

The Discovery and Exploration of the Jewish Catacomb of the Vigna Randanini in Rome

Records, Research, and Excavations through 1895

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“Il cimitero di Vigna Randanini e’ il punto di partenza per tutto lo studio della civiltà ebraica.”

Felice Barnabei (1896)

At the meeting of the Papal Commission for Sacred Archaeology (CDAS) on July 21, 1859, Giovanni Battista de Rossi was of strong opinion that a newly discovered catacomb in Rome not be placed under the Commission’s care.¹ Equally surprising was the reason. The “Founder of Christian Archaeology” was, in fact, quite sure that the catacomb had belonged to Rome’s ancient Jews. His conclusions were drawn from the very earliest stages of the excavation, within sight of the catacombs he himself was researching on the Appian Way southeast of Rome. They would nonetheless determine much of the final outcome of the dig.

The CDAS had been established just a few years before in 1852 “to administer and conserve all the catacombs on Roman soil.” In reality, it was the new custodian of Rome’s early Christian sites.² This left little room for continued generalizations about the catacombs. They were now subject to close study by de Rossi for their excavation and content and what such data could reveal about the early Church. Following years of practice, de Rossi was unable to verify “signs of Christianity” in a site nearly identical in form and function to the Christian catacombs in Rome. He chose to define the catacomb he had seen on the Appia as exclusively Jewish rather than endorse the suggestion by other Antiquities officials that further excavation would evidence the cemetery’s transition from Jewish into Christian hands.³

None of these considerations detracted from what de Rossi considered a significant find, and his constant attentions led many to hope that he himself would make something of the Randanini site in continuing research on Subterranean Rome. De Rossi was one of the first to visit the new “Jewish” hypogeum in 1859, and inspected it on numerous occasions thereafter in his official capacity as Counselor to the Antiquities Commission and member of the CDAS.⁴ The Jewish catacomb in the “famous” Vigna Randanini is one of the first things mentioned in de Rossi’s *Bullettino di Archeologia Cristiana*, launched in January of 1863.⁵ His notes today are the

single most valuable source for epitaphs and small finds from the site.⁶ But the catacomb itself contained nothing that required clerical oversight instead of that routinely performed by de Rossi’s antiquarian colleagues at the Papal Court.

On de Rossi’s recommendation, the CDAS did not assume control over the “Jewish” site.⁷ Its declaration, “la catacomba non e’ di nostra pertinenza,” became CDAS policy for the next fifty years, even as three other Jewish catacombs came to light in various parts of Rome’s *suburbium*.⁸ In each case, the discovery was accidental and the excavation privately conducted: the sites themselves were all eventually abandoned or destroyed. De Rossi and his colleagues at the CDAS voluntarily published what they could of these ancient Jewish cemeteries, for the historical record if nothing else, but already had more than they could handle in Rome’s early Christian remains, equally at risk from the city’s speculative growth at this time. As a result, the fate of the Jewish catacombs in Rome well into the twentieth century is best known from bureaucratic “paper trails” that highlight important moments of discovery but also the gaps in communication and oversight that leave many details still obscure.

No government file seems thicker than that on the Jewish catacomb found in 1859 below land that had belonged until recently to the family of CDAS secretary Mons. Felice Profili. Known even today as the “catacomb of the Vigna Randanini” after the property owner who first made its discovery known, its excavation was treated with marked differences from those in the neighboring “Christian” sites, although the hard labor and primitive methodology employed in all such undertakings no doubt remained much the same. As a non-Christian site beyond de Rossi’s and the CDAS’s direct control, the catacomb was accessible to a different set of scholars eager to investigate rare material evidence of the Jews in ancient Rome. These men saw to it that the catacomb would never again be forgotten. But the catacomb’s rare fame and con-

tinued accessibility also led to unregulated exploitation and spoliation of the site.

The suit filed in 1870 against the Randanini for their illegal sale of Jewish artifacts by a bankrupt and nearly powerless Papal State contains the original excavation licenses, site reports, meeting minutes and other official communication on the Jewish catacomb between 1859 and 1870. What it best reveals, if anything, is the struggle of the Roman authorities to enforce legal measures to protect the city's antiquities while encouraging what would otherwise not have been accomplished without funding from a private source. The drama that unfolds during the second half of the nineteenth century in this archaeological dig thus leaves modern visitors with a curious, though hardly complete, understanding of the site.

