

## ABSTRACT

Kathleen Kenyon, John Allegro, and the Dead Sea Scrolls: The Challenges of Politics and Preservation in 1960s Jerusalem

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The Dead Sea Scrolls have been a source of fascination since their initial discovery in 1947. They have also been a source of controversy among scholars who debate their origin and significance. This thesis highlights a little-known conflict between two British scholars, Kathleen Kenyon and John Allegro, in the quest to conserve, publish, and exhibit the Dead Sea Scrolls. A thorough examination of correspondence written between 1960-1969, housed in the Kathleen Kenyon Archaeology Collection at Baylor University, reveals two opposing sides in the debate concerning how the scrolls should be handled. While Allegro was of the opinion that the text and translation of the scrolls found in Cave 11 should immediately be published and placed on exhibition in England and the US, Kenyon and her colleagues disagreed, preferring a more careful approach since the delicate scrolls were desperately in need of conservation work to keep them from disintegrating entirely. Kenyon and Allegro's correspondence and their disagreements about the Dead Sea Scrolls highlight many of the struggles that still plague archaeologists today: the difficulties of political or bureaucratic involvement in research, the fight to gain academic recognition through publication, the ethical distribution of information, and the proper ownership and care of valuable artifacts.

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CHALLENGES OF POLITICS AND PRESERVATION IN 1960S JERUSALEM

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## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

This thesis began as a conversation after my Hebrew I class one day, when Dr. Fulton approached me with the idea of doing research on the Kathleen Kenyon Archaeology Collection in the Moody Library Special Collections at Baylor University. The collection came to Baylor through the efforts of Dr. Bruce Cresson from the Religion Department and Professor Edward Dalglish from the English Department, who worked together on the university's behalf to purchase a portion<sup>1</sup> of Kenyon's possessions – 1,300 books and 76 boxes of personal papers – from the auction of her estate. Baylor does not really have anything to do with Kenyon beyond a general interest in Biblical and Near Eastern archaeology, but Dr. Cresson in particular felt that it was too good an opportunity to pass up. For several years, the collection stayed in the basement of Tidwell Bible Building untouched, until it was eventually moved to Moody Library where it could be more properly cared for.

When Dr. Fulton and I began exploring the collection in 2016, few scholars had previously utilized it for research – namely, one Ph.D. student under Dr. Cresson, and Miriam C. Davis, a historian and researcher who published a biography on Kenyon in 2008 using information from Baylor's collection. Only a rudimentary inventory of its contents had been made, however: hundreds of articles written by Kenyon and many of her colleagues, thousands of notecards on pottery and other archaeological artifacts, photographs and manuscripts of Kenyon's published works (primarily *Digging Up Jericho*), and – of greatest interest to us – records and personal correspondence detailing

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<sup>1</sup>Other Kenyon collections are located at the British Museum, University College London Institute of Archaeology, Manchester Museum, and the Kenyon Institute of Archaeology in Jerusalem.

Kenyon's time as a member of the Board of Trustees for the Palestine Archaeological Museum (PAM) in Jerusalem. As part of her trustee duties, Kenyon was involved in decisions about the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), which were housed in the PAM, and how they should be published, exhibited, and conserved.

Our examination of Kenyon's correspondence has revealed a wealth of information not only about Kenyon and the DSS, but also about the world of 1960s Near Eastern archaeology in general. It was a tumultuous time, as various nations vied for power over Palestinian territory. Archaeologists and scholars were territorial as well, especially where publicity and the DSS were involved, and there were many squabbles over interpretation, preservation, and ownership. For Kenyon in particular, the challenges of ensuring the safety of such important artifacts were innumerable, and the DSS monopolized a large portion of her time and attention for over a decade. Kenyon is well known for her contributions to the archaeological method and her excavations of the Biblical sites of Jericho and Jerusalem, but her involvement with the DSS is largely forgotten. This thesis attempts to bring to the foreground a period in the history of the Dead Sea Scrolls and in Kenyon's life that is worthy of more attention.

Chapter Two will provide a background of Kathleen Kenyon and John Allegro and give a comparison of their personalities, beliefs, and perspectives. Then, Chapter Three will detail the story of Kenyon and Allegro's first major conflict concerning the Dead Sea Scrolls and specifically the controversial contents of the Copper Scroll. Next, Chapter Four focuses on the particular political and ethical challenges that Kenyon faced in advocating for the PAM and the DSS. Finally, Chapter Five discusses Kenyon's

experiences in the context of more recent developments concerning the DSS and the curatorship of archaeological finds.



## CHAPTER TWO

### A Tale of Two Scholars

#### *Introduction*

In the history of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, there have been many key figures, but perhaps two of the most fascinating are Kathleen Kenyon and John Allegro. Kenyon was one of the most famous female archaeologists of the twentieth century, renowned for her excavations of Jericho and Jerusalem, while Allegro was a little-known Semitic scholar who rose to fame when he joined the original team of DSS translators. Both became instrumental in the story of the DSS, although for different reasons and with different outcomes; and, as a result of their contrasting academic and social backgrounds, Kenyon and Allegro often had conflicting opinions about how the DSS should be handled, cared for, and made public.

In the 1960s, the world of Near Eastern archaeology was small enough that it is unsurprising that the two crossed paths; but they did so in a way that radically changed the conversation about the DSS and their significance, publication, and preservation. In examining this conversation, it is important to consider the different backgrounds from which Kenyon and Allegro came, because they provide context for the way Kenyon and Allegro interacted with each other. Though ultimately both were passionately concerned about the well-being of the DSS, the difference in their worldviews and backgrounds meant that Kenyon and Allegro were frequently at odds. Thus, a brief overview of both scholars' lives leading up to their meeting, as well as the beliefs that shaped each

scholar's worldview, will provide a solid foundation for the analysis of the events beginning in January 1960.

*Kathleen Kenyon: A Passion for Archaeology*

Kathleen Kenyon was born in London, England on January 5, 1906 (Davis 13). From birth, Kenyon immediately had a connection to Biblical archaeology: her father was Sir Frederic Kenyon, a renowned Biblical scholar, director of the British Museum from 1909 to 1931, and president of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem (BSAJ) beginning in 1919 (14). Although Kenyon later denied that her father's career had any influence on her own career choice (30), it is clear that their family relationship afforded her many opportunities that might not have been accessible to those of a lower status. However, according to biographer Miriam C. Davis, it was Kenyon's involvement as co-president of Somerville College Archaeological Society and as the first female president of the Oxford University Archaeological Society that really pushed her towards becoming an archaeologist (26). Her first chance to gain field experience came when the Principal of Somerville College, Margery Fry, suggested that she join Gertrude Caton-Thompson's excavation at Great Zimbabwe, which were "the largest ancient stone buildings in sub-Saharan Africa" (28). This experience instilled a love for archaeology in Kenyon, shaping the course of her career.

After the Great Zimbabwe excavation, Kenyon joined an excavation led by Sir Mortimer Wheeler, a colleague of her father's, at the Roman site of Verulamium in England (Davis 42). Sir Wheeler eventually became a close friend and trusted colleague,

whose opinion Kenyon often sought, especially with regard to the Dead Sea Scrolls. Additionally, Kenyon's work with Sir Wheeler led to the development of the famous Wheeler-Kenyon method of excavation, in which the dig site is divided into five by five meter squares, with an unexcavated one meter space or "baulk" between them (Cline 38). Each square is carefully excavated and recorded, and the baulks allow for inspection of the stratigraphy of the site, or the layers of soil indicating different historical periods. Kenyon proved to have a knack for identifying and interpreting these changes, earning her the title "Mistress of Stratigraphy" (Davis 47). Throughout her career, Kenyon emphasized the importance of keeping accurate stratigraphical records – one of the points on which she and Allegro disagreed.

The techniques Kenyon learned at Verulamium influenced her excavation principles for the rest of her life, and she later wrote several books and articles about the proper training and methods of archaeological excavation, including *Beginning in Archaeology*, "An Essay on Archaeological Technique," and "Excavation Methods in Palestine." Although her work on this subject merely reflected the standards of the time, it was still a significant improvement in methodology compared to the archaeological practices of the previous century. Until the 1880s, the primary goal of archaeological excavations, usually led by theologians or Biblical scholars rather than archaeologists, was merely to "locate places mentioned in the Bible and [to] map the geography of a region" (Cline 13). Often, these scholars were focused on proving a specific theory or even finding treasure, so they would dig up sites without recording their actions, essentially destroying the historical information and value of the site. By Kenyon's time, a standard of archaeological methods had been firmly established, but treasure hunting,

looting, and selling artifacts on the growing antiquities market continued to be a serious issue, as shown in many of Kenyon's letters about the Dead Sea Scrolls, particularly concerning Allegro's activities.

In the 1930s, Kenyon worked in Samaria with John Crowfoot, the director of the BSAJ, again thanks to her father's connections both as president of the BSAJ and as a member of the Executive Committee for the Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF) (Davis 56). This was Kenyon's first introduction to the Middle East, where she would subsequently spend most of her career. She quickly became an expert in categorizing and dating pottery sherds as part of her stratigraphical work, and her published report, *The Objects of Samaria, Samaria-Sebaste*, Volume III, "quickly became the standard reference work for the chronology of Iron Age Palestine" (62). She also contributed to Volume I of the Samaria-Sebaste report, *The Buildings at Samaria* (Crowfoot).

Although she had more experience with Roman-era sites in Britain than she did with Near Eastern sites, in 1948 Kenyon became the Lecturer in Palestinian Archaeology and curator of the Petrie Collection at the Institute of Archaeology, an organization formed in 1935 by Sir Wheeler (Davis 75, 95). Technically though, she appeared unqualified for the position, because she refused to study any Ancient Near Eastern languages or scripts. Kenyon believed that a competent archaeologist had no need for theoretical knowledge, only the ability to interpret the site, and thus any texts that were found during an excavation could be sent to experts for translation (96). This was a view that brought her into conflict with multiple scholars, including Allegro; however, Kenyon's extensive field experience (and likely her status as a member of the British

elite) convinced the Institute's board that she could be a capable teacher, and she was allowed to keep the post until she left the Institute in 1961 (181).

In 1950, Kenyon was appointed Chairman of the Council and then Director of the BSAJ (Davis 103). The BSAJ was hoping to reestablish its presence in Palestine, so Kenyon suggested she begin an excavation at Jericho, a site of much interest and controversy among archaeologists and Biblical scholars (104). After receiving permission from the council, she began excavations in 1952 (107).

Jericho secured Kenyon's place as a world-renowned archaeologist. First, it was one of the first Middle Eastern sites to utilize the Wheeler-Kenyon method of archaeology, revolutionizing the interpretation of chronology in stratigraphy (Davis 106). Second, Kenyon's interpretation of the site went against traditional explanations from several other scholars. Kenyon found that there were no signs of habitation or Late Bronze Age defenses at Jericho during the time when the Biblical Joshua would have brought about their destruction (Ebeling 293), and she argued that Neolithic Jericho should be dated much earlier than previously thought, making it "the oldest town in the world" (Kenyon, *Digging Up Jericho* 23). Additionally, the discovery of several Neolithic skulls covered in clay to realistically portray human faces solidified the Jericho dig as one of the most important sites of the decade because they were "the earliest human portraits directly ancestral to modern art" (Kenyon, *Archaeology in the Holy Land* 52). Overall, Kenyon's findings established her credibility as a Near Eastern archaeologist, even more impressive because she was one of the only female archaeologists at the time to achieve that level of fame. Kathleen Kenyon was becoming a household name in archaeology (Davis 133).

In 1957, at Sir Wheeler's recommendation, Kenyon was elected as the British Academy's representative on the Board of Trustees for the Palestine Archaeological Museum, where her involvement with the Dead Sea Scrolls began. The PAM was established in 1938 by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and was an international organization dedicated to the preservation of Palestinian antiquities, most notably the DSS (Davis 162).

