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To: Frances Kirby Green
with warmest regards
and deepest thanks for
her help and support of
this research.
Fred Reiner

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DEAD SEA SCROLL CONTROVERSY

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IN July 1883, Moses Wilhelm Shapira, a well-known Jerusalem dealer in antiquities and ancient manuscripts, offered to sell a scroll of Deuteronomy to the British Museum, one of his regular customers. Thus began one of the most celebrated incidents in the history of biblical scholarship, a saga that continues more than a century later.¹ The Deuteronomy scroll offered by Shapira was written in the same ancient Canaanite Hebrew script (also called Palaeo-Hebrew or Phoenician) that appears on the Mesha or Moabite Stone. This particular palaeography, coupled with significant differences between this text and the standard biblical text, made the fifteen fragments of this scroll extremely interesting to Victorian Bible scholars. The possibility that an original or (at least) very ancient manuscript of Deuteronomy had been discovered generated great public interest.

Upon his arrival in London, Shapira first visited Sir Walter Besant, secretary of the Palestine Exploration Fund. As Besant recounted later in his *Autobiography*, 'a certain Shapira, a Polish Jew converted to Christianity but not to good works, came to England and called upon me mysteriously. He had with him, he said, a document which would simply make students of the Bible and Hebrew scholars reconsider their ways; it would throw a flood of light upon the Pentateuch; ... It was nothing less than a contemporary copy of the book of Deuteronomy written on parchment.'² On 26 July 1883, Besant gathered a group of experts to view a manuscript that might have been written by Moses himself. Besant invited, among others, Christian David Ginsburg, the biblical and Masoretic scholar; Edward A. Bond, Principal Librarian of the British Museum; Captain Claude Conder; Professor Aldis Wright; and artist William Simpson. Ginsburg was asked to examine and evaluate the manuscript on behalf of the British Museum and to report his findings to Bond. In fact, Ginsburg did much more than that over the next month. He published a transcription of the scroll in the weekly journal, the *Athenæum*, helping to promote considerable public interest in it.³ While Ginsburg performed his examination and review, some fragments were placed on display at the British Museum amid widespread publicity. Even the Prime Minister, William Gladstone, a friend of Ginsburg and a supporter of his research, came to view them. The *Jewish Chronicle* referred to the scroll as the 'New Version of Deuteronomy'.⁴ Scholars came from Europe, including the French scholar and diplomat, Charles Clermont-Ganneau.

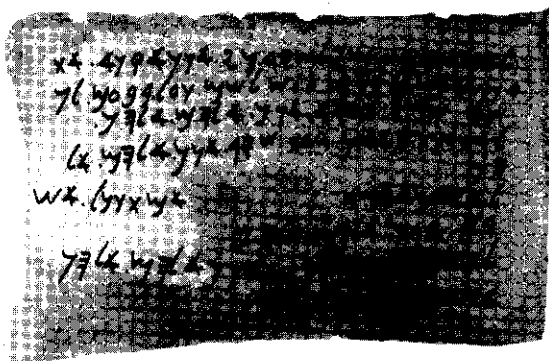


Fig. 1. A panel from Shapira's Deuteronomy scroll, as reproduced in lithograph by Dangerfield Lith., Covent Garden, [London, 1883]. Add. MS. 41294, f. 35

Finally, on 22 August, Ginsburg reported to Bond, 'The Ms of Deuteronomy which Mr Shapira submitted to us for examination is a forgery.'⁶ The next day Shapira wrote a desperate letter to Ginsburg: '... you have made a fool of me by publishing and exhibiting them [the fragments], that you believe them to be false. I do not think that I will be able to survive this shame. Although I am not yet convince [*sic*] that the MS. is a forgery unless M. Ganneau did it. I will leave London in a day or two for Berlin.'⁶ Shapira disappeared for more than six months, and on 9 March 1884, he committed suicide in Rotterdam. The Shapira fragments also have disappeared, but the incident has remained one of the great scholarly controversies of all time. Ginsburg was portrayed as saving the British people considerable money and embarrassment, especially when word emerged that Shapira had earlier offered the scroll to German scholars who had rejected it.

In the 1950s, after the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, there was renewed interest in the Shapira fragments. The American scholar Menahem Mansoor suggested that the Shapira Deuteronomy scroll might have been authentic, for Shapira had claimed the scroll was discovered near the Wadi Arnon on the east side of the Dead Sea. Mansoor's research was featured in the *New York Times* in August 1956 and later presented in a paper at a meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in December 1956.⁷ Mansoor's hypothesis was attacked by a number of biblical scholars at the time and defended by others.

Was Shapira guilty of fraud? Was he the 'impudent forger' himself? Was Shapira misguided or was he sufficiently knowledgeable to pass judgement? How certain was he of the authenticity of the scroll? What were his motives? What risks was he taking? As for Ginsburg, why did he wait to release his verdict? If the scroll was a clear and clumsy forgery, why did he not recognize it immediately? Was he simply evaluating a suspicious document, or were other factors at work? The scroll fragments are still missing and presumably destroyed, so no new evidence is likely to come from them.⁸ New evidence

has emerged, however, from contemporary accounts and letters. By studying Shapira's background and the relationships among Shapira, Ginsburg, the British Museum, and Charles Clermont-Ganneau, we may be able to understand better this fascinating incident in biblical and literary scholarship. Through a clearer appreciation of the individuals involved, we can cast some new light on the Shapira scroll incident.

At the time of Ginsburg's death, 7 March 1914, *The Times* retold the story of how 'One of the most interesting incidents in Dr Ginsburg's career was his exposure in August, 1883, of the fraudulent Shapira manuscript of part of the Book of Deuteronomy.'⁹ The 1914 account is noteworthy because of several details:

The Manuscript...was offered to the British Museum for £10,000 [*sic*], but Dr Ginsburg pronounced it to be a clumsy forgery, the work, probably, of four or five hands. Shapira committed suicide in the following year, and Dr Ginsburg afterwards bought the manuscript for a few shillings at Sotheby's...

Shapira had himself, in 1877, sold some [synagogue scrolls] to the British Museum and among other similarities it was found that the width of these slips corresponded exactly with the height of the slips on the forged manuscript.

Dr Ginsburg thought that the person who compiled the text was not acquainted with the archaic characters in which it was written, and dictated it to amanuenses, who reproduced faults of pronunciation that showed that the author was a Jew of Northern Europe.

To give the document an appearance of antiquity the Moabite Stone was used as a guide by both author and scribes. As it was expressed in a leading article in *The Times* of August 27, 1883, 'The scribes have copied, with a very suspicious fidelity, the writing and the arrangement of words for which the stone furnishes an example.'¹⁰

In 1914, then, the incident still was cited as an example of how Ginsburg saved the British people from public expense and embarrassment. Shapira was certainly remembered as a swindler and purveyor of fraudulent manuscripts. An 1883 *Punch* cartoon depicted Ginsburg and Shapira, in front of the British Museum 'Showing, in very fanciful portraiture, how Detective Ginsburg actually did Mr Sharp-eye-ra out of his skin.'¹¹

Up to 1883, however, Shapira had not been considered a swindler or a disreputable dealer in fraudulent antiquities. Facts are limited, and some sources are suspect. Nevertheless, we do know that M. W. Shapira was a dealer in antiquities and manuscripts in Jerusalem and that he had been a major supplier to the British Museum.¹² An autobiographical novel by Shapira's daughter, Myriam Harry, provides one portrait of the man, his work, and this incident. Certainly *La petite Fille de Jérusalem* (published in English as *The Little Daughter of Jerusalem*) is not an impartial and reliable source, but other sources verify Shapira's claim to be a 'Correspondent to the British Museum'.¹³ Shapira's position as a reputable supplier of manuscripts is described by J. Leveen in his supplement to G. Margoliouth's *Catalogue of the Hebrew and Samaritan Manuscripts in the British Museum*. Leveen writes:

