitative method suitable to the real socio-economic structure of our country at that time” (Le, 2007. p. 210).

Changing Huong to Giap and placing top officials created the basis for tax collection and administration. The commune-level heads are not tax collectors, so they have no basis to rely on their power to undercut the state's tax revenue. This also overcomes the situation of harassing people and arbitrarily increasing taxes by previous commune officials. The tax collection policy thanks to the base unit Giap has become more effective than before. According to Anh (2013), “The Khuc family set up the communal mandarin in order to grasp the administrative work at the commune level that was still under the control of the patriarch. The Khuc family's reform thus opened up a new development step for feudal society that later autonomous dynasties would further promote” (p.163).

Some comments on the land issue in Khuc Hao's reform in the 10th century

The method of land division in the reform policy of Khuc Hao had many progressive contents. The Khuc family does not rely on the status or caste of each household to divide, but equally distributes it to each household. With this way of dividing land, it has overcome the unequal land decentralization in society and the appropriation of land by the heads of administrative units. That has had a great impact on winning the hearts of the people and is in line with reality with the socio-political situation in the 10th century when the Khuc's autonomous government desperately needed the support of the people, solidarity between the government and the people to build and develop the country. Moreover, the Khuc government's attention to people's lives has contributed to a closer connection between the state and the people, which is one of the factors that play an important role in the construction of the country and protect the autonomous government of Vietnam in the 10th century.

Land management in the 10th century existed a complicated relationship between the State and the rural commune. This is a relationship that is both linking and opposing, “The state is both opposed to the commune, through the exploiting commune, and represents the commune in the common interests of the community” (Le, 2007. p.204). The above relationship helps the autonomous government to establish nominal ownership over communal land, thereby creating a premise to build and solidly consolidate the Khuc's autonomous government. On the other hand, the implementation of the land management policy proved the failure of the colonial government of the Duong Dynasty, instead it was the maturity of the sense of affirming the sovereignty of the Vietnamese people, represented by the Khuc government.

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Although Khuc Hao's policy of equalizing land tax was based on the tax policies of the colonial government, Khuc Hao selectively absorbed and adjusted it to suit the historical circumstances at that time. The tax rate is based on the number of households in a base unit, the tax rate is equal among households, and it is slightly reduced compared to the period of Chinese feudal dynasties, which is reasonable in this case the country has just gained independence. The division of land equally among households and the abolition of unreasonable taxes... helped the Vietnamese people escape the yoke of Chinese feudal dynasties and at the same time demonstrated the government's ideology of taking the people as the root of the Khuc government. According to Tao (2006), "the Khuc family's implementation of eliminating the heavy exploitation of the colonial government is a "untie for the people", "relaxing the people's power" which has a great effect on the development of the win people's hearts and stabilize society" (p.27). Therefore, the policy of averaging land taxes and forgiving the epidemic force has promoted the spirit of self-reliance of the Vietnamese nation and demonstrated the independence of a state, creating internal strength for the construction of the country and long-term development.

However, the distribution of land by household with an equal number of fields per family has certain limitations when the number of members in each household is very different, so averaging the field tax does not guarantee equality among households with many or few members. On the other hand, the Khuc government assigns the head of the local grassroots level to have the right to distribute land and collect taxes, but does not specify the quality of the divided land, so when dividing the good land, the mandarins will be prone to many disadvantages. In addition to the positive values brought by Khuc Hao's reforms, which contributed to the strengthening of local control and territorial reunification, along with the policy of equalizing the tax on the fields, it initially established the maximum ownership of the land State's high level of land ownership in the country and at the same time restricts the development of private land ownership.

Basically, Khuc Hao's land and tax reforms were associated with simple content and for the people, with the aim of "the very essence of simple tolerance" (Tao, 2006. p.28). Through that, the Khuc government created favorable conditions for the people to receive arable land and happily own the country. According to Tao (2006), "reform has created a cultural lifestyle of an ethnic community that has just escaped the yoke of slavery, gained independence, self-control, and had a peaceful life" (Tao, 2006. p.28).

CONCLUSIONS

During the first half of the 10th century, the Khuc family, with all their patriotism and indomitable spirit, led the people to regain autonomy for the nation after more than 10 centuries of existence under brutal domination of the Chinese feudal dynasties. On that basis, the Khuc government implemented progressive reforms to strengthen the country's independence and development. Accordingly, the land issue was renewed by Khuc Hao with many important contents on how to manage and distribute land, establish ownership and tax collection policies. These have brought positive values for socio-economic development, strengthened the relationship between the state and the people, and eased class conflicts, thereby contributing to the creation of internal strength in the context that the country has just gained autonomy. Most importantly, the land reform contents of Khuc Hao have made certain contributions in the process of establishing national sovereignty, building and consolidating the nation's autonomous government, creating an important premise for the development of Vietnamese history in subsequent periods. Although the history has gone through many ups and downs of time, the lesson on land management and distribution and people's welfare policy in the 10th century still has profound scientific and practical value in this day and age.

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