The Dead Sea Scrolls are one of the most well-known archaeological finds in history, but their discovery was purely accidental. In 1947, three Bedouin shepherds, named Jum'a Muhammad Khalil, Muhammad Ahmed el-Hamed ed-Dhib, and Khalil Musa, were tending their sheep near Qumran when Khalil decided to throw a rock into one of the caves, shattering something inside. Although the shepherds did not immediately enter the cave, two days later ed-Dhib returned and removed three scrolls that had been hidden in jars (VanderKam 3). Later, four more scrolls were found in the cave, and all seven were sold to a cobbler and antiquities dealer in Bethlehem named Khalil Iskander Shahin, or Kando. Kando then sold four of the scrolls to Athanasius Yeshua Samuel, a metropolitan of the Syrian Orthodox Church in Jerusalem, and the other three to Eleazar Sukenik, a professor at Hebrew University (Maggness 26).

As the demand for scrolls began to grow, more material began to appear on the market, and scholars worried that the DSS were in danger of being damaged or destroyed by amateur excavations. Additionally, the increased demand could lead to more forgeries and drive up the price of the DSS, hindering scholars' efforts to protect them. Recognizing these concerns, Gerald Lankester Harding, the chief inspector of antiquities in Jordan, and Father Roland de Vaux, director of the École Biblique et Archéologique

Française and the president of the PAM, began an official excavation of the caves and the site of Qumran in 1949 (VanderKam 9). Thus the PAM was able to obtain massive amounts of scrolls, mostly in fragments, that comprised some of the oldest Biblical texts and commentaries ever discovered. Only a select handful of scholars were invited to work on the DSS, so the fact that Kenyon was involved, even simply in an administrative capacity, is extremely impressive.

Around the time Kenyon was elected, she was finishing up her excavation at Jericho and beginning a new excavation in East Jerusalem (Davis 161). Because of her proximity to the PAM during excavation seasons, as well as her status as a trustee, Kenyon became more involved with the Dead Sea Scrolls; in particular, she focused on raising money to buy and preserve as many of the DSS as possible. It is quite possible, however, that Kenyon might not have taken as much of an interest in the DSS if she had not first come into contact, and ultimately serious conflict, with John Allegro, another British scholar.

### *John Allegro: In Pursuit of Knowledge*

John Allegro had a vastly different upbringing from Kenyon. Born in South London on February 17, 1923, Allegro was the son of a printer and artist, so his family's financial status did not allow him to hope for much of a future after graduating from high school (Brown 4). He worked at an insurance office for about a year, until World War II began and he joined the Royal Navy in search of a more exciting career (5). While his ship was stationed in the Mediterranean, Allegro fell ill and was forced to spend some time ashore at a hospital in Alexandria, Egypt. The long wait allowed him to explore the city and gain an appreciation for the Middle East, which appealed to his adventurous

nature. Newly inspired, Allegro applied to become a naval officer and was stationed on a new ship docked in Scotland for refitting (6). There he became involved in the Methodist church, and met his future wife, Joan Lawrence, whom he married in 1948 (7). After setting sail once again, Allegro formed a Methodist group on the ship, and found the comforting and intellectually stimulating companionship he craved in the midst of war, ultimately turning his career in a new direction (8).

After the war ended, Allegro began training as a Methodist minister at Hartley Victoria Methodist Training College in Manchester (Brown 19). He was particularly drawn to the exegetical courses that allowed him to examine the Bible in its original languages. Hebrew presented a singular challenge for Allegro, because the absence of vowels meant that certain words and phrases could have multiple interpretations, often depending on context. Allegro was frustrated by the flexibility of the language, and as a result he became increasingly doubtful about the accuracy and authenticity of the Bible itself. Feeling that he could not encourage the faith of others if he was not a hundred percent certain in his own faith, Allegro transferred to Manchester University for a theology degree, although he had effectively become an atheist (20). A year later, he transferred to the Semitic studies degree at Manchester and earned his master's in 1952 (21).

Allegro then began a Ph.D. program at Oxford University with Professor Godfrey Driver, one of the foremost Semitic scholars in England (Brown 21). At this time, the PAM was beginning to collect Dead Sea Scrolls material, predominantly the thousands of fragments from de Vaux and Harding's excavation of the caves at Qumran, and needed scholars to sort through, piece together, and translate them. Knowing Allegro's interest



and background studying Hebrew dialects in the Old Testament, Driver recommended him for the opportunity (26). Thrilled, Allegro traveled to Jerusalem in 1953 and stayed there for about a year to work on the scroll fragments. He also played a central role in photographing many of the manuscripts, which was important for preserving them for future generations, as well as enabling the scholars to work on their translations at home (27). As Allegro worked, he began to realize how desperately the PAM and its scholars needed funds to continue their work on the DSS, and started to come up with ideas for publicity tours and films – a path which, according to his biographer and daughter Judith Brown, “set him on a different course from the others [on the DSS team] for the rest of his life” (40), ultimately leading to conflict with Kenyon and the others at the PAM.

As Allegro’s year working on the Dead Sea Scrolls came to a close, he pushed harder than ever for Roland de Vaux’s permission to use the PAM’s material in publicity articles or even a BBC documentary (Brown 49). Although he later regretted allowing Allegro so much control over the publicity of the DSS, especially after Allegro sparked controversy by making several inaccurate and sensational claims, de Vaux granted him permission to promote the DSS because the PAM needed funds to conserve and rescue remaining fragments from the antiquities market (40). As soon as Allegro arrived home in 1954, he began writing his first book, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, which gave a general overview of the history of the DSS and their meaning and importance (Brown 51). The book was moderately successful, although it did not make any groundbreaking claims, and was a step towards promoting the public awareness of the DSS that Allegro desired. The true breakthrough came later, in the form of the Copper Scroll, which began the

series of conflicts between Allegro, Kenyon, de Vaux, and the other scholars associated with the PAM.

### *Conclusion*

Kenyon's and Allegro's contrasting backgrounds had a direct influence on their differences of opinion concerning the Dead Sea Scrolls. Most notably, their families' social status seemed to play a large role in the opportunities and recognition they received. Kenyon's status gave her access to special connections and afforded her a certain amount of respect even at the beginning of her career, while Allegro had to build his reputation from the ground up based on his scholarly achievements. This may have contributed to Allegro feeling like he was "set apart" (Brown 40) from the rest of the DSS team, and motivated him to pursue publication of the DSS to bolster his own academic reputation; unfortunately, however, he only ended up further alienating himself from Kenyon and from his colleagues. Additionally, Kenyon and Allegro had extremely different approaches to archaeological training and preservation methods. Kenyon's attitude towards methodology meant that she gained extensive hands-on experience in the field, while Allegro's experience was purely theoretical and more focused on linguistics—just the kind of scholar Kenyon both depended on for expertise but also scoffed at in terms of archaeological practice. Because she believed strongly in keeping proper excavation records and supporting one's claims with solid archaeological evidence, Kenyon considered Allegro's excavations and overall behavior concerning the DSS to be unprofessional. This motivated her to take action in reprimanding Allegro privately after their meeting, and later to do public damage control when he published unauthorized news articles on the DSS.

However, both Kenyon and Allegro were incredibly invested in the story of the Dead Sea Scrolls and recognized their importance. While Kenyon was focused mainly on the proper ownership and care of the DSS, Allegro was interested in deciphering their content and making that information available to the public. Although both of them were well-intentioned, the passion that Kenyon and Allegro shared for archaeology and for the DSS led to many disagreements. Thus, examining their backgrounds and beliefs is helpful in understanding and explaining why Kenyon and Allegro were at odds on almost everything related to the Dead Sea Scrolls, beginning with their first encounter in January 1960.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Controversy and the Copper Scroll

#### *Introduction*

The content of the Dead Sea Scrolls caused a considerable amount of controversy as they were translated, particularly between Allegro, the other DSS scholars, and the wider scholarly community, including Kenyon. Because of Allegro's interpretations of the Copper Scroll and other DSS, he had a different view than the rest of the DSS team on the significance of the DSS and the best way to research and preserve them. Allegro wanted to be at the forefront of the action, carrying out excavations to test his theories; however, Kenyon and others objected to his lack of archaeological training and viewed his unscientific "treasure hunting" as a danger to important archaeological sites, as well as a disgrace to the profession. Allegro also pushed to publicize the DSS as widely as possible in order to raise funds for their continued preservation, but the rest of the DSS scholars at the PAM worried that distributing information about the DSS prematurely could actually hinder their fundraising efforts by creating competition in the antiquities market. Though Kenyon and Allegro both wanted to protect the scrolls, each believed their own path was superior. The correspondence housed in Moody Library at Baylor University indicates that Kenyon viewed Allegro's particular code of ethics as hasty and selfish, ultimately resulting in more harm to the DSS cause than benefit.

### *The Copper Scroll*

Kenyon and Allegro's conflict began as a result of the discovery of the Copper Scroll in 1953 (Brown 60). Written on thin sheets of copper that were rolled up and hidden in Cave 3, the Copper Scroll presented a challenge for the DSS team because it had started to corrode over the centuries, and was too fragile to unroll (Cline 96). Scientists from several different universities could not find a suitable solution to the problem, until in 1955 Allegro, at the PAM's request, contacted the principal of the Manchester College of Technology, who suggested that the scrolls be brought there to be cut into several sections (Brown 61). Allegro supervised the opening process and therefore was the first scholar to read the Copper Scroll and publish a translation (Brown 63), although the official translation was assigned to another DSS scholar, Father J.T. Milik (Davis 163). The scroll contained a list of sixty-four valuable treasures—gold, silver, and other precious materials—and directions to the location of each (Cline 96). Allegro theorized that this treasure was the missing treasure of the Second Temple and could still be found (Davis 163).

Although Allegro had made what he believed to be a groundbreaking discovery, he was unable to immediately publicize his findings, because Roland de Vaux and the PAM's board of trustees asked him to remain silent until Milik could verify the translation, fearing that the word "treasure" would spark an outbreak of treasure hunting and destruction of historic sites (Brown 68-73). Additionally, there were also some issues with Allegro's interpretation of his assigned translation of a *peser*, or commentary, on Nahum (72-73). Several of the DSS outlined the teachings and practices of the Essenes, a sect of Judaism with some similarities to Christianity (Cline 95), and Allegro's

scroll fragments mentioned an Essenic “Teacher of Righteousness” who, like Jesus, would be crucified and later resurrected (Brown 73). The idea that the Essenic tradition could have inspired Christianity was not new: André Dupont-Sommer had suggested this in his 1951 publication *Observations sur le Manuel de Discipline découvert près de la Mer Morte*, and even earlier, in 1910, Rabbi Solomon Schechter published a section of the Cairo Genizah that described the Teacher of Righteousness, whom Schechter compared to Jesus (Jenkins). However, because of Allegro’s additional credibility as a member of the official DSS team with special access to the scrolls, de Vaux and the other scholars worried that an interpretation that casted doubt on the origins of Christianity could cause unwanted controversy (Brown 73).