With the appearance of the ill-fated bookseller W. M. [*sic*] Shapira, a third chapter opens in the

history of the Hebrew collection. ... Shapira travelled extensively through the east and tapped previously unexploited sources, with the result that the Hebrew collection was enriched by nearly three hundred manuscripts between 1877 and 1882 ... [T]he collection of 145 volumes acquired from Shapira in July 1882, ... at one stroke raised the Karaite section of the Hebrew manuscripts to one of outstanding importance, only surpassed by the Firkovich collection in Leningrad ... If the death of Shapira in 1884 dried up a fruitful source, the expansion of the Hebrew collection still went on, although manuscripts were not bought in such large numbers as from Shapira.¹⁴

By 1883, then, Shapira's place as a regular supplier of books and manuscripts to the British Museum was well established and recognized. Shapira wrote two articles for the *Athenæum* in July 1882 describing the Karaite manuscripts he was selling to the British Museum.¹⁵ He understood their importance to biblical scholarship and praised Ginsburg's work on the Masorah (the history of the text of the Hebrew Bible).¹⁶ In 1881, Shapira had written on the Jerusalem Siloam inscription and also had tangled in the *Athenæum* with both A. Neubauer and A. H. Sayce about the Siloam inscription, its palaeography and grammar.¹⁷

The Karaite manuscripts were of interest to Ginsburg, who had written a history of the Karaites early in his career.¹⁸ In addition, Ginsburg wrote a descriptive review of one of these new acquisitions in the *Athenæum* in March 1883.¹⁹ In an introduction to six Karaite Bible manuscripts in 1889, Reinhart Hoerning also links Ginsburg and Shapira. Hoerning describes the manuscript collection purchased 'in July, 1882, from the late M. W. Shapira, the well-known antiquarian bookseller of Jerusalem'. The collection, Hoerning states, 'raises the library of the British Museum to one of the vast storehouses of information concerning the history and literature of this curious and powerful sect.'²⁰ Ginsburg's involvement is evident when Hoerning notes 'his special thanks ... to Dr Ginsburg, not only for kindly aid in the revision of the proof sheets, but also instruction in the Massorah.'²¹ Presumably, in reading the proofs, Ginsburg did not object to this description of Shapira; Hoerning dedicates the volume to 'his master and friend Professor Franz Delitzsch and Dr Christian D. Ginsburg'.²²

The relationship between Ginsburg and Shapira dated back at least to January 1872, when Ginsburg went on an expedition to Moab. He wrote in his journal on the 24th of that month, 'I also saw another inscription of a similar character but of a much older date and therefore of greater importance. This Mr Shapira possess [*sic*] and has kindly promised me a square.'²³ Two days later Ginsburg wrote, 'I saw in the window of Mr. Shapira a bookseller and dealer in antiquities a fragment of an old stone with an inscription which at cursory glance looked almost exactly [*like*] a piece of the Moabite Stone and I at first sight took it to be so. He then told me that he had more pieces and that he had only obtained them last night. ... Most impatiently I returned to Mr Shapira and on my examining them more closely, I found that they were pieces of quite a different stone.'²⁴ Hoerning confirms that the relationship between Ginsburg and Shapira continued during the years 1877-82, when Shapira was helping the British Museum build its Hebrew manuscript collection. Thus, by the time Shapira came to

London with his Deuteronomy manuscript and Ginsburg was asked to evaluate it, the two men had known each other and engaged in collaborative scholarly pursuits for more than eleven years.

To understand better Shapira's role in this episode, we should look at the letters he wrote to Hermann Strack on 9 May 1883 and to Edward A. Bond on 28 August 1883.²⁵ In a ten-page letter to Strack, Shapira describes 'a curious manuscript written in old Hebrew on [*sic*] phoenician letters upon small strips of embalmed leather and [which] seems to be a short unorthodoxical book of the last speech of Moses in the plains of Moab.'²⁶ Shapira describes his encounter with Bedouins in July 1878 when he heard the story of scrolls having been discovered several years before in caves above the Arnon River in Moab. These scrolls had been found by Arabs in the late 1860s, well before Shapira's trip to the east side of the Dead Sea with Professor Almgeitz in 1875.²⁷

Shapira openly speculates on the scroll's authenticity. He explains to Strack that he had prepared a transcription and sent it to a Professor Schlottmann on 24 September 1878, five years earlier. Schlottmann had rebuked Shapira, stating, 'How I dare to call this forgery the Old Test[ament]? Could I suppose even for a moment that it is older than our unquestionable genuine Ten Commandments?'²⁸ In response to Schlottmann's judgement, Shapira first asked himself, '... if it is by all means a forgery, who could have been such a learned and artful forger? and for what purpose? As the money I paid for the manuscripts was not worth the speaking of.'²⁹ Shapira speculates the date of the manuscript to be '... judging from the form of the letters ... an early time, as between the date of the Mesa stone and the Siloam inscription, or about the sixth century B. C. But one must be very cautious ... the date may be very late. The question will of course be for scholars to decide.'³⁰ At first Shapira concludes the letter by stating that Strack will 'be better able to find the faults and virtues of it than I. I will also ask pardon for all my daring suggestions, and ask [you] to give me some candid opinion about it.'³¹ Yet then he adds a postscript: 'Dr Schroeder ... German Consul in Beiruth, is now here [in Jerusalem] and has seen a strip and thinks that the manuscript is unquestionable [*sic*] a genuine one, his chief proves [*sic*] are the beautiful Phoenician writing as well as the pure grammatical Hebrew and the outward look of it.'³² These are hardly the arguments of a conniving swindler, a forger, or someone pressing a sale of a questionable manuscript. On the contrary, Shapira goes out of his way to point out some of the problems in the manuscript, to raise different viewpoints, and to describe the flaws in the document.

Strack gave his reply in a letter to the *Times* on 31 August 1883: 'In the month of May last I received from Mr Shapira, then at Jerusalem, a long communication concerning his codex [*sic*]. In my answer of the twenty-seventh I declared that it was not worth his while to bring such an evident forgery to Europe. At the end of June, or in the beginning of July, however ... Mr Shapira came to Berlin to see me and show me his manuscript. After a short examination of it, I repeated my former verdict ...'.³³ Strack's immediate judgement (without having seen the manuscript) must have been difficult for Shapira, harking back to an incident in which Moabite pottery he had sold to Germany in 1873 was discovered to be forged.

Shapira's letter of 28 August 1883 to Edward A. Bond, following their July meeting at the British Museum, was written from Amsterdam. Shapira begs Bond for reconsideration of the manuscript and urges further examination of it by scholars from several different backgrounds. He writes, 'the sin of believing in a false document is not much greater than disbelieving the truth. The tendency of showing great scholarship by detecting a forgery is rather great in our age.'³⁴ Shapira reviews the arguments Ginsburg published in his report and answers many of them. He concludes by stating, '... I am not convinced that the manuscripts are false. Nevertheless, I do not wish to sell it [*sic*] even if the buyer should take the risk for himself (I have such offers.)'³⁵

What about Schroeder, who had seen one of the scroll fragments? He not only judged them to be genuine but offered to buy them, an offer Shapira declined. Encouraged by this positive judgement, Shapira took the scroll fragments to Berlin in late June or early July to show to Strack, who remained unconvinced.³⁶ On the same trip, the persistent Shapira took the scroll fragments to Halle and Leipzig, where he met with Hermann Guthe on 30 June to show him the manuscript.³⁷ Guthe reports that he had personally met Shapira in Jerusalem in the spring and summer of 1881, and that Shapira came to see him in Leipzig to obtain his expert opinion of the manuscript.³⁸ With Guthe's publication of his monograph on the scroll fragments, completed on 14 August 1883, the Shapira manuscript officially achieved published scholarly recognition.³⁹

Shapira then returned to Berlin, seeking further expert opinions and offering the scroll for sale to the Berlin Royal Library. On 10 July he presented the scroll to a group of scholars convened and hosted by Richard Lepsius, an Egyptologist who was the Keeper of the Royal Library, Berlin. This group of scholars also included August Dillmann, Eduard Sachau, Adolf Ermann, Schrader, and Moritz Steinschneider. In ninety minutes they reached their decision: the manuscript was a 'clever and impudent forgery'.⁴⁰ They refused to purchase the manuscript for the Royal Library.

