unwittingly signed away their greatest material asset. The evidence seems to be mounting. The only problem is that neither of these sources attempts to prove its assertions, and the sources cited by these sources do not, either.

The following decade John Ruedy's chapter on the alienation of landed properties in the nineteenth century, part of a 1971 collection edited by Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, lucidly presents all the elements of the paradigm of failure: peasants' fear of taxes, fear of conscription, and consequent mass evasion of land registration; the falsification of ownership deeds, and the result: the creation of a class of landless farmers.

> Rightly fearing that the tax collector and army recruiter would make effective use of the new [land] registers and hardly understanding the enormous importance of the new records and deeds to their own future, when the implementing regulations of the code began to be applied, they evaded massively and stubbornly. The least harmful course a peasant could take was to register the land in the name of a fictitious or long-dead individual. This approach merely confused the records and successions, making his subsequent tenure insecure. More dangerously, he did nothing, allowing local town merchants, frequently the tax farmers, to file whole strings of villages in their own names. In other cases the peasant positively encouraged the city magnates to take title. […] Since the Ottoman Land Code of 1858 made no provisions at all for mediating the relationship between landlord and tenant, thousands of peasants from the 1870s onward found themselves in fact deprived of the most minimal rights of tenure as they became increasingly under the control of the owner, who might be landlord, tax collector, and moneylender combined.[8]

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[8] John Ruedy, "Dynamics of Land Alienation" in Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, ed., *The Transformation of Palestine: Essays on the Origin and Development of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1971), 119-138 (quote from p. 124).