LOCATION AND APPEARANCE OF THE SITE "INTER II ET III MILLIARI"

The catacomb was discovered in 1859 below a triangular strip of land roughly two kilometers outside the Republican city walls of Rome. The land itself covers five and a half *ettari* (1 *ettaro* = circa 10,000 square meters) over an irregular slope that

risers to a maximum height of fifty-one meters above sea level in the face of the low-lying basilica and cemetery of St. Sebastian's "ad catacumbas."⁹ Its confines today are defined by the Appian Way, via Appia Pignatelli and a secondary road, one of many to cross the site since Roman times to provide access from the main consular road, the Appia, to neighboring estates.¹⁰ A number of these routes were maintained during the Middle Ages to provide access to the church and monastery of Saint Sebastian's.¹¹ The land above the Jewish catacombs was for many centuries part of this church's estates, and its subterranean vaults were easily confused with those of the nearby Christian cemeteries.¹² Plans of the area from the mid-nineteenth century (shortly before the Jewish catacomb's discovery) indicate a great network of galleries and cubicula below the vineyard, reaching the circus and villa of the Roman Emperor Maxentius on the estate of "La Giostra."¹³ (Figure 1)

At the time of the mid-nineteenth century excavations, the property held a small inn, laborers' cottage, antiquities chamber and wine cellar.¹⁴ Presently, the "Ristorante Caecilia Metella" and the private "Villa di San Sebastiano" occupy these sites. Both are conditioned, at least in theory, by stringent "vincoli archeologici."¹⁵

Most of the estimated 18,000 square meters of underground space for the catacomb is excavated out of the geo-

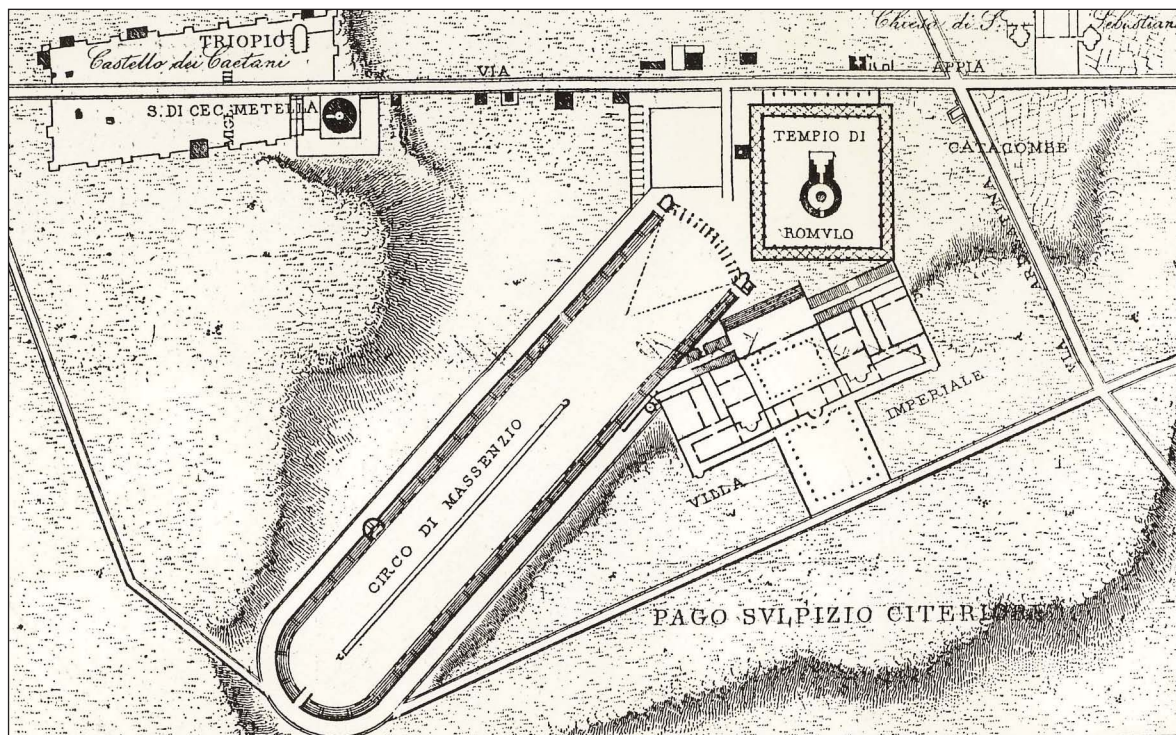


Figure 1. L. Canina plan ca. 1850, indicating area of "catacombs" opposite the Church of Saint Sebastian. G. Ripostelli & O. Marucchi, *La Via Appia a l'epoque Romaine et de nos jours: histoire et description*, Rome, 1908, p. 120.

