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The Rural Gentry in The Nineteenth Century

Japan and Egypt - A Comparative Study of Gono and A'yan

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The Rural Gentry in the Nineteenth Century

Japan and Egypt - A Comparative Study of Gōnō and A'yān

Introduction

This paper argues the situation of the rural gentry 'Gōnō' in Japan under the late period of Tokugawa and Meiji era up to the First World War, in comparison with the same stratum 'A'yan' in Egypt under Mohamed Ali and his successors 1805-1914. As the rise of rural gentry in both countries was co-related with the development of land tenure, let's have a look on the system of landholding in both countries through the concerned period.

Under Tokugawa Shogunate, about a quarter of the total area of Japan's arable land was held by the Shogun and directly administered by him. The rest of the land was divided into nearly 300 fiefs of varying size. Each of the feudal lords had his own army of samurai retainers and foot-soldiers who lived in fortified town-castle. The basis of his wealth was the land tax levied in kind (rice) on the peasants of the fief.¹ The ordinary peasants might be described as a de facto or more properly quasi owners of their land. At that time there was no clear conception of private ownership of land; the alienation of land was legally prohibited and the land was burdened by heavy tax, but in practice they could manage the land, and they could, to some extent, lease it out and transfer their land-holding to others.² Although the ban on alienation was reaffirmed in 1720's, the practice nullified it by permitting the mortgaging of land.³ As it was stated by Ogura, the relationship of the land-lords to their tenants was 'not that' of serfdom nor was it exactly that of modern tenancy, and that the tenants were: subordinate socially and economically to the landlords under the restrictions of the feudal system. According to him, the land tenure system before the Meiji Restoration can be described as de facto or quasi peasant proprietorship under a feudal system.⁴

Since time immemorial all the arable land of Egypt had been owned by the state. Land of every village was divided into small lots each containing several feddans. Peasants had usufruct rights and their landholding was circumscribed by the ban on Land alienation, they were not allowed either to inherit or to transfer their rights. Nevertheless in practice the usufruct right was liable to

¹ Dore, R.P.: Land Reform in Japan, Oxford, London 1966, p.11.

² Ogura, T.: The Agrarian Problems and Agricultural Policy in Japan, IDE, Tokyo 1967, p.3.

³ Dore, R.P.: Op-cit, p.12.

⁴ Ogura, T. Op-cit, p.3.

inheritance, abdication and mortgage on the condition of having a formal permission. Land tax levied in kind on the whole village land, and the whole village community was responsible for payment.

To facilitate tax collection, the state introduced 'Iltizam' system under which land was made over to a 'multazim' the one able to offer the largest sum by public tender. The multazim held a tenth of the total village land to be private estate with tax exemption.

Similar to the peasant of Tokugawa's Japan the Egyptian peasant was not a free agent. If he attempted to leave the land he would be brought back by force, being regarded as servant of the land he as much belonged to the state as the land cultivated. When the influence of the central government weakened around the end of the seventeenth century, Iltizam was regarded as quasi property and became de facto inheritable. The multazim authority over the peasants exceeded that of the state, and the productive relations, to great extent, were feudalist.⁵

The endeavours to establish modern state and strengthen the central government led both Mohamed Ali of Egypt and Meiji Government of Japan to develop land tenure system in order to eliminate the influential feudal power; multazims in the former and samurai in the latter. Although, there was a bit similarity regarding the procedures carried out in both countries to fulfil that end, the consequences were rather different.

When Mohamed Ali came to power (1805-1848), he planned to eliminate the influential Mamelūk multazims, to uproot them from the Egyptian society and establish a new regime depending on some Turkish and other alien elements who formed his government staff. To carry through that project, Mohamed Ali abolished the Iltizam system after staging the famous Cairo Citadel massacre of the Mamelūks on March, 1811. As unchallenged ruler of Egypt, Mohamed Ali started modernization, the most important aspect of which was re-organization of the agrarian structure. In 1813 a cadastral survey was undertaken, and agrarian land was registered in peasant names, those who had been enjoying usufruct rights. The legal situation of peasants was not changed, but in November 1847, Mohamed Ali issued the first Regalement concerning landed property. According to it, the peasant had the right to mortgage usufructary enjoyment as well as the right of conveying his landholding, by a legal title-deed or before witnesses, to a third party. The holder could be ousted if he was unable to pay the taxes on it, with the faculty, of again entering into possession the day he should be able to pay up the amounts in arrears. Inheritance was not

