

## The Disappearing Peasants of Natufa

Demographic changes exemplified by high emigration and serious disparities in age-sex grouping composition have had a major impact on the social structure of the agrarian regime in Natufa. When Eliahu Grant visited the village during Ottoman rule (c. 1905) it was a predominantly agricultural community with rich olive groves and abundant fields (Grant, 1907, 1921:223ff.). Today, this is no longer the case. In 1974 only 27 households (i.e., less than 10.5% of the total population) claimed agriculture to be a main source of livelihood for the family (Table 9:4, below).

About half the households in Natufa (50.4 percent) acquire their livelihood mainly from wages and salaries of locally employed members, including those working in Israel, followed by emigrant remittances (14.5 percent of the households). Since over two-thirds of the village households have emigrant relatives the supplementation of local income by money sent from abroad is most likely to be much higher than what appears in Table 9:4. Some of this money is responsible for the increased building activities, mostly residential -- but also commercial -- which appeared in Natufa since the mid-seventies.

Table 9:4

Main Source of Income for Natufa Households

1974

Source of Income	No. of Households	% of Households
Wages & Salaries	129	50.4*
Emigrant Remittances	37	14.5
Family Enterprises	31	12.1
Agriculture	27	10.5
Rents & Return on Property	11	4.3
Other (Charities, etc.)	21	8.2
Unknown	49	-
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS	<u>305</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Source: NHS, 1974:31. Valid Cases=256. \*Known cases only