In January of 1956, Allegro gave three BBC radio talks on the DSS and their discovery, historical context, and significance (Brown 76). While his talks were very informative in other regards, Allegro’s dramatic retelling of the crucifixion of the Teacher of Righteousness did indeed produce the scandal that the other DSS scholars anticipated, as various Christian groups responded in outrage, sensing a threat to Christianity’s unique character (77). De Vaux and Harding were upset that Allegro had not consulted them before talking about the DSS in public, and furthermore, because of some references he had made in the talks, they assumed that he had broken his vow of silence regarding the Copper Scroll (80). Since de Vaux and the other scholars were skeptical of Allegro’s claims and wanted to distance themselves from controversy, they published a letter in *The Times* publicly denouncing Allegro’s theories: “...we have reviewed all the pertinent materials, published and unpublished. We are unable to see in the texts the ‘findings’ of Mr. Allegro ... It is our conviction that either he has misread

the texts or he has built up a chain of conjectures which the materials do not support” (Brown 92). Besides disagreeing with Allegro’s translations, the other members of the DSS team, specifically Milik, appeared to be particularly annoyed that he had taken over an area of publication that was not rightfully his. Furthermore, because the entire DSS team was composed of men from various Christian denominations, Allegro’s renunciation of his earlier Methodist beliefs and his increasing hostility towards the church further isolated him from the group. Before the BBC broadcasts, Allegro had already begun to voice his doubts and eventual disdain for Christianity, telling another DSS scholar, “I wouldn’t worry about that theological job if I were you. By the time I’ve finished there won’t be any church left for you to join” (75). From the DSS team’s point of view, Allegro was not only incorrect in his interpretations but was also attempting to undermine their faith and the faith of millions of people, many of whom were extremely interested in the DSS and were a major source of funds. Allegro, on the other hand, was shocked that his academic reputation had been called into question, especially after he had discussed his theories at length with several of his DSS colleagues (72-77). Although Allegro continued his work on the DSS team, his relationship with the other scholars was never the same, and he was quick to blame every delay and difficulty related to the scrolls on the obstinacy or religious views of his superiors, often in a very public manner.

Over the next couple years, Allegro began to grow impatient for an official statement and translation of the Copper Scroll. The wait was holding up several publications that he was working on, including *The Dead Sea Scrolls* and another book called *The Treasure of the Copper Scroll*, which was not published until 1960, five years

after the Copper Scroll was first opened (Brown 98-100). Allegro wanted the DSS published as soon as possible, since he believed that “the scrolls were part of everyone’s heritage because of the light they shed on the origins of Christianity” (70). To Allegro, it seemed logical that accurate information about the DSS should be immediately available to everyone, because they were relevant to everyone; and additionally, the more the public knew about the DSS, the more they could contribute to funding the preservation of the scrolls for posterity. But as Allegro waited, he became increasingly convinced that the other scholars on the DSS team were trying to withhold information from the public. In 1958, he interviewed with the *Sunday Express* for an article titled “Expert on Biblical Manuscripts Hits Out at Roman Catholics: Are Secrets of DSS Being Held Up?,” in which he pointed out that “At present there are five Roman Catholic priests, two Presbyterians, and one Lutheran minister, and only one agnostic [Allegro himself] in the team. No material is made available to the editors until Father de Vaux ... has seen it first” (Reece). This article was the first of many claims Allegro would make about possible conspiracies within the PAM, and resulted from Allegro’s growing distrust of the DSS team after their public denouncement of his theories. As an agnostic, Allegro likely viewed himself as the only truly impartial member of the team, and so from that point forward, he decided to inform the public about the DSS himself, and to search for the treasures listed in the Copper Scroll.

### *Treasure Hunting: Kenyon Steps In*

In 1960, Allegro organized a preliminary expedition to look for some of the locations of the Copper Scroll treasures, sponsored by the *Daily Mail* with approval from the Jordanian government (Brown 120). One of the locations that Allegro surveyed was



a Hellenistic-period tomb in the Kidron Valley in Jerusalem, commonly referred to as the Tomb of Zadok. At this time, Kenyon happened to be beginning her own excavations in Jerusalem, and on January 6, 1960, she “observed activities ... in the valley below, and went down to have a look. What I saw can only be described as a rabbit burrow, from which no one could derive any scientific information” (KK to FF, 14 Apr. 1960). The exact details of their encounter are unclear; no mention of it is made in Allegro’s biography, and Kenyon writes only that it was a very short conversation because Allegro was incredibly rude to her (KK to RDV, 28 Jan. 1960). However, Kenyon made her opinion of Allegro’s activities quite clear in a letter she sent to him later that day, saying:

I wonder if you realise the enormity of what you are doing. You are no more qualified to dig for antiquities than I should be to edit a fragment of the Dead Sea Scrolls. What you are doing is exactly comparable as regards the destruction of evidence as if I were to cut up a manuscript with a pair of scissors without any prior record of its contents. (KK to JA, 6 Jan. 1960).

After this initial encounter, Kenyon was not concerned with the controversy between Allegro and the other DSS scholars; she was solely focused on Allegro’s violation of archaeological practices. But in his response to Kenyon a few days later, Allegro sidestepped the issue:

...it is clear that you wrote without accurate information on either the personnel nor the nature and extent of our mission. Not the least among your misconceptions is the idea that the excavations now being carried on in the Kidron Valley are my sole responsibility. In fact, they are the work of the Jordanian Department of Antiquities ... as the result of a long-standing arrangement with Dr. Awni Dajani, the Director. (JA to KK, 10 Jan. 1960).

Rather than addressing Kenyon’s allegations of treasure hunting, Allegro defended his activities as being sanctioned by the Jordanian government. Adding insult to injury, the Director of Antiquities mentioned above had been one of Kenyon’s students at Jericho

(Davis 163). When Kenyon complained to Dajani, he suggested that the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem should provide a trained archaeologist to assist Allegro's expedition (KK to RDV, 28 Jan. 1960). Though Kenyon did not want an official partnership with Allegro, she agreed that Dajani's suggestion was fair, especially since Allegro had already done even more damage at Qumran, where he had interfered with de Vaux's excavation of the site (KK to FF, 14 Apr. 1960).

Unfortunately, Kenyon was unable to stop Allegro from excavating entirely, and his activities were extremely prominent as a result of his newspaper sponsorship. The *Daily Mail* sent along a reporter, Ralph Izzard, who covered the events of the trip in his series *Gold Hunt in the Holy Land*. Kenyon must have been frustrated by the series, which framed the story as if there was no doubt that the contents of the Copper Scroll would lead to the treasure of the Second Temple (Izzard, "It Began With a Gun Battle"). However, Izzard admitted that the trip had some serious negative consequences: "We had known that there had been a serious 'leak' about our activities. Wild, exaggerated rumours had spread throughout Jordan that we knew the exact location of a huge fortune in gold" ("It Began With a Gun Battle"). According to Izzard, Bedouins were following the search party in hopes of being led to the treasure, and at one point, the party had to fend them off with weapons ("It Began With a Gun Battle"). But while Allegro's expedition did discover possible evidence of a garden near the tomb of Zadok, which Izzard incorrectly inferred was both the site of the Garden of Gethsemane and Jesus's tomb ("Is This the Real Tomb of Christ?"), no actual treasure was found and the party was plagued by bad luck for the rest of the trip, facing rock slides, snakes and scorpions, and storms ("We Beat the Demons of Khirbet Mird"). Although Izzard did his best to

turn the events of the trip into exciting reading, the results were largely disappointing, and ultimately the reach of the expedition was limited by bureaucratic red tape, as Allegro could not get permission to excavate at the Dome of the Rock, which he claimed would be “the best chance of solving the mystery of the Copper Scroll” (Izzard, “We Telephone the Valley of the Shadow of Death”). Though it was probably for the best that Allegro did not find any treasure, he had still effectively revealed valuable information that endangered future DSS discoveries by encouraging treasure hunting.

Allegro’s activities did not stop there, nor did Kenyon’s involvement, for in December of 1960 he returned to Jordan, this time sponsored by *The Sunday Times* (Allegro, “New DSS Search”). Once again, Kenyon called attention to the fact that Allegro was not a qualified or responsible archaeologist, writing to the editor of *The Sunday Times* that,

Dr. Allegro knows nothing of archaeological method, as I know from seeing some of his digging and from reports of other work. He is not even enough in touch with the archaeological world to know that it is not done to dig holes in a floor and pull down a wall on a site excavated by another man, even if you are searching for treasure ... The day is long past in which the only qualification required for an excavator in Palestine is to be a professor of Semitic Languages. (KK to Editor of *Sunday Times*, 20 Dec. 1960).

Unfortunately, *The Sunday Times* did not publish Kenyon’s letter, and merely responded that they had nothing to do with the organization of the expedition as they were “interested only in the journalistic by-product” (Hodson to KK, 28 Dec. 1960). Kenyon’s second attempt to stop Allegro had been thwarted.

The next year, Kenyon heard that once again, Allegro was planning to return to Jordan to explore more of the Qumran caves. Sir Mortimer Wheeler advised her to send her trusted student and colleague, Peter Parr, to keep an eye on Allegro and prevent him

from doing any damage (MW to KK, 29 Jul. 1961). Kenyon agreed, although she was frustrated at having to waste Parr's time and talent on a project that she did not endorse (KK to MW, 4 Aug. 1961). She also attempted to prevent Allegro from coming to Jordan at all by asking the British Ambassador to Jordan, John Henniker-Major, to request the Foreign Minister to reject Allegro's visa, although she recognized that this was an extreme measure (KK to JHM, 4 Aug. 1961). However, Kenyon was correct in recognizing that Allegro's activities could not only damage the excavation sites themselves, but also the work the BSAJ and the PAM were doing to obtain more of the DSS on the antiquities market. Allegro's continued presence in Jordan would likely alert treasure hunters to the location of scrolls, as well as drive up their price, which could prevent them from being purchased by institutions that could preserve them properly (KK to MW, 4 Aug. 1961). Kenyon did everything within her power to ensure that Allegro did not make any truly disastrous moves, and she tried to control any damage resulting from his frequent publications.

In Kenyon's opinion, the problems with Allegro arose because he had an inflated sense of his own importance on the Scrolls team, and was thus encouraged to operate on his own (KK to FF, 14 Apr. 1960). According to a letter Kenyon wrote to Sir Frank Francis, the director of the British Museum, in April of 1960, Allegro had not actually asked for de Vaux's permission to go ahead with the 1957 BBC documentary on the DSS, which stirred up conflict on the DSS team:

The matter came to a head [when] ... he went out to Jerusalem for a spell on his normal and official work on his assigned portion of the Scrolls, and then returned to England. Within ten days he was back in Jerusalem with a team from the BBC Television Studio, without a word of warning to his colleagues or any request for permission from the man in charge of the work on the Scrolls, Père de Vaux. He expected them to collaborate in a TV film ... to

which they were not prepared to agree, since they disapproved strongly of some of his interpretations ... The result from the point of view of Jordanian scholarship was disastrous, since he played upon the desires of the present Director of Antiquities for publicity (he was to appear prominently in the film) to create bad blood between the Scrolls team, and the Palestine Archaeological Museum where they operate, and the Department of Antiquities. This has had serious repercussions ever since. (KK to FF, 14 Apr. 1960).

Whether or not Allegro had in fact gotten permission to do the documentary, his lack of consideration in promoting the DSS irritated his colleagues. Although Allegro was right in saying that information about the scrolls should have been readily available from the start, his hastiness blinded him to the possible repercussions of unfiltered publicity – namely, garnering unwanted attention through religious controversy or mentions of treasure. As Kenyon observed, the excitement of the DSS did seem to have “gone to [Allegro’s] head” (KK to FF, 14 Apr. 1960), and being impatient, he published his own translation of the Copper Scroll two years before Milik’s official translation, as well as other information about the Scrolls that he did not have the authority to divulge. Although Allegro seemed to have been fairly charismatic in public, and made several strong political connections, he did not have the patience for academic conventions, and offended several of his colleagues as a result. All in all, his actions really did interfere with the relationships between the DSS team, the PAM, and the Jordanian government, and therefore played a significant role in the conflict surrounding the DSS.