⁵ For detailed information see; Mohamed Shafik Ghourbal: *Misr fi Mafriq-ul-tūrūq 1798-1801* (Annuals of the Faculty of Arts, Cairo Univ. Vol. IV, Part I, May 1936); Ahmed Ahmed al-Hitta: *Tarikh Misr al-Iqtisadi fi al-Qarn al-Tasi' A'sher*, Cairo 1955; Gibb, H.A.R., and Bowen, H.: *Islamic Society and the West*, Vol. I, Part I, Oxford, London 1950.

mentioned and the care of settling this most important question was left to the will and pleasure of the village sheikh (headman). The village community was still responsible for arrears in taxes of any one of its members, the village inhabitants were jointly and severally -solidarity- responsible one for the other. We can say that the peasant was rather tenant.

Nevertheless, in 1855 another decree was issued to modify the Reglement of landed property, enlarged the right of property and allowed the male heirs of a deceased holder to take possession of the land left by him. Another modification introduced in 1858, accordingly the transmission of land by inheritance to the heirs of a holder was authorized without distinction of sex. But the right of property still belongs to the State rather than to individual; the state had the right of expropriation for reasons of public good without any indemnity. Private landownership was authorized gradually in 1871, 1874, 1880 and 1891. The ruling class of Turco-Circassian origin had been enjoying private landownership right since 1842.⁶

In Japan, the feudal system was abolished through the Meiji Restoration (1868) and the new regime re-organized the agrarian structure. The government recognized the private ownership of land and abolished the Tokugawa ban on the alienation of land and other restrictions on private property rights. A few years later, a cadastral survey was undertaken and title-deeds were issued for each plot of Land to those who considered to be in possession. The feudal land tax in kind was converted into an annual money tax of 3 percent of the assessed value of land. Consequently, the quasi peasant landholders and the quasi landowner formerly bound to the land by feudal ties became independent proprietors 'free to use and dispose of the land as they wished, free - if they could find an alternative - to change their occupation at will.'⁷

The development of private ownership of land in Japan was carried through within about a decade, while it took about eight decades in case of Egypt. Regardless the debates about the economic development of each country during the nineteenth century, the differences between the experiences of the two countries are particularly constructive.

However, the development of private, landownership in both countries was accompanied by the rise of rural gentry.

I. The Rise of the stratum

In Tokugawa Japan, the fief government, which meant primarily operation of the fiscal system, was administered from the castle town by locally stationed or

⁶ Artin, Y.: *La Propriété Foncière en Egypte*, Le Caire 1883, pp.100-101.

⁷ Dore, R.P. : *Op-cit.*, pp.15-16.

itinerant samurai officials and ultimately through the district headmen and village headmen, wealthy peasants (gōnō) appointed by the fief to be responsible for managing cultivation and tax payment.

The rate of Land tax was getting higher at that time as the standard of living of samurai, the tax-receiving class, rose and the life in the capital was too costly. The expenditure of the feudal lords who had to spend half their time in the capital was inflated. They had no other alternative but to lend money from merchants and rice brokers. They levied, frequently, special taxes and obliged the peasants to pay in advance. Taxation rate was amounting to 60 per cent of the crop, since the spirit of the land tax system was focused on the famous phrase 'peasants should not be allowed to die nor yet to live.'⁸The peasants were forced to borrow money or rice to meet their tax burden. Being indebted to rice merchants and money-lenders, the samurai class prestige and integrity was weakened and the ban on the alienation of land was no more effective by permitting the mortgaging of land. The money-lenders who acquired land were wealthy peasant 'gōnō', town merchants or artisans. The village headmen were often able to extract opportunities for profit and extended the area of their landholding in spite of feudal regulations. The mortgagees were allowed, customarily, to hold the peasant land but more often they took over cultivation and the former proprietors became their tenants. These circumstances led to the rise of rural gentry who invested money in land, trade and some forms of manufacture. Due to their investments considerable area of newly reclaimed land was brought under cultivation.⁹

According to the cadastral survey undertaken by Meiji government, title-deeds were issued to those customarily considered to be in possession of land. Whenever there were conflicting claims to the land, the issue was done to the richer and powerful. Mortgagees were given the title-deeds to mortgaged land and in some cases communal village lands which had traditionally been used as a source of fodder, firewood and green fertilizer, had become the property of gōnō who were powerful enough to influence the commissioners in charge of the issue of the title-deeds.¹⁰

Thus, the interests of the different categories of gōnō in the rural society, had become well established and they played considerable role under the Meiji regime.