Shapira next went to London, and thus began the notorious conclusion to his odyssey. Meeting with Walter Besant, secretary of the Palestine Exploration Fund, on Friday, 20 July, Shapira 'informed the Secretary that he had brought to England a manuscript, which if genuine would be certainly considered of inestimable value, being nothing less than a text of the Book of Deuteronomy, written on sheepskin, in characters closely resembling those of the Moabite Stone, and with many and most important variations. He [Shapira] refused to show the documents to the Secretary, but offered to do so if Captain [Claude] Conder were also invited to be present.' There was then a second meeting: 'On Tuesday, the 24th he returned, and, in the presence of Captain Conder and Mr Walter Besant, he produced the manuscript, and with it an account in writing of the manner in which he acquired it.'⁴¹

By that second meeting between Besant and Shapira, Besant already had invited (on Monday, 23 July) a group of scholars to see the manuscript:

Palestine Exploration Fund, 1 Adam Street, 23 July 1883
Mr Shapira of Jerusalem has brought to England an Old Hebrew Manuscript apparently of great

antiquity containing the text of Deuteronomy with many important variations. He will bring the manuscript to this office on Thursday next the twenty-sixth ... at 12 A. M. and will be very glad if you can meet him in order to see it.⁴²

The group included Walter Besant, E. A. Bond, E. Budge, Mr Bullen, Captain Claude Conder, Rev. C. D. Ginsburg, Professor Lewis Hayter, William Simpson (an artist with the *Illustrated London News*, who served on the P. E. F. Executive Committee), and Professor Aldis Wright of Oxford University. Perhaps there were ten people present, according to an eyewitness account of the meeting by William Simpson, who kept a journal and described the meeting six months after it occurred.⁴³ In his journal, Simpson gives a colourful account:

Mr Shapira produced a small glazed bag — the small 'carpet-bag' of the period, from which he drew forth the pieces of very dark looking leather, and threw them in a very jaunty manner on the table, round which we all stood. With them were some fragments of Hebrew MSS., one of which was rolled up in a rude way, and suggested from its shape and colour the unsmoked half of a gigantic cigar, which I suggested must have been left by Og, King of Bashan. ... as the letters on the Deuteronomy MS were not very distinct, Shapira produced a bottle of spirits of wine and a hair pencil, and he washed them over with this so that the characters could be more clearly seen. To any one accustomed to precious documents, the rude way Shapira handled and rubbed these pretended old fragments was, had one believed them to be real, a sight to make one shiver. The grand performance of Shapira, however, was when one of the gentlemen put a question about the leather, and Shapira to shew him what it was like, tore off a fragment nearly an inch in diameter and held it out in his hand. This he really did to a document he declared to be as old as 900 B. C. — Mr Bullen was standing beside me, and I whispered in his ear, 'See there is a precious fragment worth at least five hundred pounds torn off.' — This estimate was of course placed on Shapira's valuation of a million for the whole. At one time the bottle of spirits of wine tumbled on the table, and made a great mess, — the MS. getting a full share of it. — Of course nothing could be settled regarding the claims of the manuscript at such a meeting, and it was finally decided that Dr Ginsburg should take them in charge and keep them in the British Museum, while he inspected them. Dr Ginsburg carried them off, — and the documents while I write are still in the Museum.

William Simpson 23 January 1884

Certainly Simpson is a trifle cavalier in his description of the 26 July meeting. According to Walter Besant's recollection, Simpson's comment about the value of the leather fragment Shapira tore off was made after most of the scholars had departed, with only Simpson, Besant, and Claude Conder in the room. Besant records that after stating, 'I suppose it is worth five hundred pounds,' Simpson '... chuckled and went his way. Simpson entertained a low view of the worthy Shapira, Christian convert.'⁴⁴ Besant's view of Shapira was not much higher. Besant introduces the incident in his *Autobiography* by referring to 'a certain Shapira, a Polish Jew converted to Christianity but not to good works', reflecting a bias that both Besant and Simpson may have shared.⁴⁵

A week after the 26 July meeting at the Palestine Exploration Fund offices, the first

reports of the Shapira Deuteronomy manuscript appeared in the press. The *Times* of Friday, 3 August, carried the first report of 'Fifteen leather slips' being offered to the British Museum; on the same day the *Jewish Chronicle* carried a notice of this 'new version of Deuteronomy'.⁴⁶ Ginsburg published the first translation of the manuscript the following Wednesday, 8 August; the first account of the origin of the scroll appeared in the *Jewish Chronicle* the following Friday; and the first of three articles appeared in the *Athenæum* the next day.⁴⁷ The articles in the *Athenæum* contained the new version of the Decalogue, in Hebrew and English, as well as a commentary. Ginsburg wrote, 'In the next issue I hope to give the other portions of the text in their proper sequences, commencing with the beginning of Deuteronomy.' The commentary in the *Athenæum* article is followed by a letter of 7 August 1883 from Shapira describing the history of the scroll and his acquisition of it.

In his second instalment in the *Athenæum*, on 18 August 1883, Ginsburg treats the manuscript as potentially legitimate, giving only a few textual notes at the end of his presentation of the manuscript's Hebrew text and a translation of the beginning of Deuteronomy.⁴⁸ In the last of the three articles, on 25 August 1883, Ginsburg comments, 'I have designedly abstained from making any remark or calling attention to any anomalies in the Hebrew text, as my report, which is to appear next week, will contain a full account of all the peculiarities of the MS. and the conclusion I have arrived at about its genuineness.'⁴⁹ Through these three articles in such a respected journal as the *Athenæum*, Ginsburg lent an aura of credence to the manuscript and claimed he was an impartial judge. Since Ginsburg saved the numerous press accounts, which appeared daily in newspapers throughout England, it may be safe to assume that he relished the controversy he was nurturing.⁵⁰

Shapira's letter to Ginsburg of 7 August describing the origin of the scroll and how he came to possess it was, in fact, the third in the course of a week. On 2 August he had written complaining that Ginsburg had failed to keep an appointment with him, and on the 6th, from his room at the Cannon Street Hotel, he had sent him a long defence of the charges against him concerning the Moabite pottery.⁵¹

Ginsburg's reticence regarding the scroll's genuineness was noticed by William Simpson, who made an undated entry in his journal:

From that meeting [26 July] the pieces of leather ... were removed to the British Museum, where Dr Ginsburg has since been busily engaged transcribing the characters into their Hebrew equivalents, and also in translating the whole into English. This is now nearly completed and will be presented to the Trustees of the Museum. Dr Ginsburg has been very reticent while so engaged, and has not expressed any opinion as to the genuineness of the manuscript; but he is understood to be making a report on it for the Trustees, to guide them as to whether they should enter into negotiations with Mr Shapira for the purchase of the document. In this report Dr Ginsburg will have to express his notions regarding its authenticity, and consequently all interested in Biblical matters are waiting anxiously to learn what such an authority will have to say, and whether the learned Dr will date them 800 B. C. or 1800 A. D. The pieces of skin have become very much darker since they were first exhibited at the Office of the Palestine Exploration

Fund. On the few parts of the leather where the characters could be easily seen they have now become so darkened that it is with difficulty they can be made out.⁵²

Coupled with Ginsburg's reluctance in passing judgement on the scroll and his presentation of it as potentially authentic is his clear wish to encourage publicity about the fragments. His own publication of the text, translation and 'comment' in the *Athenæum* led to subsequent articles in the *Times*, the *Academy*, and a host of newspapers throughout England.⁵³ Nowhere in all this publicity is mention made of Shapira's visit to Europe, the judgement of German scholars, or Shapira's offer to sell the scroll to the Royal Library in Berlin. Through mid-August, the many newspaper accounts reveal that Ginsburg did much to publicize the manuscript and keep public interest stimulated. As Ginsburg took his time formulating his verdict, public excitement grew. Heightening the suspense, Ginsburg published his transcriptions and translations of the manuscript over a period of three weeks without ever indicating his evaluation of the scroll.