### *More Disagreements*

Fundraising was another issue on which Allegro and the other scholars did not agree. One of the main reasons Allegro wanted to publicize the DSS was because he recognized, like the rest of the DSS scholars, that a large amount of money was needed to buy and preserve the scrolls. Starting with the BBC documentary in 1957, Allegro

focused much time and energy on promoting the DSS in order to raise funds; however, this was mostly without permission or authorization from his superiors. Allegro was never officially appointed by the PAM as a spokesperson for the DSS, and so the amount of information (or misinformation) he gave the public was extremely frustrating to the PAM and to Kenyon. For example, on January 6, 1960, the same day that Kenyon and Allegro had their confrontation, Allegro published an article in the *Daily Telegraph* entitled “Dead Sea Scrolls Emergency,” in which he stated that the DSS were not only in danger of being damaged by (ironically) amateur investigations, but also by their dispersal to several countries as part of an agreement to raise £35,000 to purchase them. The latter was true: because the PAM was having trouble raising money from British or Jordanian sources alone, they requested help from several other countries that had ties to the PAM or the DSS team, including the United States, France, and Sweden (FF to KK, 1 Jul. 1960). Allegro also claimed that the PAM was closing its resources to the DSS team and forcing them to leave; but, the major issue with Allegro’s article was his statement in the last paragraph:

A million pounds would rescue the Scrolls still in Bedouin hands, keep the contents of the Cave Four cache together, make a thorough combing of the Judaeen desert for more scrolls possible, and provide at least the foundations of a Scrolls seminary where students from East and West can meet on common ground and further the cause of international friendship. Is this too high a price to pay for the miracle of the Dead Sea Scrolls? (Allegro, “DSS Emergency”).

Kenyon in particular was angered by the implications that, first, the fundraising agreement reached by the various countries was ethically wrong, even though the Jordanian government had given permission for each country to receive portions of the DSS manuscripts as thanks for their contribution, and this way all parties were furthering study of the scrolls; second, that information about the DSS as well as access to them at

the PAM was being withheld, when the original team of translators had all agreed to finish their work at a certain date; and third, that nothing further was being done about the scrolls in regards to fundraising (KK to Editor of *Daily Telegraph*, 27 Jan. 1960). In fact, much of Kenyon's involvement with the DSS was fundraising and grant writing, and in her opinion Allegro's claim of a million pounds was simply absurd. Such a high number would only drive up the price of the DSS and make it more difficult for the PAM to acquire more scrolls (KK to MW, 4 Aug. 1961).

Not only did Allegro write frequently about the necessary funds to rescue the DSS, but he also proposed a "Dead Sea Scrolls Trust" that, among other goals, would fund an exhibition of the scrolls abroad (Allegro, "Delay in Exhibiting DSS"). Although there had previously been talk of loaning or exhibiting the scrolls in several different countries to raise funds for their continued care, the PAM's board of trustees was struggling to obtain permission from the Jordanian government to do so, particularly after the Minister of Foreign Affairs suddenly announced that the scrolls were property of Jordan and "should not be parted with or exposed to danger by sending [them] abroad for any reason whatsoever" ("The Scrolls at the Jerusalem Museum"). However, Allegro had good connections with the Jordanian government, specifically the Director of Antiquities and the king of Jordan, and was determined to put together an exhibition himself (JA to FF, 29 Oct. 1961). Kenyon and her colleagues at the PAM were shocked when *The Times* published an announcement from Dajani stating that the DSS would be exhibited at the British Museum in London for £25,000 ("DSS for London"). This was news to Sir Francis, who as director of the museum should have been approached about a potential exhibition first, but had not heard anything before that point ("DSS for

London”); clearly, Allegro had assumed that the British Museum would happily assist him with whatever his plans required. The PAM’s board of trustees was very concerned that Allegro’s exhibition would be poorly done, ruining the potential for a more official exhibition in the future (KK to JHM, 14 Dec. 1961). Francis specifically noted that it was “rather a thin kind of exhibition” (FF to KK, 28 Mar. 1962), consisting only of the Copper Scroll and Cave 4 material, and attempted to get Allegro to collaborate with the PAM in improving the exhibition.

However, Allegro’s plans were halted after a conservation expert named Dr. Harold Plenderleith examined the scrolls and declared that they were “simply not in a state to survive the Journey to England at present ... before they could be exhibited abroad, they should be reliably mounted under expert guidance” (JHM to al-Tal, 29 Mar. 1962). Additionally, Plenderleith and the PAM’s board of trustees agreed that it would be unwise to proceed with an exhibition before all the DSS scholars had published their translations (JHM to al-Tal, 29 Mar. 1962). Allegro was furious, calling Plenderleith’s report “ludicrous” and “sinister” (JA to Maurice, 2 Apr. 1962). He wrote a letter to W. B. Macomber, the American Ambassador to Jordan, threatening to leak information to the public insinuating that the British and American ambassadors and de Vaux were conspiring to delay the exhibition because the DSS were religiously controversial (KK to FF, 12 Apr. 1962). De Vaux wrote an official response to Allegro’s accusations and submitted it to the PAM, also suggesting that they plan an official exhibition to open in 1964 (RDV, *Answers to the charges*). Although Allegro did not publish any conspiracy theories as he threatened, the newspaper articles covering the delay of the exhibition undoubtedly sympathize with Allegro: “Dr. John Allegro, Professor of Semitic



Languages at Manchester University, said last night he had been thwarted by the British and American ambassadors in Jordan in his plan to exhibit the Dead Sea Scrolls in Britain and raise money for further expeditions” (“British Show of Scrolls Baulked”).

Though the public was disappointed, little mention was made of the fact that Allegro’s exhibition would violate a previous agreement between the PAM and the Jordan Government that any DSS loans would be made by a government-to-government level request (KK to JHM, 18 Jul. 1962). While Allegro had been appointed by the Jordanian government as an Honorary Adviser on the DSS in December of 1961(*Arabic Press*), he was still technically not a government official of either country, and therefore did not have the authority to be in charge of a DSS exhibition. Nevertheless, this did not stop him from continuing to be a nuisance until the exhibition was finally officially arranged (KK to JHM, 18 Jul. 1962). The scrolls were eventually exhibited in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain from 1964-1966 (Davis 167).

As mentioned before, part of the reason for the exhibition’s delay was that the DSS were in desperate need of conservation – another area in which Allegro was in opposition with Kenyon and the PAM. Although Allegro and Kenyon were in agreement that the DSS needed treatment before they were lost forever, their solutions to the problem were different. Allegro was instrumental in helping photograph the scrolls as an additional insurance against their destruction, but he still believed that photographs were no match for the originals (“No Substitute for Original Scrolls”). He wanted exhibit the DSS as soon as possible, both to raise funds for their preservation and to give the public a chance to see them before they deteriorated beyond repair. In an article for *The Observer*, Allegro said, “If nothing is done 2,000 years of miraculous preservation will be

destroyed in 20 years ... This sort of thing makes me writhe” (Dunn). Kenyon, on the other hand, felt that before any action could be taken, the scrolls needed to be examined and treated by an expert, and Dr. Plenderleith confirmed that the DSS needed to be moved from their current mounting on glass to a more flexible material like perspex, since the scrolls could be damaged if the glass was fractured during transit (KK to FF, 12 Apr. 1962). The process of finding an experienced technician to re-mount the scrolls, as well as the re-mounting process itself, proved to be lengthy – much longer than Allegro was willing to wait, but by that point things were out of his control. As with the issues of publication, fundraising, and exhibition, Allegro was impatient and incautious, putting him at odds with Kenyon and the rest of the PAM’s board of trustees, even though their motivations were quite similar.

### *Conclusion*

Many of the issues between Allegro and Kenyon, not to mention the DSS team and the PAM, resulted from Allegro’s tendency to jump to his own conclusions and ignore feedback from others. In Kenyon’s opinion, Allegro frequently acted independently without asking permission or consulting others, ultimately sowing seeds of distrust between the scholars on the DSS team and damaging the image of the PAM. By taking on the project of the Copper Scroll, and searching for the treasure he believed it contained, Allegro angered Kenyon and her colleagues by portraying himself as a legitimate archaeologist. To make matters worse, he had support from many newspapers, as well as the Jordanian government, and therefore had considerable power in the public eye. Allegro did not follow academic or archaeological etiquette in publishing about the DSS, although his efforts to raise funds to exhibit and preserve the scrolls came from a

genuine desire to do the right thing. Unfortunately, he may have done more harm than help, by increasing the number of amateurs looking for scrolls, raising the price of the DSS already on the market, and even setting the Jordanian government and the PAM against each other – as we will see in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Politics, Ethics, and Preservation

#### *Introduction*

Caring for the Dead Sea Scrolls was not a simple task. Since the DSS were extremely significant and valuable pieces of history, many individuals and nations had an interest in the scrolls' wellbeing, for both academic and political reasons. As a trustee of the Palestine Archaeological Museum, Kenyon had to use her diplomatic skills to deal with scholars and government officials from several different countries. Many had strong opinions about how the DSS's purchase, conservation, and exhibition should be handled. In particular, there were tensions between Britain, Jordan, and Israel, as well as between the Board of Trustees of the PAM and the Jordanian government. In short, almost any action involving the DSS presented an array of political and ethical quandaries.

Britain had a long and complicated presence in the Middle East. Britain occupied various parts of the Middle East as early as 1798 (Cleveland 65), but after World War I the official British Mandate in Palestine was established, marking the height of Britain's power over the region (162-63). After World War II, the British Mandate was dissolved and the state of Israel was created (Davis 97). However, Britain continued to have a strong presence in Jordan, and the PAM in particular was administered by an international board heavily influenced by British scholars, though founded by an American and located in East Jerusalem, which was part of Jordan at that time (162). Though an international board meant that the PAM could benefit from the aid and scholarship of several different countries, it also made collaborative efforts between

nations much more complicated, especially where the DSS were involved. In particular, the purchasing and preservation of the DSS required the cooperation of several groups with varying or even opposing opinions. Kenyon's correspondences housed in Baylor University's archival collection (Box 47) outline the challenges of academic collaboration, and more specifically how politics further complicated the process.

### *Purchasing Dead Sea Scrolls*

Purchasing DSS from the antiquities market was a particular challenge for the PAM. The Board of Trustees felt it was the museum's mission to rescue as many DSS as possible from the antiquities market, but the PAM's funds were extremely limited. By the early 1960s, the museum was already in financial straits because, as Sir Mortimer Wheeler states in his letter to Anthony Haigh, a Foreign Office representative, "Some time ago, as a matter of extreme urgency in order to rescue some Scrolls from highly insecure Arab hands, the Museum Trustees had to fork out something like fifty thousand pounds from their capital, thus reducing their income below a workable minimum" (MW to Haigh, 15 Feb. 1960). In addition to this emergency purchase from the PAM's own funds, several countries, including Britain, France, and America, contributed to the purchase of some of the original Cave 4 scrolls (Johnston to KK, 16 Sept. 1960). However, these contributions were not enough to keep up with the number of DSS still on the antiquities market.

As a result, much of Kenyon's work concerning the DSS involved writing grant proposals as well as letters to Sir Frank Francis, Sir Mortimer Wheeler, and other influential people in Britain and France who might be able to raise funds. Kenyon's correspondence indicates that fundraising was initially quite difficult, as many of the

PAM's primary donors were unable to contribute to the DSS project. First, the PAM was unable to convince its founder, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., to create a new endowment fund for the DSS (Palestine Archaeological Museum). Second, as Sir Wheeler states in his letter to R.C. Griffiths of the British Treasury, the British Museum and the British School could only buy a few DSS each (MW to Griffiths, 2 Dec. 1959). At that point, the PAM's funds were so low that the Board of Trustees even considered reaching out to American oil companies with ties to the Middle East (Haigh to MW, 11 Feb. 1960).

Roland de Vaux proposed a solution to the funding problem, suggesting that the French, American, British, and Swedish governments – the four countries represented on the PAM's board – contribute small annual grants to the museum (RDV to KK, 27 May 1960). But as Kenyon told de Vaux, the British Treasury would only agree to grant a larger lump sum specifically for the DSS, and if Britain deviated from de Vaux's plan, the other countries would be less willing to donate (KK to RDV, 12 Jun. 1960).