The rise of the rural gentry in Egypt was as different as the differences between the process of the economic development of both countries.

⁸ Quoted from Dore, p.12.

⁹ Beasley, W.G.: The Meiji Restoration, Stanford, Calif., 1972, p.31.

¹⁰ Dore, R.P.: Op-cit., p.15-16.

At the time of French invasion (1798-1801), each village contained several farmers titled 'sheikh'. These sheikhs were the heads of joint families holding large area of land. Like the situation under Tokugawa Japan the richest and powerful. Among the village sheikhs was appointed by the multazim as 'sheikh-el-balad' village headman in order to represent the multazim before the village community and pass the latter's instructions on to the peasants. He had to adjucate disputes and secure payment of land-tax. ¹¹

At the end of the eighteenth century, they held large tracts of land. These were then of three kinds: the rizaq ahbasiyya which was devoted to providing for guest and mosques; land which was not included the arable land known by the multazim; and masmūh land offered by the multazims in lieu of their administrative duties. ¹²

When Mohamed Ali took over the Iltizam system he granted village sheikhs parcels of land equal to 5% of the village area as 'masmūh' ; with tax exemption in payment of their duties and of guest services to government officials and passengers. ¹³Being the representatives of the government before the village community, they had enjoyed extensive administrative and judiciary power, over the peasants.

Since the 1850's, the wealthy peasants and village sheikhs were customary titled 'A'yan' notables. But, the village sheikhs were the wealthiest and most influential category of A'yan. They could increase their properties, during the second half of the nineteenth century, by different means. They had taken the advantage of being members of the village cadastral survey committee and seized large tracts of land issued title-deeds and later the land became their private ownership a case similar to that of Japan at the time of Meiji Restoration. The death of a landholder without heir provided the village sheikhs a chance to seize the land, by one mean or other, such as to forge documents testifying that the dead landholder has transferred his usufrust right to them during his lifetime. Also they seized the land held by the escaped peasants who flew away in order to get rid of the arrears burden. In some cases A'yan were granted Oshriyya land by the 'khedieves' viceroys in response to the administrivive activities, in such case the grand was free and they were enjoying tax exemption. ¹⁴

¹¹ Baer, G.: Studies in the Social History of Modern Egypt, Chicato 1969, pp.30-31.

¹² Abdul-Rahman al-Jabarti: A'jaib el-Athar fi al-Tarajim wal-Akhbar, Bulaq ed., Vol. I, pgg; Vol. II, p.152.

¹³ Ibid, Vol. IV, p.332.

¹⁴ Raouf Abbas : al-Nizam al-Ijtima'î fi Misr fi Zil al-Milkiyyat el-Zira'îyya al-Kabira, Dar-ul-Fikr al-Hadith, Cairo 1973, pp.86-90.

II. Socio-economic position

It has been obvious that the wealth of *gōnō* and *a'yan* came from different sources, such fact characterized the socio-economic position of each stratum within its society.

Since the late period of Tokugawa *gōnōs* gradually liquidated their farming operations as tenancy developed, and in some cases withdrew entirely from the management of land though not from its ownership, the scale of which they steadily expanded. Being partly freed from the supervision of cultivation, they increasingly turned their activity to trade and industry, both were rapidly expanding fields that offered opportunities for investment. Smith states that some Tokugawa writers had suggested that the money of wealthy peasants came mainly from non-agricultural sources. Most of *gōnō* were engaged in dyeing textiles or making sake or vegetable oil or operate pawnshops.¹⁵

Some of the leading entrepreneurs in the early Meiji were descendants of *gōnō*, they came into contact with the West and influenced by Western ideas. Almost such individuals had participated actively in political life while still on the village farm. Hara Rokurō the famous Meiji entrepreneur was the son of *gōnō*, his father owned the farm and operated a silk reeling factory before the Restoration. The Hara family, hereditary village headmen, was known for its broadmindedness and progressiveness. Shibusawa Eiichi, the greatest of all entrepreneurs, was a son of *gōnō* too. His father was a rich peasant, merchant and moneylender in the village.¹⁶ The *gōnō* who had engaged in entrepreneurship at the time of Meiji Restoration were concentrating on silk reeling, cotton spinning and food stuff industry.¹⁷

Those who became *gōnō* through trading, usury and cash cropping were often very imaginative and enterprising, they tried new ways of making money and of investing their capital. Cash crops usually provided an immediate opportunity for investment in some type of manufacturing. Investment in such activities as sake brewing, usually combined with miso and soy-sauce making, required large capital while cotton and silk spinning could be entered into with small initial investments. The rural manufacturers in the field of silk and cotton textiles divided the tenants and landless laborers with raw materials and some working capital.

