

An Introduction to the Socio-economic History of  
Rural Egypt in Modern Times

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Previously I wrote two articles based upon documentary materials, entitled "A Riot in Village Kafr Shubrahūr", and "A Scandal of Village Abū Şinēṭa". The first deals with a riot of villagers against their landlord for five years from 1893 to 1898, the second treats a struggle happened in 1853 between two influential families for the hegemony of village administration.

Afterwards I had the opportunities to visit Village "Kafr Shubrahūr" and Village "Abū Şinēṭa", the spheres where the above riot and struggle broke down, three times in March and September 1986, and August 1987, and to be much surprised by the fact that these two affairs before 90 and 140 years are not only inherited among villagers, but also determine the present human relationship of village inhabitants.

The aim of this article is firstly to introduce the tales of the above riot and struggle of which villagers informed me during my visits, and secondly to discuss the utility and limitation of documentary and oral materials in the study of the socio-economic history of rural Egypt in modern times, through the analytic comparison between the stories reconstructed on documentary materials and the tales informed by villagers in connection with these two affairs.