logical layers of *pozzolanella* and *tuffo terroso* between 5 and 16.30 meters below the surface level.¹⁶ Nearly all the excavated areas (about 700 meters of galleries) are still accessible today, although the public itinerary on two levels covers little more than half the site (400 meters).¹⁷ Recent topographical studies show the non-cohesive development of the site through the joining of separately excavated hypogaea and creation of distinct catacomb regions of limited extent.¹⁸ The accompanying plan identifies these regions and other structural features of the site. (Figure 2)

EXCAVATIONS ON THE PROPERTY PRIOR TO THE DISCOVERY OF THE CATACOMB

Medieval guides to Christian cemeteries and shrines make no mention of Jewish catacombs in Rome.¹⁹ Generations of tomb robbers, however, did not discriminate among the pagan, Jewish and Christian sites. The Vigna Randanini cat-

acomb shows every sign of having been pillaged prior to 1859. One underground area seen in 1860 had been so thoroughly stripped of its contents that it was impossible to state with certainty that it was part of the Jewish cemetery.²⁰ The Jesuit archaeologist Raffaele Garrucci describes an “annex” to the Jewish catacomb (areas A–B) found in 1862 already emptied of nearly all epitaphs except for one propped up against the wall of a stairway and another found in pieces in two different areas of the site.²¹ Laborers were well aware of the hypogaea below the vineyard, and thought they belonged to the catacombs of Saint Sebastian.²² A number of studies even date the catacomb’s discovery to 1857, the year of excavations in the nearby Vigna Grandi.²³ This confusion over a major archaeological find is hardly surprising, given the legal restrictions of the time forbidding excavation inside a catacomb.²⁴ An underground cemetery of this type would be one of the very last discoveries that a nineteenth century antiquities hunter would hope to make in a costly, privately sponsored dig.

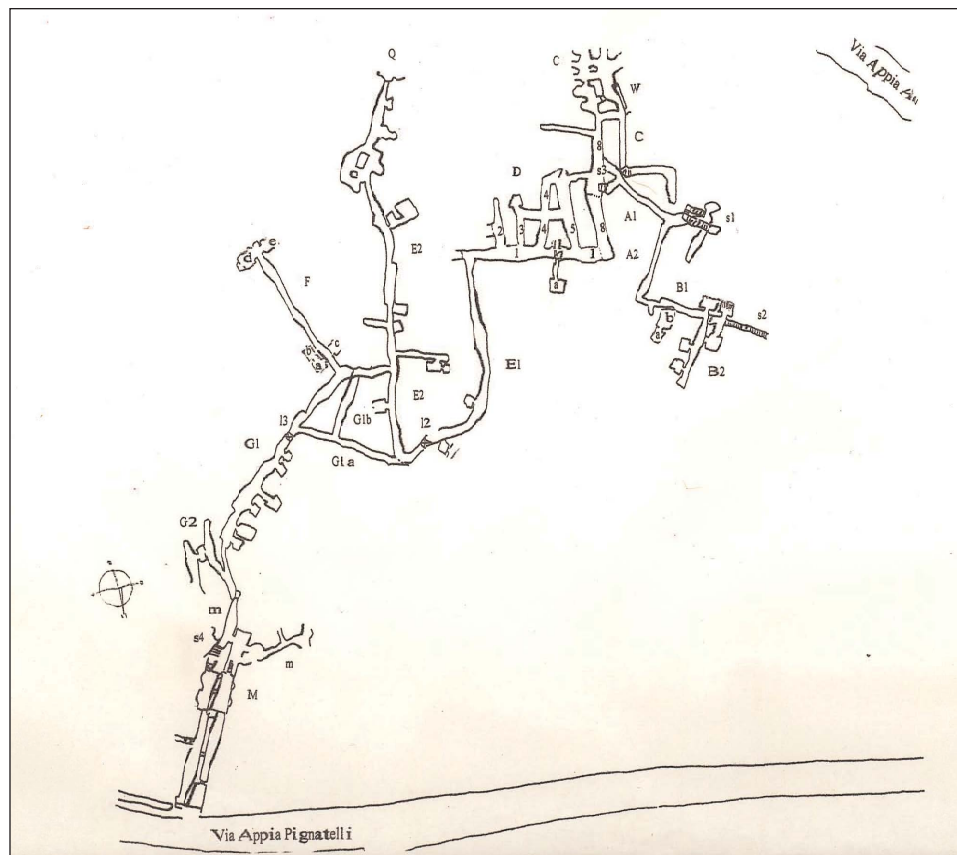


Figure 2. Plan of the Vigna Randanini catacomb with regional distinctions. Author’s elaboration on the 1984 PCAS plan.