Satō Gentabei of Kakeda village in Fukushima was a typical highly successful rich peasant, manufacturer and trader. Records of 1727 from the Satō family indicate that he produced and traded sake in large quantities and did a profitable

¹⁵ Smith, T.C.: *The Agrarian Origins of Modern Japan*, Stanford, Calif., 1959, p.166.

¹⁶ Hirschmeier, J.: *The Origins of Entrepreneurship in Meiji Japan*, Harvard 1968, p.88.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, pp.90-103.

business in yarns, tea, rice and soybeans. The case of the Satō family is, of course, an extreme one, but lesser capitalists of a similar type were to be found in almost every village. In this way the rich became richer and the poor villagers became ever more dependent upon these village capitalists.¹⁸

This status continued in Meiji Era. Gōnō was transitional and precede the disintegration of their social stratum into parasitic landlords or rural capitalists.¹⁹ The percentage of tenant land continued to rise after the Restoration: from 31.1 percent in 1873 it rose to 36.8 percent in 1883, 40 percent in 1893 and 44.5 percent in 1903. Landlordings were largest in the northern sections of Japan, notably the Niigata and Akita areas, which were the chief rice producing regions.²⁰

At the same time as being landlords levying rent gōnō were also cultivating their own farms. They also displayed a mercantile aspect as side-line pawnbrokers or wholesale dealers, as well as the aspect of the rural manufacture.²¹

But the Egyptian rural gentry was bound by traditions so far investing their capital in agrarian land and agriculture and never tried new ways of making money. Some exceptions among them seeked new fields for investment. After the breakdown of monopoly system some individuals engaged in commerce especially cash cropping, others acted as contractors and suppliers. Ali el Badrawi, village sheikh of Samannūd, Gharbiyya province was a typical example of such kind. He had so far invested capital in commerce as well as in land and agriculture. In the 1850's he took over Ohda land of three villages of the same province for which he paid 160 purses of tax arrears.²²

The peak of the A'yan socio-economic influence was in the period 1869-1881. The land law which ordering the division to be made of the shares coming to each of the heirs, authorized the eldest of the family to constitute himself the mandatory (attorney) of all the other members of both sexes, whether minors or of age. These eldest of family when they came to the decision hat they would give up their lands, also gave up those that they hold in common with their fellow heirs, and thus prejudiced the rights of the latter, who had applied to the authorities and obtained a decree in 1881 ordering the division to be made of the shares to each of the heirs who were authorized to be independent. But, the provisions of that decree being contrary to usage and custom, and, above all,

¹⁸ Ibid, pp.84-85.

¹⁹ Irokava Daikichi: Freedom and the Concept of People's Rights, Japan Quarterly Vol. XIV, No.2, p.180.

²⁰ Hirschmeier, J.: Op-cit., p.108.

²¹ Irokava Daikichi: Op-cit., p.180.

²² Raouf Abbas: Op-cit., p.87.

opposed the interests of the village sheikhs whose strength lay in their landed wealth, and who dreaded the cutting-up of their lands, above all else, for fear of losing a portion of their influence, these provisions had never been carried out in general manner.²³

In addition, the A'yan attained very considerable landed property due to a combination of certain number of factors. In the first place, the part they had in classifying the lands and assessing them for taxation enabled them to derive great economic advantages for themselves. Secondly, they made loans to the peasants who were in increasingly greater need of cash as a result of the transition to market crops and the collection of taxes in cash rather than in kind. Consequently, the peasant who could not pay their debt lost their property to the creditor and became tenants. Thirdly, the sheikhs' rule in the village enabled them to gain great economic benefits in that period of intensified agricultural development; they leased out their holdings which were beyond their capacity to cultivate; their lands got priority in irrigation and were the first to be cultivated by the peasants almost without pay. Finally, they took the advantage of the peasants illiteracy: often serving as intermediaries in marketing the produce of the peasants or in hiring them out to plantations and sugar mills, they kept a good deal of the prices or wages for themselves.²⁴