A subplot of this drama began to unfold on 15 August when the French diplomat and archaeologist, Charles Clermont-Ganneau, arrived in London to view the Shapira manuscript. Clermont-Ganneau had reason to be very interested in the Shapira manuscript: it was he who had proved that Moabite pottery pieces which Shapira had sold earlier to the German government were forgeries. Shapira viewed Clermont-Ganneau as an enemy, as he was portrayed in *The Little Daughter of Jerusalem*, the autobiographical novel by Shapira's daughter. One recalls that after Ginsburg's verdict was published, Shapira wrote him the distraught letter (23 August 1883) quoted at greater length above, stating, 'I do not think that I will be able to survive this shame. Although I am yet not convince [*sic*] that the MS. is a forgery unless M. Ganneau did it...'.⁵⁴ While many commentators have noted this historical connection, none has pointed out the connection between Clermont-Ganneau and Ginsburg. Both were deeply interested in and published versions of the Moabite Stone, a great archaeological find of the nineteenth century. The inscription on this stele provided the prototype for early Semitic writing and was similar to the early Hebrew or Phoenician script on the Shapira manuscript. But the similarities between the discovery and publication of the Moabite Stone and the Shapira manuscript go beyond the form of the letters.⁵⁵

The Moabite Stone was discovered originally by the Rev. F. Klein of the Church Missionary Society in 1868. As word passed among German and English archaeologists, Clermont-Ganneau, then at the French Consulate in Jerusalem, saw the importance of making a 'squeeze' or impression of the stone. He also was determined to outbid the representatives of the other countries and obtain the stone for France. Ginsburg describes, in his commentary on the Moabite Stone, how Clermont-Ganneau, recognizing the great importance of this find, acted 'with more enthusiasm than discretion' and 'employed several agents to obtain squeezes, and even the Stone itself'. By offering a large sum for the stone, Ganneau created 'too great a temptation and a bait for the different chiefs, each one of whom naturally wished to obtain the prize... The Moabites... "sooner than give it up, put a fire under it and threw cold water on it, and

so broke it, and then distributed the bits among the different families...".⁵⁶ Summarizing the events surrounding the discovery of the Moabite Stone, Ginsburg further notes that 'the very oldest Semitic lapidary record of importance yet discovered, which had defied the corroding powers of more than 2,500 years, was at last broken up, through the unwise measures adopted by a young French *savant* [i.e. Clermont-Ganneau], who, in spite of knowing that others were first in the field bidding for it, was determined to outbid them, in order to secure it for his own nation.'⁵⁷ Throughout the introduction to his work on the Moabite Stone, Ginsburg makes several disparaging comments about Clermont-Ganneau and accuses him of acting irresponsibly. Eventually, the Moabite Stone did end up in Paris, and a squeeze copy of it is in the British Museum.

Just as Clermont-Ganneau was successful in obtaining the Moabite Stone for France, he did not hesitate to become involved in new archaeological controversies. He took particular interest in archaeological forgeries and published a number of studies on them. So when he arrived uninvited at the British Museum requesting to view the Shapira Deuteronomy manuscript, his interest was probably unwelcome. Was he there to steal the scroll for France, as he did the Moabite Stone? Was he there to discredit Shapira again, as he had with the Moabite potteries? Was he there to upstage Ginsburg and demonstrate his superior scholarship in detecting forgeries?

In a long letter to the *Times* of 21 August 1883, Clermont-Ganneau describes his mission to the British Museum:

I reached London on Wednesday last, entrusted by the Minister of Public Instruction in France with a special mission to examine Mr Shapira's manuscripts, at present deposited in the British Museum, and which have, for some time past, excited such great interest in England.⁵⁸

Clermont-Ganneau describes his background in the matter, implying his expectation to be welcomed and included in the investigation of the manuscript:

My studies of the stone of Mesha, or 'Moabite Stone,' which I conveyed to the Louvre, and reconstructed in its entirety, my decisive disclosures with regard to the fabrication of spurious Moabite potteries purchased by Germany, and my labours in connexion with Semitic inscriptions generally, gave me, I ventured to think, some authority upon the question; and caused me to hope that the favour would be shown to me, which was accorded to other scholars, and to persons of distinction, of making me acquainted with these documents; which, if they should prove to be authentic, would unquestionably be of incalculable value.⁵⁹

Clermont-Ganneau admits that he 'entertained in advance most serious doubts' of the authenticity of the Deuteronomy manuscript, and that he came to London 'in order to settle these doubts. But I thought it my duty to pronounce no opinion until I had seen the originals.'⁶⁰ He continues his narrative:

As soon as I had arrived I went to the British Museum, where my learned and obliging friend, Dr. S. Birch, was kind enough to introduce me to Dr. Ginsburg, whom I found in the Manuscript Department, engaged in studying the fragments, in company with Mr. Shapira. Dr. Ginsburg was good enough to allow me to glance at two or three of the fragments which were before him,

and postponed until the next day but one (Friday), a more extended examination. He showed, however, some degree of hesitation; and finally expressed himself as uncertain whether it would be convenient or not to submit the fragments to me. It was agreed that I should have a decisive answer on Friday. I fancied that Dr. Ginsburg feared some encroachment on my part, in the matter of the priority of publication of a text which he has deciphered with a zeal, which I am happy to acknowledge, and which he has had the honour of first laying before the public.⁶¹

Through this very letter, of course, Clermont-Ganneau has done just that: encroached on Ginsburg's control of the announcement of his verdict on the scroll. Just as Clermont-Ganneau states that he was 'ready to bind myself to refrain from...publishing anything whatsoever on the contents of the fragments', he has done that very thing. He continues:

On Friday, I went again to the British Museum, and Mr. Bond, the principal librarian informed me, in the presence of my distinguished friend Mr. Newton, that he could not, to his great regret, submit the fragments to me; their owner, Mr. Shapira, having expressly refused his consent. There was nothing to be said against this. The owner was free to act as he pleased. It was his strict right, but it is also my right to record publicly this refusal, quite personal to me; and this, to some extent is the cause of this communication. I leave to public opinion the business of explaining this refusal... In these circumstances, the object of my mission became extremely difficult to attain, and I almost despaired of it.

Clermont-Ganneau persisted in his mission and based his conclusions on the 'hasty inspection of two or three pieces' he had handled on his first visit and 'the examination of two fragments' on public display. On Friday and Saturday, Clermont-Ganneau stood with 'the crowd of the curious pressing round these venerable relics' to reach his scholarly conclusion:

The fragments are the work of a modern forger... I am able to show, with the documents before me, how the forger went to work. He took one of those large synagogue rolls of leather, containing the Pentateuch, written in the square Hebrew character, and perhaps dating back two or three centuries, rolls which Mr. Shapira must be well acquainted with, for he deals in them.... The forger then cut off the lower edge of this roll — that which offered him the widest surface. He obtained in this way some narrow strips of leather with an appearance of comparative antiquity, which was still further heightened by the use of the proper chemical agents. On these strips of leather he wrote with ink, making use of the alphabet of the Moabite stone, and introducing such 'various readings' as fancy dictated, the passages from Deuteronomy which have been deciphered and translated by M. Ginsburg, with patience and learning worthy of better employment.

