

not only on the basis of their class, they were also discriminated against on gender and national or racial grounds as well. (14)

In fact as Table 1 shows, racial discrimination in the labour force was even higher than sexual discrimination. While Jewish women working in this industry received an average daily wage of about 182 mils, Arab men in the same job were paid an average of 95.5 mils or about half of the Jewish female wage, and 99 mils for Arab women.

The destruction of the indigenous rural economy during the first decade of British rule compounded with the 1929 World economic recession had its influence not only on the fallaheen but on other workers as well. With unemployment at its peak during this period, labourers were willing to accept any wage if only they could find work.

Speaking of a relatively prosperous section of the Arab working class in late 1920s, Simpson wrote:

These men..had enjoyed a certain measure of ease and prosperity in the past, but [their] conditions had deteriorated during recent years. There were master-masons who used to employ a number of subordinates, yet now are only not in a position to employ any assistants, but are themselves destitute, owing to the inability to find work.(15)

Equally affected by the changes were existing wages for various sections of the working classes. The drop in wages among skilled workers was staggering during this period. For example, the wage rates for skilled artisans, carpenters and stone-dressers fell by 50 per cent in 1930. (16) A similar situation emerged among workers in the indigenous industries who had previously enjoyed relative prosperity. A survey published in 1937 revealed that while a laborer in a sea-shell factory used to receive 250-600 mils per day between 1919-1925,