Unlike gōnō case, the A'yan of Egypt lacked the genuine of enterprise being satisfied with investing capital in agricultural land. They did not support the projects of establishing a national bank or trying industrial enterprises. Agricultural companies were the most attractive field of investment for them. In 1895 an agricultural company specializing in producing sugar-cane was founded at Mallawi, Asitūt provides the value of its assets was £E200 thousand. Most of its shares were held by Tūni Mohamed Bey a rural notable. In 1897 some A'yan established another agricultural company to buy up the Da'îra Saniyya estates of Beba and al-Fashn for £E1,250,000.²⁵

Both the Japanese gōnō and the Egyptian A'yan had enjoyed similar social prestige in their communities. In the later period of Tokugawa Japan the gōnō were the wealthiest class within the rural society. They lived in the style of the city rich, welcomed crop failures for the opportunity of buying up land at distress prices and corrupted officials with gifts and bribes. In various ways gōnō were taking on the social characteristics of the warrior class. The most important distinction between the warrior and the peasant was that only the warrior had the right to bear a surname and to wear a sword. By the early nineteenth century both the Shogunate and the Han governments as a financial

²³ Artin, Y.: Op-cit., pp.65-66.

²⁴ Baer G.: Op-cit., p.50.

²⁵ Raouf Abbas: Op-cit., p.167.

measure were resorting to the sale of the right to both arms and names to the wealthy peasants.²⁶ Hence they became ringleaders in uprisings against the heavy tax burdens or the trading monopolies of some Han government such as Satsuma.

In Egypt the social prestige of the A'yan was depending mainly on their landed property and administrative functions. Since the mid-nineteenth century A'yan had more opportunity to join the bureaucracy. In addition to those who were despatched to Europe in the 1820's to get training and then joined the government service Clot Bey stated that around the end of Mohamed Ali's rule, village sheikhs were appointed as Nazir Qism (county headman) but the rank of Mūdîr (prefect) was in the hands of Turco-Circassians.²⁷ Under Saîd, the share of the A'yan in the administrative positions was one third of Nazir Qism and one quarter of Mūdîr ranks. The rest was kept for the Turco-Circassians. It was at the time of Saîd when the sons of the village sheikhs were conscripted and they had to be promoted up to the rank of Qaîmaqam (Colonel). The officers contributed to the Arabi revolution 1881-1882 were almost sons of village sheikhs who had been conscripted under Saîd. By the decline of the Turco-Circassian element from the 1870's most of the Mūdîr positions were held by the A'yan.²⁸ Their way of living changed to be similar to that of the Turco-Circassian landlords and the gap between them and the peasants became wider.

III. Role in Politics

Having a distinguished socio-economic position, the rural gentry of Japan and Egypt had intensive role in politics equivalent to their power and the development of both countries.

Since the early Tokugawa period the gōnō had been Liberate, but by the last century of the period the literacy of wealthy peasants in many cases went far beyond its former utilitarian limits. Gōnō began to cultivate the fine arts and invade the field of scholarship, all previously were monopolized by the warriors and the city rich. Of the various arts that wealthy peasants cultivated in the late Tokugawa period--such as poetry, painting, calligraphy-- the military arts were the least proper of all to their class. They had studied swordsmanship under the itinerant samurai and masterless warriors. Such training lessened the psychological distance between wealthy peasants and warriors.²⁹ This may have prepared the way for a political alliance of the two elements during the crisis the country faced in the last decades of Tokugawa rule and created the motive

²⁶ Smith, T.C.: *The Agrarian Origins of Modern Japan*, pp.176-177.

²⁷ Clot Bey: *Aperçu Général Sur L'Egypte*, Tome 2, Paris 1840, pp.186-187.

²⁸ Raouf Abbas: *Op.cit.*, pp.81-82.

²⁹ Smith, T.C.: *Op.cit.*, pp.177-179.

power of the Meiji Restoration. But a gap has been opened gradually between the gōnō and the mass of peasants.