Clermont-Ganneau Aug. 18⁶²

As Ginsburg is patiently deciphering, transcribing, translating, editing, and publishing this manuscript (cf. fig. 1), Clermont-Ganneau is able to come to this quick and immediate conclusion, having been denied the opportunity to view the manuscript directly and then only a portion of it in the public display cases. He was denied access on Friday, 17 August, and spent Friday and Saturday doing his best to examine the manuscript. He wrote his letter on Saturday, 18 August, and it was published on Tuesday, 21 August.

In the same issue of the *Times*, Claude Conder of the Palestine Exploration Fund writes, 'I have no hesitation in concluding that the supposed fragments of Deuteronomy were deliberate forgeries.' As Ginsburg was working patiently to release his verdict, how distressing it must have been for him to have a scholarly opinion appear before his officially solicited judgement. This was especially true since Ginsburg's previous encounter with Clermont-Ganneau concerned which country would control the Moabite Stone: England, France, or Germany. Now the issue was who would control deciding the authenticity of the Shapira manuscript, and how embarrassing it would be if England purchased this manuscript when Germany had regarded it as a forgery.

On the other hand, one might ask: What took Ginsburg so long? And why did Strack and the other German scholars not share their impressions of the manuscript with their counterparts in England earlier, while the manuscript was first under consideration? In response to the second question, we have something of an explanation from Hermann Strack in his letter to the *Times*.⁶³ In response to the first question, we can turn to a letter that Ginsburg wrote to his daughter Ethel just after the Shapira incident, on 3 September 1883, from the British Museum:

My darling Ethel

... The excitement about the ms. has by no means ceased. You will probably have heard that last Saturday the *Spectator* the *Saturday Review* & other periodicals had still articles on the subject.

I do not think that the month which I spent on the ms. is time thrown away though it is a forgery and though the deciphering of it has nearly blinded me. Though I was sure the first week of my examination that it was a forgery yet the extraordinary cleverness and skill displayed in the production of it as well as the fact that a company were engaged in it made it absolutely necessary thoroughly to make it out, to translate it and to publish it before I gave the verdict and before publishing the Report. By so doing I made it impossible for this clever band of rogues to practice any more impositions.

Mr. Shapira has disappeared and the ms. is still here. I do wish you could come up to town to see it for it is so wonderfully clever. If I could afford it I would give £200 for it. There is such a demand for my Report that the British Museum have decided to reprint it with the original and my translation ...

Your affectionate father⁶⁴

From this letter we can see the great pride Ginsburg took in the notoriety that the entire incident brought him. We also see Ginsburg's own explanation about the timing of his report, and a clear statement that he, too, recognized that the manuscript was a forgery from the beginning. His explanation, however, is not compelling. If the manuscript was clearly a forgery, why did he spend a month working on it, when he was busy producing his volumes on the Masorah, his magnum opus? Given that deciphering the manuscript was difficult and taxing on his eyes, why did he bother to 'make it out, translate it, and publish it' rather than just presenting his scholarly opinion that the work was a forgery? Clearly Ginsburg saw the opportunity to create public interest in this manuscript and to establish himself as the defender of the British people from fraud and forgery.

Magnifying public interest in the manuscript also served to popularize Ginsburg's fields of scholarly interest, biblical studies and archaeology. Creating a public event served the interests of the Palestine Exploration Fund, the British Museum, and Ginsburg himself. Symbolically it established British scholarship in this field.⁶⁵ All of these reasons are more compelling than Ginsburg's statement that he 'made it impossible for this clever band of rogues to practice any more impositions.'

Ginsburg's comment to his daughter about desiring to purchase the manuscript is curious. Shapira's last letter to Ginsburg, on 23 August, states that Shapira will leave London in a day or two for Berlin. Five days later, Shapira wrote a long letter from Amsterdam to Edward A. Bond, the Principal Librarian of the British Museum, asking for reconsideration of Ginsburg's decision.⁶⁶ When Shapira left London, he left the manuscript behind, as Ginsburg wrote his daughter. Ginsburg's desire to purchase the manuscript is not surprising, even though he had just declared it a forgery. Ginsburg was a collector of Bible manuscripts, and he found this one intriguing and 'so wonderfully clever'. What is surprising is the £200 price he mentions.

Less than two years later, in July 1885, the British Museum would sell the manuscript at Sotheby's for £10 5s. to the bookseller Bernard Quaritch. Notice of the manuscript appeared in the 1887 Quaritch catalogue:

BIBLE. The most original MS. of Deuteronomy, from the hand of Moses ... as discovered by the late Mr. Shapira, and valued at £1,000,000; 15 separate fragments ... written in the primeval Hebrew character on strips of blackened leather, £25.

Ante Christum 1500 — A. D. 1880.⁶⁷

The description of the manuscript establishes both the identity of the scroll and its symbolic value to England: 'These are the famous fragments which Dr. Ginsburg so painfully deciphered and published in the Times, and which led the religious world of England to sing halleluiahs. The scoffing atheists of Germany and France had refused to acknowledge them genuine.'⁶⁸ The following year Quaritch exhibited the unsold manuscript at the 1887 exhibition of Anglo-Judaica.⁶⁹ The manuscript may have been acquired subsequently by Sir Charles Nicholson, as A. D. Crown suggests, and has since disappeared, perhaps destroyed in the fire in Nicholson's home near London in 1899.⁷⁰ Given Ginsburg's own interest in the manuscript and its inexpensive price in both 1885 and 1886, it is surprising that he did not purchase it himself. His quotation of the £200 price to his daughter, moreover, does not fit the facts. Perhaps Ginsburg was concerned about the appearance of impropriety in purchasing a manuscript that he had declared to be a forgery.

The manuscript remained famous for some years after Ginsburg's verdict was released, and the entire incident was one of the most celebrated scholarly controversies of the nineteenth century. By examining the historical context, we can see that Ginsburg did more than simply expose a forgery. The entire episode symbolized the scholarly competence of the British and their approach to biblical archaeology and documents. The British emerged triumphantly as careful and thorough investigators, not bested by

the French nor by the Germans. Thus did an 1883 encounter between two East European-born Christian converts, Shapira and Ginsburg, destroy one man and establish the other as a guardian of the reputation and the resources of the British people.⁷¹

¹ Most basic primary source documents are collected in British Library, Add. MS. 41294, 'Papers Relative to M. W. Shapira's Forged MS. of Deuteronomy (A. D. 1883-1884)' [a xerox reproduction of these papers is also held in the Oriental and India Office Collections, Or. MS. 14706]; and in Or. MS. 14705, 'Documents connected with the Shapira M.S. of Deuteronomy, Moabite Pottery, etc.' The latter is a photographic reproduction of an original dossier, or album, comprised of press-clippings, articles, and manuscript notes assembled by William Simpson, London, 1884. (The photographic reproduction of the album was kindly donated to the British Library in 1992 by the Valmadonna Trust, London, which holds the original.) Other contemporary accounts of the incident are contained in: 'The Shapira Manuscripts', *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement*, Oct. 1883, pp. 195-209; Hermann Guthe, *Fragmente einer Lederhandschrift enthaltend Mose's letzte Rede an die Kinder Israel* (Leipzig, 1883); Franz Delitzsch, 'Schapira's Pseudo-Deuteronomium', *Allgemeine Lutherische Kirchenzeitung* (Leipzig), 7 Sept. 1883 (cf. pp. 844-6, 869-71, 893-4, and 914-16); C. Clermont-Ganneau, in *Revue politique et littéraire*, xxxii, no. 13 (29 Sept. 1883), and in his *Les fraudes archéologiques en Palestine* (Paris, 1885), ch. iii-iv; *Autobiography of Sir Walter Besant* (New York, 1902; reprinted 1971), pp. 161-7; and A. C. R. Carter, 'Shapira, the Bible Forger', in his *Let Me Tell You...* (London, 1940), pp. 216-19.