Fortunately, however, the PAM received a \$60,000 offer from an American lady, Mrs. Elizabeth Bechtel, to purchase the Psalms Scroll and some other DSS from Cave 11 and donate them to the PAM after a brief exhibition in America (Heddy to MW, 22 Sept. 1960). Kenyon was also eventually able to procure a grant for £25,000 from the British Treasury specifically to purchase more DSS on the antiquities market.

Unfortunately, the Jordanian government seems to have misinterpreted the British Treasury grant as a request from the British Museum to exhibit the DSS. While Kenyon's letters do not indicate how this miscommunication came about, it is clear that the Jordanian government and the PAM had different ideas about how to handle the DSS. Jordan's Director of Antiquities, Awni Dajani, published an announcement in the *Times*

announcing the exhibition without consulting the rest of the PAM's board ("DSS for London"). This directly conflicted with previous statements made by Dajani as well as the Jordanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sharif Musa Nasser, saying that the DSS would not be allowed to leave Jordan under any circumstances ("The Scrolls at the Jerusalem Museum"). According to John Henniker-Major, the British Ambassador to Jordan from 1960-1962, the Jordanian Department of Antiquities repeatedly assured the PAM that Dajani and Nasser's statements were false (JHM to KK, 4 May 1961); however, in July of 1960 the Jordanian government announced that it would be repaying the foreign governments that had purchased the Cave 4 scrolls and beginning plans for an overseas exhibition ([Jordan repays foreign governments]). Under the original Cave 4 arrangement, as described by the previous British Ambassador, Charles Johnston, Jordan agreed that:

... the fragments so purchased would be kept at the Palestine Archaeological Museum for the period necessary to study them and prepare them for publication, following which each institution ... would receive as its property a group of manuscripts which would correspond, both in quality and in quantity, to those purchased with the funds such institutions provided. (Johnston to KK, 16 Sept. 1960).

Jordan no longer wanted to disperse the DSS abroad, but instead wanted to treat their original agreement with these various foreign bodies as a loan. This change of policy had the potential to damage the PAM's fundraising efforts, so Kenyon had a lengthy meeting with Dajani explaining to him that international help was necessary because no individual government, especially Jordan, had enough money to save the DSS on its own.

Furthermore, allowing the DSS to travel temporarily to other countries would be an effective and relatively simple method of raising money (Kenyon, *DSS & PAM*).

According to Kenyon's written report of the conversation, Dajani was receptive to her

arguments, provided that all the scrolls had been studied and photographed before they were sent abroad (which Kenyon suspected was Allegro's influence and not Dajani's own idea). However, he was resistant to the idea of any preservation work occurring outside of Jordan, though there were no local preservationists and funds to bring in an outsider at that time were nonexistent.

Dajani also suggested nationalizing the PAM, which meant that Jordan would take over full ownership and responsibility for the DSS (Kenyon, *DSS & PAM*). Kenyon and the other board members wanted to avoid this at all costs, believing that Jordan simply did not have the resources or experts to care for the DSS the way Britain could (KK to MW, 12 Aug. 1962). In a letter to Sir Frank Francis, Kenyon said, "The Jordanian Department of Antiquities has literally not got a single trained technician" (KK to FF, 12 Aug. 1962). Based on Kenyon's correspondence, the Jordanian Department of Antiquities appears to have been quite small in the 1960s, with limited resources, but it is also very possible that a certain amount of prejudice shaped Kenyon's view of the situation. British elitism was still quite prevalent during Kenyon's time, and Kenyon herself was no exception: she refers to the Jordanian conservators as "ignorant" (KK to FF, 12 Aug. 1962), and to the Curator of the Amman Museum as "the stupidest man I have ever tried to teach ... a positive menace to any collection" (Kenyon, *DSS & PAM*). Kenyon cites the Jordanians' lack of ability as a strong reason to oppose nationalization of the PAM, fearing that they would do more harm to the DSS than good, but her doubts were also likely influenced by her subconscious attitude towards foreigners. Furthermore, Kenyon's concerns about Jordanian management of the PAM and the DSS reflected her larger political concerns about the Middle East, which were affirmed after



the Six Day War caused dramatic upheaval of the political situation in Jerusalem. From an objective standpoint, both Jordan and Kenyon had their weaknesses: Jordan was inconsistent on its standpoint concerning the DSS, and Kenyon's deep concern for the DSS was biased by her preference for British ideals. Thus, the issue of nationalization of the PAM, and the consequences it could have for funding the scrolls' conservation and exhibition, presented yet another diplomatic challenge for Kenyon.

The PAM's fundraising efforts were also hindered by Allegro's individual efforts. Allegro was very active in raising money for the DSS, often using newspaper articles as a platform. According to Kenyon, Allegro even wrote letters to influential people in British government, like the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Derick Heathcoat-Amory. Kenyon claims that Allegro was asking Heathcoat-Amory to "put up large sums of money for the purchase of Scrolls, and for the institution of a major scheme to search for caves, and [conveying] the impression that Allegro had an official status in the matter, and was the editor in particular of the Copper Scrolls" (KK to Johnston, 12 Dec. 1959). Kenyon's private correspondence shows her irritation with Allegro, because while she was authorized to make those kinds of requests as a member of the PAM's board, Allegro was only affiliated with the PAM as a researcher. Additionally, Allegro's close relationship to the King of Jordan made him even more of an annoyance to Kenyon. Through Allegro's charismatic personality and his connection to Wing-Commander Erik Bennett, a pilot in the Royal Jordanian Air Force and adviser to the king, he was able to meet and strike up a friendship with King Hussein, eventually becoming his trusted advisor on the DSS (Al Manar). Through this connection, Allegro was able to get not only the king's support in organizing an expedition to search for more DSS, but also the

resources and funds to do so (“King Hussein Cooperates...”). The king even visited the expedition camp himself at Christmas, bringing gifts for the group (Brown 140-41, 145). But perhaps most concerning to Kenyon was a press conference that the king gave in London at the end of 1961, stating that “[an] agreement was finally reached between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the British Museum to dispatch all the Dead Sea Scrolls to be exhibited in the Museum and other places under the supervision of Dr. John Allegro. All financial and technical difficulties against that have been surmounted...” (Falastin). None of this was accurate, however –the British Museum had no indication about the possibility of an exhibition, nor had the PAM’s board discussed it (“DSS for London”). So because of Allegro’s connection to Jordanian royalty, he did significant damage to the PAM’s public image by spreading confusion, and Kenyon in particular viewed his behavior as unauthorized action on behalf of the museum.

Allegro was not the only person to cause trouble for the PAM. After Kenyon was able to get a grant from the British Treasury, the museum reached out to Kando, the antiquities dealer, in hopes of purchasing more DSS. At the same time, King Hussein’s uncle, Sherif Nasser, was making inquiries about purchasing some scrolls on his own (KK to MW, 3 Jul. 1961). Suspicious of his sudden interest, Kando told Nasser, and subsequently the PAM, that there were no scrolls available for sale. Kenyon and the rest of the board were frustrated by this, as she writes in a letter to Sir Mortimer Wheeler, and they worried that Allegro and Nasser’s meddling would eventually drive up the price of the scrolls when they came back on the market (KK to MW, 3 Jul. 1961).

As Kenyon predicted, Kando approached the PAM about a year later with a few scrolls, asking a much higher price than they were worth. Kenyon, de Vaux, Professor

Godfrey R. Driver, and Yusef Sa'ad, the curator of the PAM, examined the scrolls, which appeared to be of some historical importance:

Professor Driver confirmed the provision dating of Dr. Paul Lapp of the early 4th century B.C., and agreed that they were official documents, probably Persian instructions for Palestine similar to those upon which he had worked dealing with Egypt. The importance of the documents was enormous, for it is a period for which both written and archaeological evidence is very slight indeed ... But it was clear on inspection that the documents were in a very bad condition, as they were pierced by innumerable worm-holes ... it was highly improbable that it would be possible to make out an intelligible text. (Kenyon, *DSS: Report on New Material*).

The group decided the scrolls were only worth £5,000 at most, and made their counteroffer. They were disappointed since Kando had previously mentioned a scroll with seven intact seals, which did not match the description of any of the scrolls; consequently, they were shocked when Kando pulled the scroll out of his pocket, claiming it was worth double the value of the other five scrolls. According to Kenyon,

This was a great shock, since he had previously asserted in reply to close questionings ... that he had submitted the complete find for our inspection. Pere de Vaux and Yusuf [sic] Sa'ad were particularly shocked, as they had never previously been treated in this way. The new document was obviously more complete in length than any of the others, but it was also clearly riddled with worm-holes. (Kenyon, *DSS: Report on New Material*).

Kenyon explains that, as they were irritated by Kando's sudden change in behavior, the four scholars reduced their offer to £5,000 for the complete set of scrolls, which Kando rejected. Since neither party was willing to negotiate further, the scholars left. To Kenyon and de Vaux, Kando had betrayed their sense of honor by withholding information from them (KK to MW, 15 Aug. 1962). However, Sa'ad had a different view: he told John Henniker-Major that Kenyon and de Vaux were responsible for the failure, saying that they had tried to rush through the negotiation to get back to Kenyon's

excavation in Jerusalem, and that this was the wrong way to handle a transaction with a Middle Eastern businessman (JHM to Heddy, 27 Jul. 1962). He added that they had been unreasonable to “punish” Kando, when he simply had a different cultural opinion of what was acceptable behavior in a negotiation. Overall, Sa’ad felt that he should have been allowed to handle follow-up negotiations with Kando and perhaps offer him a few thousand pounds more if necessary (JHM to Heddy, 27 Jul. 1962). Since this did not happen, the PAM’s board and the British Ambassador to Jordan were left to worry about how to manage their £25,000 grant.

When Kenyon heard what Sa’ad had said, she responded,

It is my absolutely clear recollection that Saad himself emphasized that he could not take the responsibility for the final stage of the negotiations, and should not be expected to do so. It is certainly completely untrue that we were in a hurry over the negotiations because we were busy with the dig ... The point of the ‘extreme annoyance’ was that Kando behaved in a blatantly dishonest way which had not occurred before ... He had given Saad, from whom alone our information was derived, a description of the documents which was belied by what he produced, which was a pretty miserable lot. In particular, he had referred to one document with seven intact seals. De Vaux cross-examined him about it, and he tried to show that one of those produced answered this description, which it clearly did not. He was repeatedly asked if this was the lot, and repeatedly said it was ... Never in the fourteen years of previous negotiation had there been direct dishonesty of this sort. (KK to MW, 15 Aug. 1962).

Kenyon also mentioned that the offer of £5,000 was in her opinion, extremely generous, and that the group had been patient because they recognized the importance of re-starting negotiations on DSS material to further the PAM’s conservation efforts (KK to MW, 15 Aug. 1962). On the other hand, Mortimer Wheeler felt that the four scholars had made a tactical error by discontinuing negotiations (MW to Heddy, 17 Aug. 1962). In any case, Kando soon made efforts to sell the scrolls to other parties, namely some members of the École Biblique, who discovered that the “sealed” scroll held a reference to Nehemiah.

Encouraged by this, Kando stuck to his original request of £25,000 for the scrolls (Driver to MW, 5 Sept. 1962). The French scholars turned down the offer, but about a month later, Frank Moore Cross bought the scrolls for about £12,000 (RDV to KK, 19 Nov. 1962), with money from Mrs. Bechtel (FF to KK, 30 Nov. 1962). The Nehemiah scroll turned out to be a contract, not a reference to the Biblical Nehemiah, and therefore was of less interest to the PAM than originally thought (RDV to KK, 19 Nov. 1962). Since Cross was still willing to share information about the scrolls with the PAM and use their facilities to take photographs, Kenyon and the other board members felt that the situation had resolved satisfactorily (Davis 167). However, this particular experience<sup>2</sup> exemplified how the struggles that the PAM faced in protecting the DSS were compounded by interpersonal and cultural conflict.