In as much as democratic participation in politics by the people was not achieved by the Restoration, such participation was strongly demanded and it has taken the form of the Freedom and People's Rights Movement ("Jiyū Minken Undo") which arose about ten years later. The movement began as anti-government movement by a very small number of ex-samurai intellectuals. But after the Satsuma Rebellion of 1877 the power of the military class declined decisively and the main stream of the movement gradually shifted into the hands of gōnō. There after the movement went on to become nationwide involving peasants and towns- people with the gōnō stratum co-operating with the certain section of the military class intellectuals.

The Kokkai Kisei Dōmei, a nationwide organization devoted to the cause of establishing a national assembly, was formed. Political societies were also established in all parts of the country, and those political societies which "Were well-known numbered more than 150 at the period. Political meetings and study societies flourished in the countryside: where peasantry were passionate for learning.

We have some instances of leading gōnō from East Japan which provide us with basic information about their involvement in the People's Rights Movement. Hosono Kiyoshiro of Ogawa-mura in northern Tama could be a prominent example of the kind. He was born in 1854 for a gōnō who has been hereditary headman of that village. In 1877 he presented a position to the government on behalf of Ogawa-mura calling for the opening of national assembly. At the same time he combined with like-minded gōnō in nearly villages to organize a study society called the Takumakai and began studies of politics. These study societies usually comprised between 20 and 30 members but there were some with more than hundred members. Their own expenses were met by the help of gōnō such as Hosono. In practice their meetings were open to the public and they welcomed the participation of the masses. Such societies which started as books reading groups made up from a small number of gōnō came to have the appearance of schools for politics for all adult villagers without distinction and then developed into provincial political societies. The nationwide movement for the opening of a national assembly was supported by these political societies.

Through the development of the People's Rights Movement 1878 - 1881 the differences between the two leading elements; liberals and reformers meant nothing, both were supporting the nationwide movement and affording political ideas to the local gōnō movement.³⁰ The gōnō were seeking a prosperous

³⁰ At that time the metropolitan political opposition was carried through by two groups of ex-samurai;

market, sound local administration and described themselves as subjects of the people rather than objects of the politicians and looked for power.

According to Prof. Ichii Saburō of Seikei University the Minken Undo People's Rights Movement aimed at opening the Diet, freedom of speech and meeting, free and prosperous development of the private industry, decrease of land tax and taxation in general and the realization of the national independence by revising the unequal treaties with the European Powers. Such demands were interpreted in different ways by the radicals, reformers and gōnō. At the peak of the movement the three elements were sticking to these demands but by the decline of the movement after the 1881 coup d'etat differences appeared and the movement has been divided. The ex-samurai intellectuals became rather engaged in politics whilst the gōnō extended their activities to economic and cultural fields. The position of the gōnō as leaders of the rural community started to be shaken. At the beginning solidarity between the gōnō and the peasants was the characteristic of the movement, but during the deflation period the class division had been sharpened and peasants began to move autonomously.

Such conditions divided the gōnō themselves into three groups:

1. The economic group contained those who denounced politics, engaged in commerce or rural manufacture and gradually increased in number.
2. Few mass-oriented politicians kept supporting the peasant's movement.
3. An isolated radical sentimental group.

When the Kommintō revolt broke out in August 1884 in Minami Tama, some leading members of the People's Rights Movement were the target of that revolt except few of them who had supported the peasants.

According to Prof. Irokawa, one third of the 44 leading members of Minami Tama Liberal Party had been elected to the prefectural Assembly. They were almost gōnō but the prominent leaders of the party came from the lower class of gōnō.

Since the 1860's the A'yan of Egypt made their appearance on the political arena. Majils Shūra al-Nūwwab the Consultant Assembly of Delegates

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1. the first resembled the local samurai intellectuals, rather radical and eager to organize local branches for the People's Rights movement all-over Japan and the Liberal Party was influenced by them.
 2. the other group contained the urban samurai intellectuals rather reformers, contributed to journalism and cultural activities were almost supporting the Constitutional Reformist Party.

see; Gakushūin-Daigaku Kindai-shi Kenkyukai: Katsudo Hōkokusho, San-tama Jiyū: Minken Undō, Shōwa 46 nendo (Tokyo 1971).

established by khedive Ismail in October 1866 was formed by A'yan holding 91% of the seats. The voting right had been exclusively authorized to the village headmen and bound by the amount of land tax they paid. Therefore the members could not oppose the government policy for about a decade. But when the financial conditions were getting worse and led to the extension of foreign control over the Egyptian Finance, the A'yan went on direct action and organized anti-government movement.