Figure 3. “Tomb of the First Century, built of fine brickwork, over the Catacomb of the Jews.” J. H. Parker photograph, n. 1755 (ca. 1868).

Though silent on the Jewish catacombs, sources indicate that the excavations in the Randanini vineyard beginning in the late 1850s were, in fact, the last in a series of over half a millennium or more. Of the rich Roman necropolis brought to light in these digs, one monument remains, a “tempietto” of the second century CE identified in sketches of Ligorio, Serlio, Peruzzi and others, as well as in a print of Carlo Labruzzi’s and photograph for J. H. Parker in 1868.²⁵ This brick temple-tomb sits atop the hillcrest above several *columbaria* chambers partially exposed in Labruzzi’s print. The opening of a *lucernarium* or skylight for the Jewish catacomb (L3) is very close to this site. (Figure 3)

Ligorio’s drawings also preserve the memory of more temple-tombs, *columbaria* and possibly *tumuli*.²⁶ The condition of these tombs was already quite poor by the mid-sixteenth century, and if not destroyed or trapped in the foundations of later buildings, they were reburied and their exact location soon forgotten. Great time and expense was spent to “discover” many of these same monuments in later times that produced very disappointing results in the way of inscriptions and funerary goods. The recent widening of the Appia

and rebuilding of the walls around the property have once again exposed tomb foundations by the road.²⁷

Yet the uneven terrain and occasional cave-in of the slopes above the Appia still convinced many that objects of great value lay beneath.²⁸ The last decade of the eighteenth century witnessed a new flurry of archaeological activity in the vineyard by the Irish antiquarian Robert Fagan.²⁹ In the decades that followed, the archaeologist who would later grant the Randanini permission to excavate led his own dig on the site. This was the Baron Pietro Ercole Visconti (1802–1880), who, in 1825, obtained permission to excavate on properties leased to Gaetano and Alessandro Profili (brothers of CDAS secretary Felice Profili) near the “giostra” or *girolum* (i.e. the Circus of Maxentius). The list of artifacts found during this dig and on other “fortunate” occasions clearly indicates the discovery of a tomb or tombs, but the results were hardly spectacular, influencing, no doubt, Visconti’s initial view of the Randanini excavations as “unpromising.”³⁰ Further archaeological explorations, as well as pozzolana quarrying in the Profili vineyards, brought to light other monumental remains, but the property itself was divided and sold by 1850.³¹ The Randanini took over one part of the estate, and Benedetto Grandi rented other areas by the small side street known as the vicolo di S. Urbano (or “vicolo della Basilica di S. Sebastiano”).³²

DISCOVERY ON MAY 1, 1859 OF THE “CATACOMB OF THE JEWS”

It did not take long for Giuseppe Randanini—a money-changer by trade—to join forces with the architect Ignazio del Frate to speculate on the vineyard’s ancient remains.³³ On April 7, 1859, the two men submitted a formal petition to excavate on a property Randanini had leased “in enfiteusi” from the Monastery of Saint Sebastian.³⁴ Farm laborers had uncovered ancient walls while planting new grapevines by the road (via Appia Pignatelli) that led to the “Circo di Caracalla” (Circus of Maxentius), not far from the landmark “Torre Nuova” (perhaps the building restored as a “Medieval” tower at the intersection between the via Appia and the via delle Sette Chiese).³⁵

The walls belonged to sepulchral chambers. One glance from the local antiquarians was enough to see that these ancient remains had been already stripped of their contents. As a result, they were initially given scant attention, being similar to so many other tombs discovered on the Appian Way during the restoration and maintenance of that road in modern times.

The Ministry of Commerce and Public Works granted Randanini and del Frate an excavation license on April 14, 1859 (drafted April 9). The proposal was subject to what was then

known as the “Pacca Edict” of 1820 against clandestine excavations and illegal trafficking in Roman antiquities. It dictated that once an annual license had been obtained, the excavator had to follow up with weekly or bi-weekly reports to the Ministry as well as immediate releases for extraordinary finds, at which time all excavations would cease until the Antiquities and Fine Arts Commission had inspected the site. The Commission would then deliberate on the artistic and historical value of the discovery and recommend provisions for its care. No artifact could leave the dig without the Commission’s express authority. Finds of particular importance were catalogued to prevent their looting for the antiquities market later on.

