

In Ras el-Tin the only variation on this pattern was the alienation of the best village lands (including a substantial plain surrounding the village built-up area) to the Barghuti clan in the last decade of the 19th century. The Barghuti clan was also the first in the village to send migrants abroad. In the fifties, members of the clan migrated to Lebanon, where many of them became building workers and hotel and restaurant attendants in the city of Beirut. This was followed by larger waves of migration in the sixties and seventies to the Gulf, Latin America, and Germany, this time including both Barghutis and Fallahin. Migration created a new source of wealth in the village which radically changed the importance of land ownership as a source of social differentiation -- given the meagre yields of the reduced plot holdings by the middle of this century.

Today Ras el-Tin is a "poor" village compared with the surrounding towns in the Ramallah district, but not untypical of the average village in the hilly regions of the West Bank. It has several natural springs but no waterpipe and no irrigated agriculture. Of the 5,000 dunums of cultivated land under village control, 4,500 dunums are planted with olive trees (of those only 3,500 dunums are productive), the remaining 500 dunums are planted with fig trees, almonds, grape vines, wheat and barley, lentils and fave beans. All yields, aside from olives and olive oil, are subsistence crops. There are at the moment three old olive presses, one of which is also used as a grain mill. Electricity is supplied for a few hours in the evening from privately-owned generators which are shared between several families.

Aside from the olive presses, the only form of productive investment in Ras el-Tin is a chicken farm which markets its produce in Ramallah and four all-purpose village stores whose owners make credit arrangements (including loans with high interest terms) with their clients.