In 1876 they had collaborated with the army officers and some intellectuals in founding a secret society to be the centre of a political opposition called al-Hizb al-Watani the nationalist party. They organized a nationwide campaign against the European interference in Egypt's affairs in Press and the Assembly of Delegates, called upon the government to reduce land tax. The Assembly members decided that the budget should be checked and authorized by them.

Since the government did not meet the demands of the Assembly and decreed the session termination the members declared themselves a 'National Assembly' rejected the session termination and presented to the Khedive a memorandum demanding: elimination of the absolute rule, enforcement of a liberal Constitution, national government and the continuity of the Dualist Control in order to secure the European interest and promised the re-pay of the State Debt by their pledge .

Nevertheless the national movement developed and in 1881 the Arabi revolution took place. The A'yan kept supporting the revolutionary regime aimed at constitutional rule, elimination of the Turco-Circassian aristocracy and resistance of foreign interference. Thanks to Arabi revolution Egypt could get the first liberal Constitution in 1881 and the A'yan political influence increased.

When the country was seen a target of unavoidable occupation The A'yan changed their attitude. They had been divided into two groups.

1. The big landlords such as Sūltan Pasha, Ahmed Bey Abdul-Ghaffar and others joined the reactionary party, supported the khedive and offered help to the British during the invasion.
2. The bulk of the A'yan kept supporting the revolution in collaboration with the Liberal intellectuals. They never been reluctant in offering donations to the army during the military operations.

Such split characterized the condition under the British Colonial rule. Although the big landlords were rather acting in general confirmation with the occupation authorities the others were moderate and cautious being enjoying the advantages of the agricultural development under the occupation. When they had given their support to the Nationalist Party and the petition for a constitution, they

tried to avoid radical nation For them constitution meant reasonable participation in politics such as having considerable portion of government positions and extension of the functions of the constitutional bodies founded by the occupation to be authorized for deciding financial, administrative and educational affairs. Their conception of liberalism and democracy was rather different than that of the intellectuals and the people in general. For them liberalism meant equal share in power with the Turco-Circassian elite, democracy meant their legal right to represent the peasants being the natural leaders of the rural society. They stood against free elections and voting right for the mass. In a big debate upon a proposed draft submitted by some liberal-oriented members of the Legislative Council upon the election of village headmen by peasants the members rejected the draft claimed that the people were not enough matured to enjoy such right.³¹

Conclusion

In conclusion, the rural gentry in the nineteenth Japan and Egypt made their appearance in accordance with the economic development of their countries. Though differences between the Japanese experience and the Egyptian one were considerable the role of such stratum in domestic affairs had been distinguished.

Since the early Tokugawa era, there were several (Zai Kataichi) local regular fairs covered three of six villages regularly in turn. From the middle of that era such function had been replaced by local merchants and the fair became rather regulated and stationed in towns. Many districts had had experience of commercialization in the later Tokugawa period. Whilst the situation in Egypt before the nineteenth century was absolutely different, each village was a self-sustained unit and the commerce had been the business of several merchants mainly dealing with transit trade. The guilds were self-controlled units in the towns producing and dealing with certain commodities.

The merchant class of late Tokugawa days naturally played an important role in developing industrial and commercial firms. In these they were joined by the old Daimyō and also by many samurai who had chosen business as their new means of livelihood. Though Meiji government directly developed and controlled certain services, such as the railways, the telegraph system and other public utilities, the government aided many new enterprises and industries by loans or by various other means.

But in Egypt's Mohamed Ali the wealthy merchants and rich guilds were confiscated and a strict monopoly system had been enforced. The creation of a large-scale industry was absolutely developed and controlled by the government to meet the military demands. Therefore, after the breakdown of the monopoly

³¹ Raouf Abbas: Op-cit., pp.190-247.

system in 1840's the country could not afford a native substitute and hence former Egypt had been the field of European investment, became rather connected with the world market and could not develop a national market.

However the development of a market economy and of private ownership of land made the wealth and power of the A'yan but these had been declined mainly as a result of the restriction of their fiscal and political authority under the British occupation. Whilst the gōnō took the advantage of the natural development acted as absentee landlords, entrepreneurs and rural manufacturers.