The license itself employs the usual formula for a dig at a safe distance from any other ancient site: underlined, however, is the following phrase: *dandosi poi il caso che nella scavare si rinvenisse un qualche indigio di catacombe... (il signore Randanini) dovra’ immediatamente sospendere lo scavo, accontemporaneamente farne rapporto al Ministro non che al Vicariato.*³⁶

Initial reports were not promising. On his first site inspection of April 11, 1859, Antiquities Commissioner P. E. Visconti noted the discovery of several sepulchers of “persone di umile grado” stripped of their artifacts except for a stele dedicated to the memory of freedmen of the *gens Caecilii* (CIL 6.2 no. 7771). Visconti nevertheless advised prudence in expanding the dig, given the high risk of intercepting catacombs in the area.³⁷

Two weeks later, on May 1, 1859, openings in the far wall of one chamber led to a cemetery below. The Monuments and Excavations Inspector, Giovanni Battista Guidi, took note of this development along with the recovery of several inscriptions and a decorated cinerary urn.³⁸ But Randanini himself filed a virtually simultaneous report on “Jewish catacombs.”³⁹ This extraordinary announcement was discussed during the May 14 meeting of the Commissione Generale Consultiva di Antichita’ e Belle Arti (General Advisory Commission on Antiquities and Fine Arts), which decided against suspending or intervening directly in the excavation for the time being. Work was allowed to continue pending a decision by the CDAS, whose representatives had visited the grounds three days before.⁴⁰

Subsequent reports to the Antiquities Commission during April and May of 1859 paid closer attention to the details emerging from the dig.⁴¹ The sepulchral chambers (area M) were found to contain arched shelves of varying dimensions, stacked two or three to a row on walls of *opus vittatum* or *tuffelli* brick, concealing, in places, earlier walls of *opus reticulatum* with niches decorated with mosaic, stucco and fresco.⁴² Some wall surface still bore traces of revetment in marble, including the low bank attached to three brick piers that had once supported a series of cross-vaults over the chamber at the far

northwestern edge of area M and the two shallow apses in *opus reticulatum* later discovered in the southern wall opposite these piers.⁴³

A portal with travertine jambs and a heavy brick lintel in a wall of *opus vittatum* and brick was flanked at its upper right by a walled-in window or niche partially obscured by a later wall at northwest in *tuffelli*. Just inside the doorway, a small flight of stairs led into a rectangular semi-hypogaeal room cut out of the dark granular pozzolanella below the ground level of the vineyard (m). The walls of this lower room had been reinforced with ancient masonry and plaster. Two openings in the northeast wall in m led to galleries apparently empty, but sarcophagi and *forma* tombs were found at or below floor level in m, in addition to a well shaft six meters in depth that connected to a series of conduits and drain holes inserted into the mosaic pavement of the chamber directly outside.⁴⁴ Another doorway in the southwestern wall in m opened onto a long, sloping corridor that led to a second portal with travertine jambs and lintel. The cemetery proper appeared to begin at this point.

The early reports proceeded cautiously with the identification of a Jewish cemetery. Mention was made of non-Jewish material, or tombs “not well-defined as Christian or Jewish.”⁴⁵ This problem of “definition” was still not resolved by the time official announcement was made to the Vicariate of Rome on May 23, 1859, nearly three weeks after the catacomb’s discovery.⁴⁶ The report persisted in the hope of finding a link to the Christian catacombs, or evidence of the catacomb’s later transformation into a Christian site. Some of the artifacts recovered from the external chambers in M were identified as of Christian or of neutral workmanship. Special emphasis was given, however, to the prevalence of Greek in the inscriptions and the absence of what was then considered undisputed signs of Christianity, such as the “segno della croce, monogrammi, ancore, colombe, od immagini dei santi.”⁴⁷ Christian artifacts would remain all too scarce in the vineyard, where the image of the menorah was seen to identify a large quantity of Jewish tombs.⁴⁸

In a letter of July 21, 1859, the Cardinal Vicar, Costantino Patrizi, President of CDAS, thanked the Public Works Minister, Mons. Camillo Amici, for calling the CDAS’s attention to a discovery “of the greatest interest” discussed in a meeting of the CDAS on July 21, 1859.⁴⁹ Patrizi expressed his firm belief, however, that the sepulcher contained only Jewish tombs.⁵⁰ The immediate consequence of Patrizi’s decision was that Randanini would be able to continue with his dig. The excavation of a catacomb was a criminal offence in Papal Rome, but the digging up of pagan burial sites was routinely permitted.⁵¹ Giuseppe Randanini now had a uniquely “profane” or non-Christian catacomb to explore, as he would, “with great zeal,” though with hopes of finding objects of greater—salable—value in other areas of the vineyard. His

excavations were not limited to the catacomb alone. On December 11, 1860, a staircase next to a group of *columbaria* was found to lead to a small catacomb already devastated beyond any hopes of discovering the religious identity of its owners.⁵² This second cemetery was reburied at the end of the second season of excavations in February of 1861.