### *Exhibiting the Dead Sea Scrolls*

As if the task of purchasing DSS was not difficult enough, there was also the question of exhibition. Once the Kando negotiation had been resolved by Cross' purchase on behalf of Mrs. Bechtel, Kenyon discovered that the Americans had their own plans for the DSS. In the fall of 1962, Sir Francis wrote to Kenyon that

the Americans have arranged, through their State Department, for a [Smithsonian] scrolls exhibition based on the Psalms scroll but including background material and other items, next autumn ... I fear that Father de Vaux has been somewhat disingenuous, and possibly also some of our colleagues in the United States ... It looks as though Allegro's suspicions of the Americans were well founded! (FF to KK, 30 Nov. 1962).

Sir Francis, as the director of the British Museum, was probably concerned that he and the PAM were being left out of arrangements for an exhibition. Obviously, Britain would

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<sup>2</sup>Miriam Davis provides a good summary of this and other DSS purchases in her biography *Dame Kathleen Kenyon: Digging Up the Holy Land*, pages 164-167.

want to be involved in such an important and significant event, so Francis was understandably nervous that the Americans were not communicating their plans. Jordan was also a source of worry for Britain and the PAM while negotiating over the DSS exhibition. Jordan was resistant to the idea of letting the DSS out of the country for any reason – at least until Allegro convinced the Department of Antiquities and the king that a DSS exhibition would help raise additional funds for their conservation and improve Jordan's global presence (Brown 167). From that point on, the Jordanians, encouraged by Allegro, repeatedly pushed for an exhibition as soon as possible.

Originally, in conversations with the king and other officials, Allegro hoped for a worldwide exhibition as early as 1962, but the scrolls' condition did not allow for them to be transported so soon (JA to FF, 29 Oct. 1961). Undeterred, Allegro moved back his plans a year, hoping to open at the British Museum in 1963. Kenyon heard from Sir Francis that Allegro had been given official permission to make arrangements for the exhibit, so she urged the PAM's board to solidify their own exhibition plans (KK to JHM, 18 Jul. 1962). The PAM realized that the exhibition would not be feasible until 1964 at the earliest, particularly because they felt that more impressive material like the Psalms Scroll was necessary, but its contents had not yet been published (KK to MW, 12 Aug. 1962). After the complications with preservation of the DSS, however, the exhibition was pushed back another year, first arriving at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. in December 1964 and opening in February 1965 (KK to FF, 1 Dec. 1964). The exhibition then went to the British Museum from December 16, 1965 to Jan 29, 1966 (Davis 167). While the process of arranging a DSS exhibit was apparently not quite as complicated as fundraising, the PAM still had a few difficulties in collaborating

with Jordan and other museums overseas. Above all, conservation of the DSS was the biggest hindrance to the exhibition process.

Although Allegro's personal efforts to produce a DSS exhibition had failed, and he had mostly backed away from involvement in fundraising and exhibition planning, he was still actively concerned about the scrolls' wellbeing, especially after reading an article in *The Times* which stated that Kenyon and the PAM had finally gotten a grant of £1,000 from the British Academy to be used for conservation of the DSS. Allegro sent a letter to Kenyon and to Sir Wheeler seeking more information on how the grant was to be allocated, and whether any of it would go towards the scrolls' exhibition in England specifically (JA to KK and MW, 28 May 1965). Although he phrased this request as a concerned party, being one of the original editors as well as an adviser to the Jordanian government on the DSS, to Kenyon and Wheeler it likely came across as presumptuous. After receiving a rather curt reply from Wheeler, Allegro responded:

I find it a little extraordinary that the Academy should be so easily persuaded to loosen its purse strings to the extent of 1,000 pounds of public money on such a loosely defined brief as that you have described. However, I have written to Dr. Kenyon to enquire further on the disposing of this money. You will appreciate that very important matters of principle are raised by this award which doubtless you and your Trustees have already considered. The assumption by the British Government of responsibility for the safeguarding of these foreign-owned and largely foreign-controlled documents in a similarly administered institution abroad is a matter which cannot so easily be passed over. No one is more concerned about the adequate conservation of the Scrolls than I, but there are not a few of us who look askance at some of the recent activities of this museum in regard to these highly controversial documents and their publication. You will appreciate that failing a satisfactory reply from Dr. Kenyon, I shall feel it my duty to take the matter further and if necessary raise it publicly. (JA to MW, 1 Jun. 1965).

Similarly, to Kenyon Allegro wrote,

This is certainly a quite extraordinary award by the British Academy; just how satisfactory it is depends on a number of important considerations. Bearing in mind that the fragments are being housed in this foreign-owned and largely foreign-controlled Museum, one would like to know on what grounds the British tax-payer is being asked to contribute to this work, and to what extent the British Government has, by this award, untaken responsibility for the conservation of the Scrolls. Clearly the amount of the grant is not going to be sufficient for the whole work, and presumably some arrangement has been entered into with foreign governments for the share-out of responsibility.

Is the 'expert' you mention to be a British expert, working in or from the British School? To whom is he going to be responsible? You will appreciate that this grant, awarded I understand on the widest of briefs, looks uncommonly like a donation to the funds of the Palestine Archaeological Museum. If this is so, such open-handedness on the part of the Academy is surely unprecedented and should not be allowed to pass without public comment. Before taking the matter further, I should be most grateful for further illumination on the points I have raised. (JA to KK, 3 Jun. 1965).

These letters from Allegro reflect the continuing tensions concerning his involvement with the DSS and his interactions with Kenyon and her colleagues. Allegro's primary focus in these letters is the successful conservation and eventual exhibition of the DSS, and his questions seem to indicate that he was concerned that the grant would not be used for that purpose. By contrast, Wheeler and Kenyon's responses to Allegro display their ongoing reluctance to formally acknowledge his involvement. From their perspective, Allegro was questioning their academic integrity – their scholarly reputations and grant funding were at stake. But Allegro seems to have been genuinely invested on behalf of Jordan: he sensed the underlying British elitism and power dynamic that was present in the PAM and in general British academia. As a British scholar who actually sympathized with Jordan and understood their political and cultural structure, Allegro realized how important it was for Jordan to claim a part of their heritage via the DSS exhibition. Thus,



exhibiting the DSS presented a unique array of challenges, as multiple groups competed to execute their own ideas for the exhibition.

### *Preserving the Dead Sea Scrolls*

Caring for the DSS was also a serious issue. As mentioned in the previous chapter, UNESCO expert Dr. Plenderleith examined the DSS and declared them unfit for exhibition. Their current mounting on glass, while effective for keeping scroll fragments together and allowing scholars to easily pick up and examine them, could potentially damage the DSS further: the weight of the glass during transit could fracture the brittle leather scrolls and cause them to deteriorate (KK to FF, 12 Apr. 1962). Plenderleith recommended encasing them in Perspex, a type of clear plastic, which would be more sturdy and lightweight. But while he was of the opinion that the PAM could handle the transferring of the scrolls themselves, Kenyon recognized that, with the original team of scholars dispersed back to their various countries of origin, there were no staff with suitable experience to carry out the task (KK to FF, 12 Apr. 1962). Thus, the PAM asked the British Museum if they had any experts who would be willing to come to Jerusalem for a few months to do the work (RDV to FF, 26 Jul. 1962). This process quickly became much more complicated than they expected, however, because the British Museum was unable to spare anyone for the amount of time and money it would take to send them to Jerusalem, and the PAM was likewise unable to send someone from Jordan to work on the DSS in England. Moreover, Kenyon told Sir Francis, anyone the PAM sent would have to bring the DSS, mounted in glass, with them – which was exactly what they were trying to avoid (KK to FF, 12 Aug. 1962). Meanwhile, Sir Francis brought up concerns that Perspex was not the right material for preserving the DSS: it was

expensive, scratchy, and hard to work with (RDV to KK, 23 Aug. 1962). Instead, he and his staff suggested,

The fragments must first be freed of the cellulose acetate tape which was used to hold them together. They would then be mounted between glass, NOT perspex. (On balance we think the use of glass makes the task easier, and provided the fragments are stored vertically in racks, glass should be perfectly satisfactory.) The fragments are mounted directly on one of the pieces of glass, using 'gold-beaters' skin' (very fine vellum). A piece of card or leather is used as a 'distance piece' between the pair of glass mounts and the two pieces of the pair are bound together with leather or buckram. The fragments would thus be held firm, and at the same time not squashed between the pieces of glass. We should be happy to train a suitable craftsman in the British Museum Laboratory, in the techniques involved, for a period of a month or six weeks, by the end of which time he should be perfectly capable of carrying on the work in Jordan himself. (Paisey to RDV, 19 Sept. 1962).

No move seems to have been made on this suggestion however; it was simply too difficult for the DSS to leave Jordan, so Sir Francis' proposal was scrapped.

Unfortunately, it was not until almost the end of 1963 that Kenyon was able to find a conservation expert to come to Jerusalem and treat the DSS. The American Committee offered the services of Valerie Foulkes, an expert in mounting papyri and vellum, for a period of about two months to start conservation work on the DSS and hopefully train someone on the PAM's staff to take her place (FF to RDV, 3 Oct. 1963). Foulkes seems to have done satisfactory work, but her final conservation report on the DSS was largely negative towards the work environment at the PAM:

Jealousy and personal animosities seem to be hindering the proposed travelling exhibition. It was very disappointing to find that the Trustees had after all been unable to arrange for me to train someone suitable. I was most unwilling to train the museum photographer in anything except the actual binding of the plates, because of his age, poor eyesight, his set ways and ideas, his imperfect understanding of English, the short hours he works, his additional photographic duties and, above all, his (understandable) unwillingness to learn a new craft. (VF to KK, 4 Jan. 1964).

Although Foulkes had tried her best to relax, flatten, and mount enough scrolls for the exhibition in 1964, she was concerned that the rest of the DSS, particularly the Psalms Scroll, would have to wait for treatment until another expert was found (VF to KK, 4 Jan. 1964). Foulkes also predicted that the packing of the DSS for the exhibition would need to be handled with tremendous care, and indeed, as Kenyon helped organize the exhibition, she realized that someone from the Smithsonian Institute or the British Museum would have to fly out to Jordan to help pack the DSS for transport, since no locals had the skills to do so (KK to FF, 1 Dec. 1964).

Another serious problem with the DSS that Foulkes addressed but was unable to resolve was the fact that they were stuck together with Scotch tape. As the tape began to decay, it left sticky residue on the scroll fragments. While this actually helped in some cases to keep the fragments together on their glass plates, Foulkes noticed that many pieces had fallen out of their frames and been replaced incorrectly. She was able to fix the majority of these issues by comparing the plates to their photographs, but even this was an inefficient process because the photos were not organized and even with pattern-matching it was hard to be sure she was correct since she did not know Hebrew. She suggested temporarily arranging the fragments on blotting paper and taping the edges until the scholar in charge of publishing each scroll could confirm the arrangement, which could then be finally mounted (VF to KK, 9 Dec. 1964).

Unfortunately, even the conservationists' best efforts were not enough to stop the DSS from deteriorating, and according to some, the treatments had actually worsened the scrolls' condition<sup>3</sup>. In a letter to de Vaux, John Strugnell (one of the DSS scholars)

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<sup>3</sup>According to the Israel Antiquities Authority, the DSS treatments done in the 1950s-1970s did indeed worsen the damage, and had to be reversed starting in 1991. The conservators also designed a

complained that the DSS were now barely legible, making it extremely difficult to check his translation work. He said, “I find it hard to believe that a method which produces such gloomy looking pieces can be a delight to the custodians of Museums” (JS to RDV, 12 Sept. 1965). Dr. Werner from the British Museum’s conservation department, on the other hand, felt that the scrolls, though all needing permanent treatment at some point, were not too badly damaged, and advised the PAM to wait until more of the plates had been approved by the scholars working on them (Werner). In the meantime, Kenyon attempted to find another expert to do long-term work on the scrolls, but once again her plans were put on hold – this time by a much more serious event.