A second group of publications followed reports, in 1956, of the investigation of Menahem Mansoor as reported in the *New York Times* (13 Aug. 1956) and the *London Jewish Chronicle* (28 Dec. 1956). Mansoor's research is presented best in his article, 'The Case of Shapira's Dead Sea (Deuteronomy) Scrolls of 1883', in *Transactions of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters*, xlvii (1958), pp. 183-225; Mansoor concludes that 'neither the internal nor the external evidence... supports the idea of a

forgery' and that 'there is justification... for a re-examination of the case' (p. 225). Mansoor's conclusion is attacked by M. H. Goshen-Gottstein in 'The Shapira Forgery and the Qumran Scrolls', *Journal of Jewish Studies*, vii (1956), pp. 187-93, and in 'The Qumran Scrolls and the Shapira Forgery', *Haaretz*, 28 Dec. 1956 (in Hebrew); and by Oskar K. Rabinowicz, 'The Shapira Forgery Mystery', *Jewish Quarterly Review*, N. S., xlvii (1956-7), pp. 170-83. Mansoor is supported by J. L. Teicher, 'The Genuineness of the Shapira Manuscripts', *Times Literary Supplement*, 22 Mar. 1957. See also the *Jewish Chronicle* (London) for 15 Feb. and 9 and 16 Aug. of 1957.

Additional studies of the incident include: John Marco Allegro, *The Shapira Affair* (Garden City, New York, 1965); O. K. Rabinowicz, 'The Shapira Scroll: A Nineteenth-Century Forgery', *Jewish Quarterly Review*, lvi (1965/6), pp. 1-21; A. D. Crown, 'The Fate of the Shapira Scroll', *Revue de Qumran*, viii (1970), pp. 421-3; Neil Asher Silberman, 'One Million Pounds Sterling: the Rise and Fall of Moses Wilhelm Shapira, 1883-1885', in his *Digging for God and Country: Exploration, Archeology, and the Secret Struggle for the Holy Land, 1799-1917* (New York, 1982), pp. 131-46; Menahem Mansoor, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Textbook and Study Guide*, 2nd edn. (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1983), ch. xxv, pp. 215-24; Colette Sirat, 'Les Fragments Shapira', *Revue des études juives*, cxliii (1984), pp. 95-111; and most recently Hendrik Budde, 'Die Affäre um die "Moabitischen Althertüemer"', in Hendrik Budde and Mordechai Lewy, *Von Halle nach Jerusalem: Halle — ein Zentrum der Palästina-Kunde im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert* (Halle, 1994), pp. 106-17, esp. item V/24.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Some shorter accounts are found in the *Revue des études juives*, vii (1884), p. 316; J. Jacobs, 'Shapira, M. W.', *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. xi (New York and London, 1905), p. 232-3; F. F. Bruce, 'Shapira Fragments', *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. xiv (Jerusalem, 1972), cols. 1301-2; S. Fisch, *Shapira the*

Forger and the Midrash Haggadol (Leeds, [c. 1961], mimeograph), pp. 1–3; H. Rabinowicz, 'The Shapira Manuscript Mystery', *Jewish Chronicle* (London), 13 Mar. 1964, pp. 9 and 50; Albert van der Heide, 'De Shapira-affaire', *Alef Beet: Tijdschrift van de Vereniging tot Bevordering van Kennis van Hebreëws*, iv, no. 2 (1994), pp. 28–31; idem, 'Vijftien reepjes leer maakten Wilhelm Moses Shapira kapot', *Nieuw Israelitisch Weekblad* (4 Mar. 1994); and N. A. Silberman, *The Hidden Scrolls: Christianity, Judaism, and the War for the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London, 1995), pp. 36–9. Various newspaper accounts are cited in a number of the studies.

There are several fictionalized accounts of the affair. Firstly, there is the autobiographical novel by Shapira's daughter, Myriam Harry [Perrault-Harry], *La petite Fille de Jérusalem* (Paris, 1914), first published in English translation in 1911; see also the supplement by Yaakov Asia, 'Parashat Shapira', in his Hebrew translation of Harry's novel entitled *Bat Yerushalayim ha-ketanah*. Harry's second book, *La Conquête de Jérusalem* (Paris, 1903), also contains material relating to the affair; cf. the English translation, *The Conquest of Jerusalem* (London, 1905), pp. 118–19 and 164–73. The Israeli historical novel by Shulamit Lapid, *Ke-heres ha-nishbar* [*As a Broken Vessel*] (Jerusalem, 1984), is based on the Shapira affair.

There have also been several television and radio programmes on the Shapira affair in Israel and Canada, including a film produced in 1980 by Kastel Enterprises in Tel-Aviv (on which correspondence was conducted with Quaritch in London), and more recently for CBC Radio, Toronto, in 1992, edited by Margaret Horsfield. Thanks are due to Mr Nicholas Poole-Wilson of Bernard Quaritch Ltd. for making available his 'Shapira correspondence' file, based on regular queries to Quaritch over the years. According to Mr Poole-Wilson, hope never fades at Quaritch that the fragments will still turn up, in a drawer or behind a wall.

It is worth noting, finally, that Theodor Gaster, in a memoir of his father Moses Gaster, recounts that his father possessed a 'roll of leather inscribed with a portion of Deuteronomy in characters very much like those of the Dead Sea Scrolls. (My father thought it might be part of the notorious Shapira frauds, but my recollection is that the script was very different and

that the column was a narrow, vertical one, and not written longitudinally, as were those fabrications.)' See 'Theodor's Memoir', appended to Moses Gaster, *Memoirs*, ed. Bertha Gaster (London, 1990; printed privately), p. 111; the memoir was first published as the 'Prolegomenon' to Moses Gaster's *Studies and texts in folklore, magic, medieval romance, Hebrew apocrypha and Samaritan archaeology*, vol. i (New York, 1971). Theodor Gaster does not record the subsequent fate of this particular 'roll of leather' in his father's library, which was kept in their dining-room cupboard. Most of Gaster's Hebrew manuscripts were acquired, before and after his death, by the British Museum and the John Rylands Library in Manchester, but the whereabouts of this possible 'Shapira scroll' is unknown.]

- 2 *Autobiography of Sir Walter Besant* (New York, 1971), p. 161.
- 3 *The Athenæum*, no. 2911 (11 Aug. 1883), p. 178; no. 2912 (18 Aug. 1883), p. 206; no. 2913 (25 Aug. 1883), p. 242.
- 4 *Jewish Chronicle* (London), 3 Aug. 1883, p. 13.
- 5 *The Times*, 22 Aug. 1883.
- 6 Letter of M. W. Shapira to C. D. Ginsburg, 23 Aug. 1883 (BL, Add. MS. 41294, document F).
- 7 John Hillaby, 'American Revives Bible Scroll Case', *New York Times* (13 Aug. 1956), p. 1. See also the subsequent article, 'Scholars Dispute Scrolls' Validity', *New York Times* (28 Dec. 1956), p. 14.
- 8 For a description of the history of the Shapira scroll after 1883, and a possible solution to its disappearance, see A. D. Crown, cited above.
- 9 *The Times*, 9 Mar. 1914.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 6.
- 11 *Punch*, 8 Sept. 1883: *Punch's Fancy Portraits*, no. 152.
- 12 EDITOR'S NOTE: A survey of the various Hebrew manuscript collections assembled by Shapira is provided by Benjamin Richler in his *Guide to Hebrew Manuscript Collections* (Jerusalem, 1994), p. 175. On Shapira's earlier and 'uncontested' Hebrew manuscript offerings to the British Museum, see his own handwritten 'List of Hebrew Manuscripts mostly from Saana in Arabia [Yemen]', c. 1880, 28 ff., preserved in the Department of [Western] Manuscripts, British Library, as Add. MS. 41293 [a xerox reproduction of this list is also in the Oriental and India Office Collections, Or. MS. 14707]; H.