THE FIRST PUBLISHED REPORTS: 1861–1865

The project attracted the attention of noted scholars, including the Visconti, G. B. de Rossi, R. Garrucci, and the architects F. Podesti and V. Vespignani. These men hailed the discovery of the Jewish catacomb and repeatedly recommended its care to the Papal State at every stage of its excavation.⁵³

The public first learned about the Jewish catacomb from an article written by C. L. Visconti for the *Giornale di Roma* of May 1, 1862 (reprinted for wider circulation among Italian Jews in the *L'Educatore Israelita*).⁵⁴ The piece was actually Visconti's second article on the site. The *Bollettino dell' Istituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica*, with a wide foreign readership, had published Visconti's report on epitaphs from pagan sepulchers in the Vigna Randanini in January of 1861, followed by an article on the Jewish catacomb that March by the German scholar Ernst Herzog. These indicate the trend to publish separately the profane and Jewish materials from the site.⁵⁵

Carlo Ludovico Visconti (1818–1894)

Assistant to the Papal Antiquities Commission under his uncle's direction, Carlo Ludovico Visconti is responsible for the official records of artifacts from the Randanini excavations.⁵⁶ He witnessed two additional discoveries during the second season between December 1860 and January 1861: that of a columbarium for the Carvillii and the second hypogaeum close to the entrance into the Jewish catacomb from the via Appia Pignatelli.⁵⁷ Visconti's notice is the only published account of the latter, whose topographical relation to the Jewish catacomb remains unclear: Visconti defines it only as "servile."⁵⁸

Visconti's second article for the May 1, 1862 edition of the *Giornale di Roma* reports on excavations in the Jewish catacomb from March to May of 1862, mainly the discovery of over thirty inscriptions similar in content and design to other Jewish epitaphs from Rome.⁵⁹ Little mention is made of distinct structural features in the site. Visconti only observes that, as in the case of the Jewish catacomb on the Monteverde, explorers had already devastated the vigna Randanini catacomb in modern times.⁶⁰ The article concludes with the recent discovery of a well-preserved, three-chambered columbarium on the same property containing nearly one hundred epitaphs to freedmen of the Junii Silani family.⁶¹

Ernst Herzog (1834–1911)

Over the course of the second season (Fall–Winter of 1860), the proprietors of the vineyard allowed a young Classicist from Tübingen, Ernst Herzog, to study the site. Herzog was in Rome between 1860–1861 to assist with the collection of Latin inscriptions for the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*.⁶² His lecture, "La catacomba degli Ebrei in Vigna Rondonani [sic]," published in the March 22, 1861 edition of the *Bollettino dell' Istituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica*, covered only the very small area of the catacomb excavated by the winter of 1860.⁶³ (Figure 4) Herzog saw a number of the exterior chambers on the northeastern limits of the site (M) exposed down to their original pavement level, as well as the doorway at the far southwestern end of these structures that led into the first hypogaeum chamber m (the second doorway at the intersection of the wall with the two apses was not yet seen).⁶⁴ He could access the wide gallery G1 to the point where debris from a lucernarium (L3) completely blocked passage. A number of other catacomb galleries and cubicula near the entrance were also visible, but not cleared of debris in their entirety. It was enough to convince Herzog that the catacomb would reach a considerable size.

Herzog's study is thus limited in a topographical sense, but provides unique evidence of features in the catacomb that were altered in later times. This is especially true regarding the exterior burial chambers in M and initial tracts of galleries in that area considered by Herzog to be the oldest part of the catacomb.⁶⁵ His identification of the semi-hypogaeum area m as the center of a "sistema di condotti" is supported by openings in the walls of this chamber that are now sealed (another entry to this area, from G1, right before the series of six cubicula, had been walled up in antiquity).⁶⁶ Later authors, from Garrucci to Leon, dismiss Herzog's site report as highly inaccurate, but many details noted by Herzog were no longer visible to Leon at the time of his visits during the 1920s.⁶⁷ Regarding site chronology, Herzog again stuck to what was at hand. All previous assumptions about Jewish catacombs in Rome depended on Bosio's description of the then-inaccessible cemetery on the Monteverde (not re-discovered until 1904). But the Jewish catacomb on the Appia was most unlike the former and "ne' rustica ne' ignobile" with its evidence of decorative materials, monumental tombs, elaborate sarcophagi and what appeared to be at that point the very frequent presence of *cubicula*.⁶⁸ Indeed, to Herzog, the Randanini catacomb resembled, if anything, certain regions of the Christian catacombs nearby, and he adapts de Rossi's "separate but equal" approach to explain the mutually exclusive origins of the Jewish and Christian catacombs of Rome: in this case, that a wealthy Jew must have donated his land to the Jewish community for burial, "in maniera interamente analoga all' uso dei cristiani."⁶⁹