### *Politics and the Dead Sea Scrolls*

The Six-Day War took place on June 5-10, 1967, and ended in the Israeli occupation of Jordan’s West Bank, which included East Jerusalem where the PAM was located (Wikipedia). This caused serious problems for the British, especially for Kenyon who was also still excavating in Jerusalem, and for the PAM which had a close relationship with the Jordanian government. In the uncertainty of who had jurisdiction over the PAM and the DSS, the board could do nothing but wait. It was particularly frustrating because the PAM had resisted nationalization for so long. Over the years, the Jordanian Department of Antiquities made several requests for the DSS to be turned over to them, and in 1962 officially insisted that this happen (AD to YS, 27 Jun. 1962). The PAM, understandably, was nervous that the DSS would be transferred elsewhere (KK to YS, 20 Jul. 1962), but for the moment Jordan wanted official ownership of the DSS in name only, and still allowed them to be housed at the PAM (RDV to KK, 9 Dec. 1962).

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special laboratory for the DSS that mimicked the climate of the Judean Desert caves where the DSS were originally housed (“Conservation”).

Later though, Dajani persuaded<sup>4</sup> the new governor of Jerusalem, Anwar Khatib, to allow the Department of Antiquities to take over the PAM, which officially occurred in November of 1966 (Davis 193-94). But Jordan's control of the PAM was shortlived, and once Israel occupied the West Bank they removed everything related to the DSS from the museum. From this point on, the international trustees of the PAM had little to no involvement with the DSS, and the museum steadily declined. Although the Israel Antiquities Authority attempted to maintain a friendship with the British Museum by asking for their assistance in conserving the DSS (Biran to KK, 5 Nov. 1967), the British Museum could not send any specialists to Israel because the British government did not officially recognize Israel's occupation of the territories gained in the Six-Day War. The PAM also lost their £1,000 grant from the British Academy for conservation, since Kenyon was never able to find someone to work on the DSS full-time (KK to Swainson, 4 Feb. 1969). The conclusion to Kenyon and Britain's involvement with the DSS was largely disappointing in view of all the hard work they had done, but as Kenyon herself observed, "it is better not to get mixed up in the confused political and academic situation" (KK to Swainson, 4 Feb. 1969). Kenyon's work with the DSS was over.

### *Conclusion*

The complications surrounding the management of the DSS arose from a unique set of circumstances. Not only were the DSS located in an area rife with political tension, but their provenance and ownership was also constantly under debate, as various groups attempted to assert control over the most important archaeological find of the century.

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<sup>4</sup>Perhaps unsurprisingly, Allegro strongly encouraged Dajani in his efforts to nationalize the PAM, even suggesting he use it as a threat to force the PAM to raise funds and publish the DSS manuscripts faster (Brown 159-61).

Kenyon and her colleagues often struggled to find a balance between pleasing the Jordanian and British governments and doing what was best for the DSS. Even within the subject of preservation, there was argument about how best to purchase, conserve, and exhibit the DSS, and again this process was further complicated by personal and political interests. Between her ongoing arguments with Allegro and her efforts to raise funds for the DSS, it is no wonder that Kenyon was often frustrated by the stubbornness of the scholars and government officials she interacted with on a daily basis. Although Kenyon never trained or showed interest in becoming a diplomat, through her interest in the DSS and her dedication to the PAM she became well-versed in persuasive arguments and in compromise. Overall, it was these relationships and compromises between individuals and between nations that most greatly affected the DSS and their future.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Back to the Future: How the Legacy of Kenyon and the DSS Lives On

#### *Introduction*

As seen in the last chapter, Kathleen Kenyon and the PAM faced many challenges surrounding the Dead Sea Scrolls. These challenges – political interference, publication and exhibition rights, and conservation and stewardship of the DSS – were just as complicated in the 1960s as they are today. Through the correspondence in the Kathleen Kenyon Archaeology Collection at Baylor University, we have first-hand accounts of the issues that Kenyon faced, and her experiences are incredibly timely in the light of recent events surrounding the DSS. Kenyon's letters illuminate a part of the Dead Sea Scrolls' past that epitomizes the long history of issues related to class and race conflict, publication and accessibility of information, and the ethics of antiquities dealing and museum practice.

#### *Historical and Future Conflicts*

The history of the DSS illustrates just how deeply influential the Arab-Israeli conflict was in the realm of Near Eastern archaeology. Today, this conflict continues unresolved, affecting not only the citizens of both groups, but also the antiquities of the region. After the Six-Day War, Israel removed the DSS from the PAM ostensibly to protect them from ongoing combat in the region, but it can be surmised that they also did not want Jewish texts in the hands of a different cultural group. Jordan and Israel are still publicly debating who really owns the scrolls, and Jordan has made several petitions to

other countries for recognition, without much success (McGregor-Wood). The DSS are just one prominent example of the continuing enmity between Jordan and Israel. But although the DSS are relatively safe in the Shrine of the Book where they now reside, other landmarks of historical importance are not. Across the Middle East, militant groups like ISIS have destroyed museums such as the Mosul Museum in Iraq, as well as UNESCO World Heritage sites including Palmyra and the Biblical city of Nineveh (Curry). According to National Geographic writer Andrew Curry, “The group claims the destruction of ancient sites is religiously motivated; its militants have targeted well-known ancient sites along with more modern graves and shrines belonging to other Muslim sects, citing idol worship to justify their actions. At the same time, ISIS has used looting as a moneymaking venture to finance military operations” (Curry). The idea of cultural eradication through destruction of significant artifacts is not new, but the frightening scale of the obliteration caused by ISIS and other groups who seek to target religious sites is legitimate cause for concern. Since ISIS specifically destroys sites and artifacts belonging to religious groups, including mosques and holy pilgrimage sites like the Tomb of Jonah (Ford), it may be that one day the DSS themselves, as an icon of Jewish and Christian history, might be in danger.

Though specific targeting of the DSS was not a concern of Kenyon’s, she clearly did worry about the welfare of the scrolls and the possibility that they might be severely damaged or destroyed in the midst of political shuffling. The current political climate means that it is now more important than ever to preserve cultural heritage before it is lost. Some companies and universities have been developing 3-D scanning and virtual reality technology in an effort to combat both natural and human destruction. While



nothing can truly replace the authenticity of a historic building or archaeological site *in situ*, virtual reality allows archaeologists to keep a digital record of that place in the event it is destroyed, and can also help with interpretation of the site by creating digital reconstructions that won't damage the original (Murdock).

Although Kenyon herself observed that it is wise to stay out of complicated political and academic situations (KK to Swainson, 4 Feb. 1969), her archaeological legacy has certainly gotten mixed up with her political leanings. Many scholars assume that Kenyon was anti-Semitic, or at least anti-Israel, especially after the editor of *Biblical Archaeology Review* (BAR), Hershel Shanks, published an article in 1975 titled "Kathleen Kenyon's Anti-Zionist Politics – Does It Affect Her Work?". Shanks focused on Kenyon's preference for Arabic place-names rather than Hebrew ones, as well as her outspoken disagreement with the techniques of several prominent Israeli archaeologists, which Shanks described as possible "professional cantankerousness" ("Kathleen Kenyon's Anti-Zionist Politics" 3). Additionally, he claimed that Kenyon displayed a particularly dispassionate attitude towards Israelite culture in her publications, which therefore led to several incorrect conclusions, particularly concerning the extent of Davidic Jerusalem's walls (Shanks, "Kathleen Kenyon's Anti-Zionist Politics" 11-13). While Shanks acknowledged Kenyon's important contributions to archaeology, he cast serious doubt on her credibility as a professional. Kenyon did not take kindly to this; after repeated requests from BAR to publish a response, Kenyon finally wrote, "I am afraid that I think that it is such an insult to my professional integrity to suggest that I twist archaeological evidence to support the political views you ascribe to me that I completely refuse to discuss your observations ... perhaps you might wonder whether

your Pro-Zionist Politics affect your work” (Kenyon 12-13). Although Kenyon often publicly disputed with scholars and critics alike, their ethnicity did not matter so much to her as the fact that she genuinely disagreed with them; and in fact she believed that many of her countrymen were incorrect. Starting with her very first independent excavation at Jericho, Kenyon’s findings disproved the previous theories of Professor John Garstang, who believed he had found evidence of Joshua’s destruction of the city (Davis 117).

Nevertheless, Shanks was justified in saying that Kenyon was perhaps consciously or unconsciously influenced by her inherent biases, as many Biblical scholars were, though she would never intentionally twist her findings to fit her beliefs (Kenyon 13). Biographer Miriam Davis opines that “Kathleen Kenyon was certainly not anti-Semitic if by that is meant dislike of Jews . . . She was undoubtedly anti-Zionist” (Davis 201-2). As a member of the British gentry and a lifelong Christian, Kenyon was a product of her time, her nationality, and her station in life, and thus preferred for Britain – or at least Britain’s allies – to have control of the Middle East. Though she was not particularly sympathetic to the Palestinian cause, she believed that Israel did not have a right to the territories it had gained in the Six-Day War<sup>5</sup> and therefore served as an advocate on the Council for Arab-British Understanding (202).

Perhaps the most significant example of the systemic ethnocentrism present in Kenyon’s day is the fact that the original team of DSS scholars consisted solely of European, Christian males. No Israeli or Jewish scholars were allowed on the team, even though the DSS were just as significant, and perhaps even more, to Judaism as to Christianity. Indeed, the DSS do not contain any New Testament texts, and are believed

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<sup>5</sup>On March 21, 2019, the United States officially recognized Israel’s annexation of the Golan Heights (Diamond). However, Britain still has not, since the annexation violates international law as established by the United Nations (Holden).

to have been written by a Jewish community, possibly the Essenes. It was not only Kenyon who had this bias – the Palestine Archaeological Museum’s entire board of trustees, and likely even Allegro, shared the same prejudice, which still continues to be a struggle for institutions worldwide. Even after Israel took possession of the DSS and encouraged Jewish scholars to join the publication team, there were still scholars from the original team working on the DSS until the 1990s (“Delay in Publishing DSS”).

Interestingly enough though, both Kenyon and Allegro were in agreement on one subject: that the three religions originating from the Middle East (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) must find a way to coexist politically. Allegro believed that,

The Scrolls will form a bridge so much needed between Jew, Christian, and Muslim *religiously*. Although each religion must preserve its own distinguishing marks and revelation, nevertheless, if through the Scrolls we see a common background and fount (which in fact we do), it should enable man to understand his fellow better and point a way to understanding and peace. (Brown 161).

Similarly, after the Six-Day War Kenyon wrote, “The Israelis understandably feel that the Old City of Jerusalem must not be lost to them. But it must be remembered that it is equally important to the Arabs, and is inhabited by them ... [Jewish] interests and those of the Muslim and the Christians must be safeguarded ... Jerusalem should become an open city” (Davis 197-98). Though both Kenyon and Allegro had a slight bias towards the Arab side of the conflict, both desired a solution to the religious and political dissension that had plagued the region for so long. But unfortunately, neither were able to fully escape the prejudices of their time period and upbringing – a shortcoming that is sadly still quite common.