Derenbourg, 'Les Manuscrits judaïques entrés au British Museum de 1887 à 1890 [nos. Or. 11 – Or. 4117]', *Revue des études juives*, xxiii (1891), pp. 99–116, 279–301 ('les manuscrits hébreux, provenant de Schapira', Or. 1451–1490; 'ceux qui ont été apportés de San'à par lui et d'autres', Or. 2210–2230; 'le magnifique fonds karaïte acheté à Schapira', Or. 2459–2602); J. Leveen's introduction to the index volume of G. Margoliouth, *Catalogue of the Hebrew and Samaritan Manuscripts in the British Museum*, part iv (London, 1935; reprinted 1977), pp. viii–ix; H. M. Rabinowicz, *Jewish Literary Treasures of England and America* (New York and London, 1962), pp. 19–22; and D. Rowland Smith, 'Genizah collections in The British Library', in D. Rowland Smith and P. S. Salinger (eds.), *Hebrew Studies*, British Library Occasional Papers, xiii (London, 1991), pp. 21–2.

On Shapira's Karaite manuscripts acquired by the Museum, see Reinhart Hoerning, *British Museum Karaite Manuscripts: Descriptions and Collation of Six Karaite Manuscripts of portions of the Hebrew Bible in Arabic Characters...* (London, 1889), and on these same manuscripts see also now Geoffrey Khan, *Karaite Bible Manuscripts from the Cairo Genizah* (Cambridge, 1990), esp. p. ix; Derenbourg, op. cit.; S. Poznański, 'Die Qirqisāni-Handschriften im British Museum', in *Festschrift zum achtzigsten Geburtstage Moritz Steinschneider's* [*Tehilah le-Moshe*] (Leipzig, 1896), pp. 195–218, and G. Margoliouth's review in *Zeitschrift für hebräische Bibliographie*, ii (1897), pp. 99–100; H. Ben-Shammai, 'Some Judaeo-Arabic Karaite Fragments in the British Museum Collection', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, xxxviii (London, 1975), pp. 126–32. See also [R. Hoerning], 'Karaite MSS.' [List of Karaite Manuscripts in the British Museum], unpublished handlist, c. 1885, held in the Hebrew Section of the British Library; Poznański's '[List of Karaite Manuscripts in the] British Museum', among his handwritten location lists preserved in the Poznański Archive in the Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem; and G. Tamani, 'Repertorio dei manoscritti ebraici caraiti', *Henoch: Studi storiografologici sull'ebraismo*, i (Turin, 1979), p. 277. (None of the latter three works makes reference to Shapira as provenance of specific MSS.) For lists (of Shapira's manu-

scripts) held in the Staatsbibliothek, Berlin, see M. Steinschneider, *Verzeichnis der hebräischen Handschriften* [in the Royal Library] (Berlin, 1878–97), vol. i, p. v, and nos. 176 and 176^b, and Richler, op. cit.

Among the Hebrew collections which Shapira helped build was that of Adolf Sutro in San Francisco, on which see the published catalogue by W. M. Brinner, *Sutro Library Hebraica* (San Francisco, 1966), pp. iii–iv, and also S. Roubin [Rubin], *Sefer Torah katwo be-yad rabi Mosheh ben Maimun: A Scroll of the law supposed to have been written by Maimonides* (San Francisco, 1894), p. 13. See also Roubin's typescript *Catalogue of the Hebrew and Arabic Manuscripts in the Sutro Library* (San Francisco, 1894); the unpublished catalogue by Ephraim Deinard, *Reshimat Kitve yad me-'otsar ha-sefarim shel ha-gevir ha-sar ha-'adon Adolf Sutro* [*Catalogue of the old Hebrew and Arabic Manuscripts of the Library of the Hon. Adolph Sutro*] (San Francisco, 1897); and another unpublished catalogue, prepared under the Work Projects Administration, by J. Saloman, J. Friedman, and J. J. Davidson, *Catalogue of the Hebrew and Arabic Manuscripts in the Sutro Library* (San Francisco, 1938–41). On the Sutro collection and its catalogues, see Louis I. Newman, 'Solomon Roubin and Ephraim Deinard, cataloguers of the Hebraica in the Sutro Library in San Francisco', in W. J. Fischel (ed.), *Semitic and Oriental Studies: a volume presented to William Popper* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1951), pp. 355–64. There is also an unpublished (?) report on this collection by G. A. Kohut, 'Description of the Hebrew-Arabic Manuscripts at the Sutro Library, San Francisco, California', Dallas, s.a. (c. 1898), 2 pp. (now held in the Oriental and India Office Collections of the British Library, Or. MS. 14700). On Deinard and the Sutro collection, see also Simcha Berkowitz, *Ephraim Deinard (1846–1930): A Transitional Figure*, M.A. thesis, Columbia University, New York, 1964, pp. 43–4 and 58; on Deinard and Shapira, and in particular for Deinard's view of the Shapira affair, see Deinard's *Zikhronot bat 'ami* [*Memoirs of Jewish life in Russia*] (St Louis, 1920), pp. 133–42.

13 The novel was published in English, under the same pseudonym, as *The Little Daughter of Jerusalem* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1919). On Shapira's status as a British Museum corre-

- spondent, see John Marco Allegro, *The Shapira Affair* (New York, 1965), p. 17, and the editor's note above.
- 14 Leveen, op. cit. Leveen, although reversing Shapira's initials, confirms (p. ix, n. 1) that 'It was this bookseller who offered to the Museum fragments of the Pentateuch on leather purporting to be of extreme antiquity, but afterward discovered to be forgeries.'
 - 15 *The Athenæum*, no. 2855 (15 July 1882), p. 80; no. 2856 (22 July 1882), pp. 113-14.
 - 16 *Ibid.*, 2 July 1882, p. 114.
 - 17 *Ibid.*, no. 2805 (30 July 1881), p. 144; no. 2806 (6 Aug. 1881), p. 176; no. 2807 (13 Aug. 1881), p. 208.
 - 18 C. D. Ginsburg, 'The Karaites: Their History and Literature', in *Proceedings of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Liverpool*, xvi (1861-2), pp. 155-70. (This essay was also listed among other works by Ginsburg in *The Moabite Stone* [London, 1871] as available directly from the publisher, Reeves and Turner [i.e., as a separate off-print].)
 - 19 *The Athenæum*, no. 2892 (31 Mar. 1883), p. 409.
 - 20 Reinhart Hoerning, *British Museum Karaite Manuscripts: Descriptions and Collation of Six Karaite Manuscripts*, p. v.
 - 21 *Ibid.*, p. xii.
 - 22 *Ibid.*, dedication page (unpaginated).
 - 23 C. D. Ginsburg, 'Journal of an Expedition to Moab, 1872' (BL, Add. MS. 41291), p. 13.
 - 24 *Ibid.*, p. 18.
 - 25 M. W. Shapira, letter to Hermann Strack, Jerusalem, 9 May 1883 (BL, Add. MS. 41294, document B), and M. W. Shapira, letter to Edward A. Bond, Amsterdam, 28 Aug. 1883 (BL, Add. MS. 41294, document H).
 - 26 Shapira to Strack; Jerusalem, 9 May 1883, p. 1.
 - 27 *Ibid.*, p. 2.
 - 28 *Ibid.*, p. 4.
 - 29 *Ibid.*, p. 5.
 - 30 *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.
 - 31 *Ibid.*, p. 10.
 - 32 *Ibid.*
 - 33 Hermann L. Strack, letter to the *Times*, 4 Sept. 1883, p. 6.
 - 34 Shapira to Edward A. Bond, Amsterdam, 28 Aug. 1883, p. 1.
 - 35 *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.
 - 36 Hermann L. Strack, letter to the *Times*, 4 Sept. 1883, p. 6.
 - 37 Hermann Guthe, *Fragmente einer Lederhandschrift*, p. 1.
 - 38 *Ibid.*
 - 39 Neil Asher Silberman, *Digging for God and Country*, p. 139.
 - 40 Strack, letter to the *Times*, 4 Sep. 1883, p. 6. See also 'Report from Berlin', *Times*, 28 Aug. 1883; and Allegro, *The Shapira Affair*, p. 46. The unsigned 'Report from Berlin' in the *Times* states that 'This committee consisted of Professor Dillmann, of the Hebrew Chair; Professor Sachau, the distinguished Orientalist; Professor Schrader, the celebrated Assyriologist; Professor Ermann, another Hebrew scholar; and Dr. Schneider [*sic*], who in the years between 1852 and 1860, compiled the valuable catalogue of Hebrew books, &c., in the Bodleian Library at Oxford', as well as 'Professor Lepsius, the famous Egyptologist, who is keeper of the Royal Library'. Strack refers to those present at the meeting as 'several other scholars (Professor Dillman [*sic*], Professor Sachau, &c.)'. Allegro (p. 46) enumerates this 'high-powered body of scholars' as Professors Richard Lepsius, August Dillmann, Eduard Sachau, Adolf Ermann, and Dr Moritz Steinschneider. The *Times* report incorrectly refers to Moritz Steinschneider as 'Dr. Schneider', but it is unclear whether the 'Prof. Schrader' mentioned is the same as Prof. Schroeder, who had declared the manuscript genuine and offered to purchase it. Strack, in his letter to the *Times*, states that 'Nothing of this was then made public, because no one in Berlin for a moment supposed that the codex in question would be the object of further discussion', implying that Schroeder was not present.