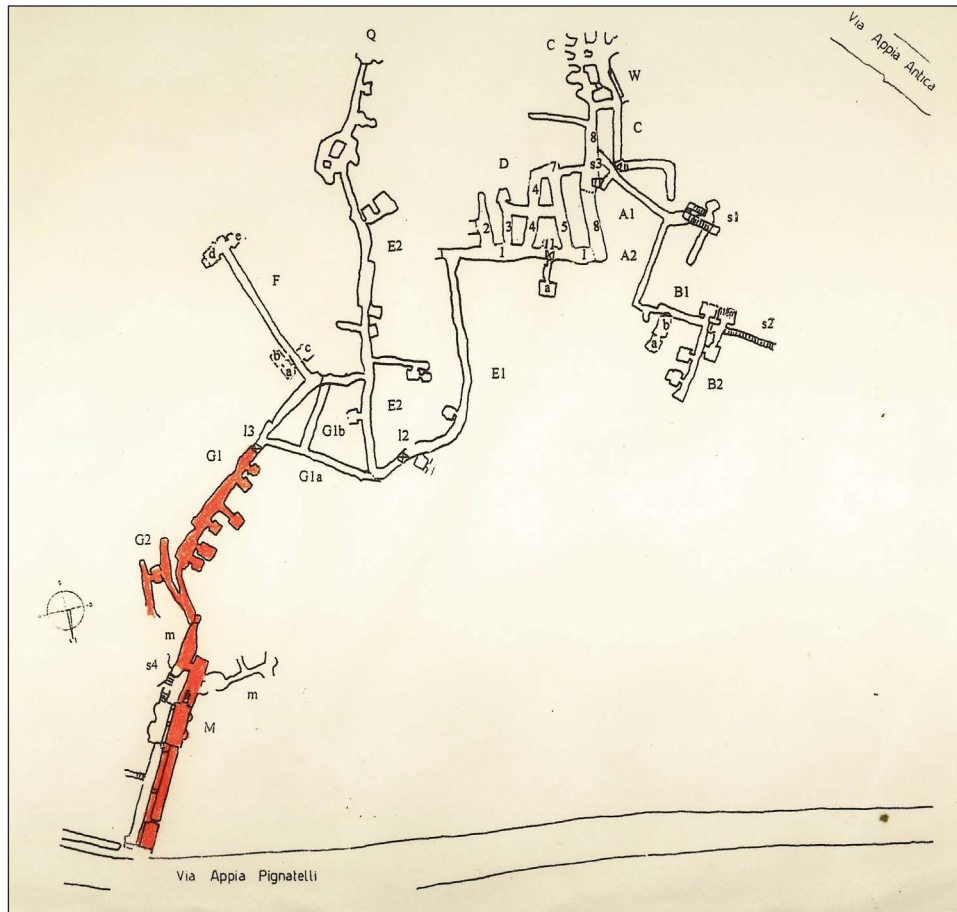


Figure 4. Excavations in the Vigna Randanini Catacomb described in Herzog's article of 1861. Author's elaboration on the 1984 PCAS plan.

The complicated relationship between the Jewish catacomb and surrounding cemeteries, nevertheless awaited, wrote Herzog, "una mano maestra," an indirect tribute to de Rossi's long-awaited but imminent publication of the first volume of the *Roma Sotterranea Cristiana*. C. L. Visconti had earlier published a columbarium *titulus* that could refer to a Jew, but Herzog was not excluding direct contact with the Christian catacombs close by.

Raffaele Garrucci, S. J. (1812–1885)

The Irish geologist Joseph Barclay Pentland is credited with bringing the site to the attention of the Jesuit scholar Raffaele Garrucci.⁷⁰ Garrucci had no official role to play in the excavations, but took an ardent personal interest in Randanini's work between 1862 and 1865.⁷¹ His knowledge of Hebrew and familiarity with archaeological sites throughout Europe

made him a most formidable guest. But the manner in which he solicited the property owners directly for publication of their archaeological finds greatly annoyed those in charge of supervising the excavations, de Rossi in particular. During a prior skirmish between Garrucci and de Rossi, the former had made no excuses for "beating" the latter in the race to publish new discoveries.⁷² Now Garrucci was following the catacomb excavations in the Vigna Randanini while in the midst of preparations for a "Corpus picturarum et sculpturarum veterum Ecclesiae universae" that de Rossi feared would cover much of the same material he himself was planning to publish in the *Roma Sotterranea Cristiana*.⁷³

