

The Transformation of Land Management: A Case Study of the Lin Family of Lung-ching (1817-1892)

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Abstract

Still a frontier region of the Ch'ing dynasty, Taiwan in the nineteenth century was a highly commercialized, agricultural immigrant society. The Lin family of Lung-ching played a major role in the integration of the peasant society of central Taiwan. They combined agricultural production, military organization, and industrial investment to pursue security and stability for the economy and society. There were three characteristics of their land management: production with an economy of scale, full employment of labor, and reciprocal social relations between patron and client. The Lin family was also successful in manipulating traditional lineage and kinship institutions. All these factors contributed to their success in land management and is an example of the cultural innovations of the Han Chinese in Taiwan.