Editors' Preface

This book is a collection of articles written by the journalist Dorothy Kahn Bar-Adon (1907–1950). From among hundreds of articles, three unpublished book-length manuscripts, and personal letters found in her archive, we have chosen materials representing a variety of burning issues of the time.

Dorothy Ruth Bar-Adon (née Kahn) was raised in a Reform Jewish milieu in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Atlantic City, New Jersey. After completing high school, she was employed as a journalist by the *Atlantic City Press*. Simultaneously she became interested in Zionism—although she did not belong to a specific Zionist organization—and in 1933 immigrated to Palestine, where she was employed as a staff journalist by *The Palestine Post* (later *The Jerusalem Post*) until her death in 1950. The opening chapter contains biographical material that provides context for Bar-Adon's writings.

Bar-Adon succeeded in sharing with her readers the sights, sounds, and smells of Palestine/Israel as she experienced them. Although Bar-Adon spoke and understood Hebrew, she wrote in English; indeed, most of her published material appeared in *The Palestine Post*, the only local English-language daily newspaper. Materials from the *Post* are available online in the paper's archives. However, most of the materials in this collection were never published, although—as noted in the bibliographical information accompanying the various articles—versions of some did appear in the *Post*.

In comparison to the majority of journalists living and working in Palestine in the period of 1933–1950, Bar-Adon was unusual in two ways. Firstly, she was not committed to any of the highly partisan Jewish-Zionist organizations of the time. Her writing was thus free of the partisan commitment that characterized almost all of the Hebrew-language daily press: indeed, most of Israel's earliest daily Hebrew-language newspapers were

unabashedly sponsored by political parties. Her writing thus provides documentation generally unmediated by political, ideological considerations.

Secondly, most of the documentation of the period of the British Mandate that dealt with the Yishuv as a whole, with the new Jewish settlements, and with the developing conflicts between Jews, Arabs, and the Mandatory authorities was written by men. Although Bar-Adon herself does not appear to have what would later be called a feminist agenda, she often brought to her observations and writing different emphases from those of her male colleagues.

Indeed, Bar-Adon was received into circles that would have been closed to others: as a woman she was able to speak with Arab women; as one who wrote in English she gained entry to offices of British government authorities. Her interlocutors spoke to her with openness; Bar-Adon was thus enabled to write about daily life and culture in the Jewish and Arab towns and villages, the status of women in a variety of communities, Jewish immigration to Palestine, and the Jewish-Arab conflict as it was being played out under British rule. Years before practitioners of academic disciplines developed theories of high and low politics, political sociology, and social and cultural history, Bar-Adon produced writings that constitute valuable raw materials for these areas of study.

It is our belief that these articles will be of use to students and scholars of the period during which they were written.

EDITORS' NOTE: BAR-ADON'S USAGE

Dorothy Kahn Bar-Adon worked as a journalist for approximately twenty years: from the late 1920s to the early 1930s until her death in 1950. In other words, her career began some eighty years ago and came to an end well over half a century ago. It is therefore only to be expected that some twenty-first century readers will feel uncomfortable with Bar-Adon's use of certain words and expressions that were common usage at the time but have since become unacceptable in the context in which she used them. One example is *primitive*, in reference to *people hailing from pre-technological societies*. Another example is *colonials*, in reference to *people residing in a country or territory governed by a foreign power*.

The articles written by Bar-Adon contained in this collection were chosen for their historical interest. They should, in other words, be read as products of a particular situation, time, and place: a journalist writing in English about Mandatory Palestine/ Israel in the 1930s to 1940s. The editors therefore did not see fit to make changes in the author's lexical choices. Rather, we appeal to the reader to understand the occasional discomfiting usage as a sign that Bar-Adon—as is the case with most, or even all, working journalists—was indeed a woman of her time.

SOURCES

The materials in this collection are from Dorothy Kahn Bar-Adon's personal archive and generally were not previously published (although versions of some of the articles were published during her lifetime). Much of these materials come from two unpublished manuscripts: Zif Zif and Inhabitants of the Rock.

Bar-Adon's final illness was sudden, and her only son and executor was a child at the time of her death. Thus there are occasional texts for which dating is problematic. When the date of composition could not be determined, the material is undated. (In some cases, events mentioned in the text enabled us to provide tentative dates).

The editors are deeply grateful to Doron Bar-Adon for making his mother's archive available.