The *Times*'s 'Report from Berlin' similarly cites no dissenting opinion: '...they unanimously pronounced the alleged codex to be a clever and impudent forgery ... so satisfied were the committee with the general internal evidence ... that they deemed it unnecessary to call for further proof.' The committee, according to this account, did not share completely their verdict with Shapira: 'the committee deemed that it was not at all incumbent upon them to demonstrate a negative, and therefore told the expectant Mr. Shapira that they were disinclined to enter into a bargain with him. They were quite willing, it is true, to buy his wares, though only as an

- example of what could really be done in the way of literary fabrication.'
- 41 'The Shapira Manuscripts', *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement*, Oct. 1883, p. 195.
 - 42 Invitation sent by Besant (in BL, Add. MS. 41294).
 - 43 This is BL, Or. MS. 14705, the album (or rather photographic reproduction thereof) referred to above, in n. 1. The meeting is also described in a letter from Besant to Ginsburg, 2 Jan. 1884 (BL, Add. MS. 41294, document G). See also *Autobiography of Sir Walter Besant* (New York, 1902), pp. 161-4; and Allegro, *The Shapira Affair*, pp. 48-51.
 - 44 *Autobiography of Sir Walter Besant*, p. 162.
 - 45 *Ibid.*, p. 161.
 - 46 *Times*, 3 Aug. 1883; *Jewish Chronicle* (London), 3 Aug. 1883, p. 13.
 - 47 *Times*, 8 Aug. 1883, p. 11; *Jewish Chronicle*, 10 Aug. 1883, p. 10; *The Athenæum*, no. 2911 (11 Aug. 1883), p. 178.
 - 48 *The Athenæum*, no. 2912 (18 Aug. 1883), p. 206.
 - 49 *The Athenæum*, no. 2913 (25 Aug. 1883), pp. 242-4; the quotation is on p. 244.
 - 50 Over forty contemporary newspaper accounts of the incident, from English and European newspapers and journals, are included in Add. MS. 41294, 'Papers relative to M. W. Shapira's forged MS. of Deuteronomy', given to the British Library by Ginsburg.
 - 51 *Ibid.*, Documents D and E.
 - 52 BL, Or. MS. 14705; separate undated note by William Simpson.
 - 53 *The Academy*, no. 588 (11 Aug. 1883), pp. 99-100. See also n. 49, above.
 - 54 M. W. Shapira to C. D. Ginsburg, London, 23 Aug. 1883 (BL, Add. MS. 41294, document F).
 - 55 On the Moabite Stone, see now H. Budde, 'Die Affäre um die "Moabitischen Althertümer"', in *Von Halle nach Jerusalem*, cited in n. 1, and G. Lehrer-Jacobson, *Fakes and Forgeries from Collections in Israel*, exhibition catalogue of the Eretz Israel Museum (Tel-Aviv, 1989), pp. 12 ff.
 - 56 C. D. Ginsburg, *The Moabite Stone: A Facsimile of the Original Inscription, with an English Translation, and a Historical and Critical Commentary*, 2nd edn. (London, 1871), p. 10.
 - 57 *Ibid.*, p. 10.
 - 58 Letter to the *Times* by Clermont-Ganneau, dated 18 August. The letter appeared in the *Times*, 21 Aug. 1883, p. 8.
 - 59 *Ibid.*
 - 60 *Ibid.*
 - 61 *Ibid.*
 - 62 *Ibid.*
 - 63 Strack writes, as stated above, that 'Nothing of this was then made public, because no one in Berlin for a moment supposed that the codex in question would be the object of further discussion' (letter to the *Times*, 4 Sept. 1883, p. 6). In writing this letter on 31 August, Strack seems unaware of Guthe's publication about the manuscript, or chooses to ignore it.
 - 64 BL, Add. MS. 57486, document H.
 - 65 On this point see also Allegro, *The Shapira Affair*, especially ch. 10, pp. 74 ff.
 - 66 Shapira to Ginsburg (Add. MS. 41294, document F); Shapira to Edward A. Bond (Add. MS. 41294, document H).
 - 67 Bernard Quaritch, *A General Catalogue of Books offered to the public at the affixed prices* (London, 1887), vol. iii, p. 3192, lot no. 32270. The description corresponds with the Sotheby sale catalogue, 'The Shapira [*sic*] Manuscripts, no. 302, Deuteronomy in Hebrew, 7 numbered and 8 unnumbered fragments, *written on leather*.' A copy of the latter description appears in Harry Rabinowicz, 'The Shapira Manuscript Mystery', *Jewish Chronicle* (London), 13 Mar. 1964, p. 9. One notes that the Quaritch catalogue does not refer to the manuscript outright as a forgery.
 - 68 Quaritch, *op. cit.* The Quaritch description fails to mention that the 'famous fragments' were declared a forgery by Ginsburg. One interpretation of the phrase 'led the religious world of England to sing halleluiahs' is that Ginsburg's evaluation and judgement preserved the authenticity of the authorized text of Deuteronomy. The Shapira manuscript, after all, represented a conflicting version of the book and challenged the received biblical text. In addition, Ginsburg's verdict saved the British people world embarrassment by not accepting as authentic a manuscript that European authorities had declared a forgery. But the last sentence of the Quaritch 1887 description implies that the British religious community accepted what the 'scoffing atheists' of Germany and France 'had refused to acknowledge [*as*] genuine'. In fact, Ginsburg, Clermont-Ganneau, and Strack all came to the same conclusion: that the scroll was a forgery. Perhaps Quaritch himself was not

convinced and thought that the scroll might be authentic and have religious relevance.

69 J. Jacobs and L. Wolf (compilers), *Catalogue of the Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition, Royal Albert Hall, London, 1887* (London, 1888), p. 136, no. 2091.

70 See A. D. Crown, 'The Fate of the Shapira Scroll', and also Harry Rabinowicz, 'The Shapira Manuscript Mystery', both cited above.

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