tarian class.[74] Arab employment by British productive capital reached its peak during World War II, when the British colonial authorities for the first time invested in Arab industry and agriculture.

In an article titled, "Wartime Development of the Arab Economy in Palestine," Z. Abramovitz writes:

"During World War II, the increased economic activity in Palestine brought about by British demands for food and military supplies and British investments in buildings, roads and fortifications attracted substantial numbers from rural areas into the much increased Arab labor force. The number of wage-earners employed by the British increased from 15,578 in January, 1939, to 76,548 in December, 1942....Thousands of workers who were hitherto employed on their own land in their village were transformed into wage-earners working for the Government. Thousands of them were trained as skilled workers." 75

This is to say, the size of Palestinian wage labor force employed by British capital in 1942 was equivalent to the size of Palestinian wage labor force penetrating the Israeli-Jewish economy from occupied Gaza and West Bank in 1972. The growth in British demand for Arab labor was, however, only temporary. The fluctuation in the demand for Palestinian-Arab labor during the Yishuv is absolutely phenomenal: 5,000 in 1925, compared to 11,000 in 1929; 33,000 in 1935; 3,029 in 1936; 15,578 in 1939; and 76,548 in 1942.

These fluctuations in the employment of Palestinian labor suggest that it may not be accurate simply to attribute the non-configuration of a Palestinian proletariat as a significant social force with a distinct class interest during the Yishuv to Zionist labor policy alone, as the 1942 figures point to a deeper explanation: the state of development and requirements of the Palestinian forces and relations of production. If the absorptive capacity of the productive forces at the disposal of the Jewish Yishuv were to exceed the requirements of Aliyah absorption, the boycott of Arab labor slogan could never have been applied. In fact, we notice the develop-