### *Academic Integrity*

Exclusivity and elitism did not only apply to scholars outside the DSS team, but also within it. As mentioned previously, Allegro faced a great deal of opposition from the other members of the DSS team because of his unorthodox ideas, and felt (probably rightly so) that they treated him unfairly. With regard to the initial arrangements, all the scholars seemed to be on an equal footing. Pierre Benoit, a member of the DSS team, writes a detailed account of how the DSS were divided up for translation. Sections were assigned largely by area of expertise and interest, as well as the amount of time each scholar had to work on them. He states,

Documents were never assigned to one man or another by authority. A certain group was usually chosen on the suggestion of [Father J. T.] Milik who had greater knowledge of the whole of the material and, if this was accepted by the editor in question in discussion with de Vaux, this became a starting point to his study, but all the material was available to whoever chose to work on it and establish a claim for himself in it. The proportion of manuscripts for which each editor is responsible depends uniquely on the time, energy and ability used by them in forming groups of fragments into manuscripts, identifying these and undertaking the study of them. (Benoit).

However, although the original DSS team tried to be fair in how they divided the work, access to the DSS was extremely exclusive outside of this team and continued to be so even after the Six Day War, when the DSS became Israeli property.

Allegro often accused the PAM, his fellow scholars, and particularly Roland de Vaux of withholding information on the DSS. De Vaux, Kenyon, and others insisted that the delays were simply the result of the painstaking work of identifying scroll fragments and translating them in the most accurate way possible, in addition to the fact that the original team was based out of several different countries and thus manuscripts sometimes had to cross quite a distance before they could even be revised or approved for

publishing (Benoit). Benoit also pointed out that “It would only be possible to suppress a document if all the scholars could be brought to agreement and it is impossible that three scholars should agree on anything!” (Benoit), yet accusations that scholars were withholding information continued well into the 1980s and ‘90s. By 1989, fewer than half of the DSS had been published (“Delay in Publishing DSS”). Today, however, thousands of high resolution images of the DSS are available online for anyone to access as the result of a partnership between the Israel Antiquities Authority and Google (*Leon Levy DSS Digital Library*). Allegro would be proud, though this development has taken several decades longer than he hoped.

### *The Ethics of the Antiquities Market*

Other academic and ethical issues have continued into the 21<sup>st</sup> century as more DSS have been discovered, and as repatriation becomes a universal theme for museums. As recently as 2018, archaeologists have discovered yet more caves that possibly once contained DSS (Sauter). But in addition to legitimate discoveries, many DSS fragments have been discovered to be fake. Most notably, in 2018 five of the DSS housed at the Museum of the Bible in Washington, D.C., from the collection of Hobby Lobby billionaire Steve Green, were confirmed as forgeries (Burke). Forgeries are unfortunately common, and private collectors like the Green family can easily be taken advantage of when antiquities dealers lack a proper ethical code and when the collectors themselves are unscrupulous about their purchases or fail to do their research. Even then, forgeries can be so well done that prominent experts are fooled – one notable recent example is the Gospel of Jesus’ Wife, which was uncovered in 2012. The Harvard professor who bought it, Karen King, was convinced that the papyrus fragment was authentic after

showing it to experts, and presented a paper about its revolutionary implication that Jesus could have been married. However, other Coptic scholars claimed that it was a forgery, and King later conceded that she was mistaken (White). This type of story is concerning because it makes archaeologists' jobs harder, forcing them to sift through an abundance of false information. It also illustrates the dangers of being tempted by impressive discoveries, since there is often no definite way to establish provenance for these documents. Hershel Shanks points out that, "Most of [the Dead Sea Scrolls] were looted and purchased from middlemen" ("Between Authenticity and Forgery"), so even the most well-known archaeology discovery of all time has uncertain origins. While Shanks argues that this fact does not invalidate the contents of the DSS, in other circumstances it can still be a problem for museums, since having uncertain provenance removes the credibility of the museum's collection. In any case, authenticating artifacts can often be a complicated process, as shown by Kenyon's experiences, and continues to be a source of difficulty for many collectors and museums alike.

Another problem – one that has been around since ancient times – is the smuggling and looting of artifacts. Though there are now many more laws in place to prevent this than in Kenyon's day, illegal activities still occur. Besides questionable DSS fragments, in 2010 the Green family, through Hobby Lobby, purchased over 5,500 artifacts looted from Iraq, which were then smuggled into the United States marked as tile samples (Feuer). The Greens were found guilty of buying illegal goods, and have since returned them, but this is just one example of the continuous market for stolen artifacts coming out of the Middle East, which is unfortunately fueled not only by the looters of antiquities but also by unethical buyers. Though many scholars share

Kenyon's disgust for treasure-hunting, and several laws have been passed preventing the illegal sale of artifacts, looting remains a widespread problem, whether it is on an individual level or organizational, as with ISIS and other groups.

The issue of looting also raises questions about the repatriation of such artifacts. In cases like the Nazi-looted art from World War II or with human remains, particularly under the Native American Graves and Repatriation Act, it is very clear that the correct moral and legal path is to make all efforts to return the objects to their owners when possible. In other cases, however, not everyone agrees. Britain and other European countries have a long history of soldiers and travelers taking artifacts home with them after visiting another country. Consequently, many artifacts in the collections of world-renowned museums were never legally sold or donated to them, and essentially can be considered stolen. Yet some museums still debate the ownership of especially famous artifacts, like the Parthenon or Elgin Marbles, which are named after the British lord who brought them to England from the Greek Parthenon in the 1800's. For years, Greece has viewed these statues as stolen property and requested their return, but the British Museum claims that they were legally removed from Greece with permission from the Turkish authorities in power at the time – though the Greeks themselves did not authorize the statues to be taken (Selwood). A common argument that the British Museum and others have cited is that, "These great 'encyclopaedic' or 'universal' museums ... offer a unique opportunity for everyone to experience the interrelationship of all things. In these museums' vast collections ... visitors gaze into other cultures, not just into a reflection of their own. They are museums of humanity" (Selwood). While this seems like a valid argument since it allows citizens of a certain place to experience more of the world, it is

also grounded in the somewhat selfish knowledge that if the British Museum returned everything in its collection that was stolen, there would be nothing left.

Another example, again involving the British Museum,<sup>6</sup> is the Rosetta Stone. Discovered in 1799 by a member of the Napoleonic French army invading Egypt, the Rosetta Stone held the key to deciphering Egyptian hieroglyphs and is another one of the world's most important archaeological discoveries. When the British defeated the French in Egypt in 1801, they took possession of the Rosetta Stone and brought it to the British Museum, where it now resides (Milmo). As was the case with the Elgin Marbles, the Egyptian Council of Antiquities has been asking for the return of the Rosetta Stone for decades, and again the British Museum has denied their request, "underlining its role as a global repository for humanity's cultural achievements" (Milmo). Both the Rosetta Stone and the Elgin Marbles illustrate the question of whether it is more important for an artifact to be displayed in conjunction with other similarly impressive artifacts or in the country and culture of its origin. While the British Museum is obviously has to make some decisions based on its own survival, it is still hard to justify keeping so many objects that are quintessential elements of another country's heritage.

Controversial decisions like the ones the British Museum has made are also likely rooted in the underlying ethnocentricity that has characterized the attitudes of European archaeologists for centuries. In this light, it is understandable why Jordan and other countries have historically been so reluctant to loan significant artifacts like the DSS, and even now face repercussions when they agree to do so. In 2017, plans for a German museum's exhibition of the DSS were cancelled when the German government refused to

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<sup>6</sup>Many other museums throughout Europe and the United States have come under fire for allegedly having stolen artifacts in their collections; the British Museum is simply the most well-known and relevant example.



guarantee that it would not seize the scrolls. While the reason is unclear, Germany has essentially implied that it does not recognize the DSS as Israeli property (Weinthal). So the struggle for ownership that began in the 1960s still continues.

### *Conclusion*

The letters in the Kathleen Kenyon Archaeology Collection provide a window into past struggles that very much reflect the present atmosphere of Near Eastern archaeology. Not only are the same political conflicts still raging between the same groups, but also the same issues of academic exclusivity, protectiveness of cultural heritage, and illegal handling of antiquities still continue unresolved. From current news stories and from Kenyon's personal account of her struggles, we can see that honesty, academic integrity, and compassion need to take the lead in resolving archaeological and political conflict. In the museum field especially, there is a growing emphasis on sharing resources – so hopefully in the future, museums will be able to find a satisfactory way to care for important artifacts, perhaps by collaborating on digital resources, using replicas of artifacts, and returning the originals to their country of origin. Kenyon's experiences show that over 50 years ago, archaeologists and museum professionals were beginning to pave the way for a more inclusive academic environment – and her accounts of the problems and ethical questions of the past form a valuable focal point for self-reflection as the field continues to progress.

## CHAPTER SIX

### Conclusion

The story that is told by the private correspondence in Baylor's Kathleen Kenyon Archaeology Collection is one of conflict and compromise. From the start of her involvement with the DSS, Kenyon represented the interests of the wealthy British scholar, while Allegro represented the interests of the common global citizen. Both had their merits and their faults; whereas Kenyon had the benefits and the oversights of traditional academic and archaeological training and experience, Allegro had the enthusiasm and the impetuosity of a genuine love for discovery and the excitement of sharing knowledge. Both scholars were products of their upbringing, and stubbornly held to their own beliefs throughout the entire time they worked on the DSS. And both were right in their own way: Kenyon was absolutely correct about the importance of archaeological method and careful, thoughtful planning of exhibitions and conservation work, while Allegro was right about the necessity for honest scholarship and the need for inclusivity, especially when an entire cultural group is left out of a subject that is incredibly relevant to them. Though Kenyon and Allegro approached the challenges of politics, ethics, and preservation quite differently, both cared deeply about the safety of the DSS, and even believed that they could be the key to uniting Muslims, Jews, and Christians in a common interest. This hope has yet to come to fruition, but even in the continued conflict and global dialogue about ethics and cultural heritage, we see echoes of the dialogues that were occurring between Kenyon, Allegro, and their colleagues in the past.

My thesis would not be complete without a brief note about how Kenyon and Allegro's lives continued after their involvement with the DSS. Kenyon's excavation of Jerusalem ended in 1967 shortly after the Six-Day War. Jerusalem was her last excavation, as she was already 61 years old and had a backlog of material to publish from several different excavation sites (Davis 201). In 1973, Kenyon was named a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire for her archaeological achievements, and she spent the remainder of her life at her father's estate in Wales, passing away after a stroke in 1978. Her death was mourned worldwide (Davis 223-5).

Allegro, on the other hand, had a sadder story. After the DSS exhibition, Allegro developed his ideas on the underlying universal narrative behind the teachings of the Essenes into what his daughter and biographer Judith Brown calls "a grand, unifying theory of religion" (Brown 185). The compilation of these ideas was a book called *The Sacred Mushroom and the Cross*, which claimed that Christianity, like more ancient religions, was based in a fertility cult centering around mushrooms, which symbolized the phallus as the progenitor of life (185-6, 193). As it essentially declared that Christianity was a hoax, this book was not well received, and it basically destroyed Allegro's academic career. Though Allegro continued to write and publish books, and to call attention to the still-lagging publication of the DSS, he never experienced the same amount of success or attention that he had during the height of his involvement with the DSS. He passed away after a heart attack in 1988 (277).

The end of Kenyon and Allegro's lives illustrates once again just how different they were. Kenyon remained a dedicated, respectable member of the British gentry, while Allegro stayed true to his inquisitive nature and passionate desire to uncover the

secrets of the universe, even to the detriment of his career; but both were equally fascinating scholars and people in their own right. It is my hope that this thesis gives readers a deeper appreciation for Kathleen Kenyon, John Allegro and their contributions to modern Near Eastern archaeology. Though neither was by any means a perfect person, there are many lessons we can learn from their interactions experiences, and the issues that Kenyon discusses in her letters are still relevant today. We have both Kenyon and Allegro to thank for the Dead Sea Scrolls' continued safety and existence, and by studying their mistakes and successes, archaeologists around the world can work towards a better future.

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