Garrucci's first visits to the Vigna Randanini in 1859 and 1860 coincided with the excavation of a large part of the exterior burial chambers on the via Appia Pignatelli (M).⁷⁴ Sifting through the remains of allegedly pagan and Christian tombs, he spotted fragments of a marble sarcophagus with

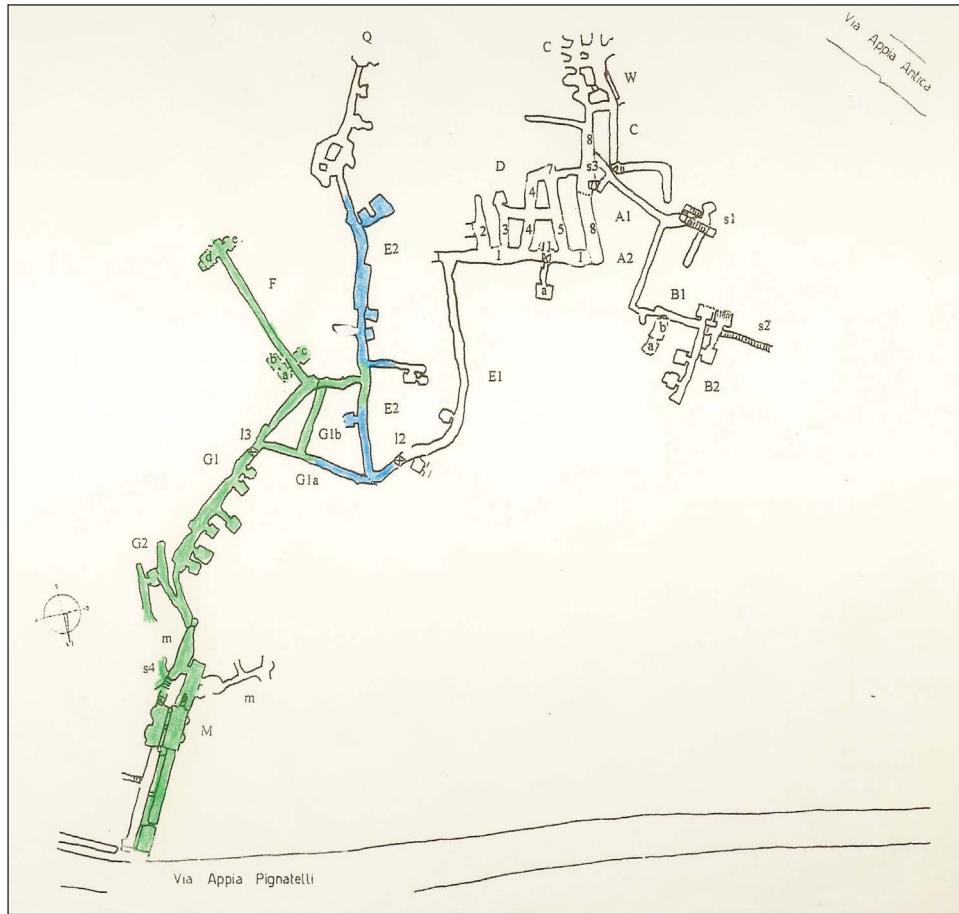


Figure 5. Plan of the Vigna Randanini catacomb excavations between March and May, 1862. Author's elaboration on the 1984 PCAS plan.

the same Jewish emblems he himself had described in a recent publication on ancient gold glass.⁷⁵ He also identified the figures on a second, intact sarcophagus in one of the small cubicula in G (Gb) as those of a deceased couple accompanied by a philosopher and a muse.⁷⁶

In a lengthy article on the Jewish catacomb published by the Jesuit press *Civiltà Cattolica* in June of 1862, Garrucci includes the earliest known plan of the site (artist unknown). It depicts the areas described by Herzog as well as others excavated between 1861 and 1862 once debris was removed from the shaft of *lucernarium* L3 in gallery G1.⁷⁷ The new regions (areas E and F) contained *cubicula* and a small number of monumental tombs. (Figure 5) The plan itself must have been drafted very early in 1862, as a gallery visible in the spring of that year is not yet shown.⁷⁸ Also not included are the areas seen on May 18, 1862, when workers broke through more debris below a second *lucernarium* shaft (L2). Garrucci visited these areas three days later just in time

to include them in an appendix to the article already in press.⁷⁹ (Figure 6)

To Garrucci, who had already combed the site for evidence of the “costumi, lingue, e concetti artistici” of the ancient Jews, the excavations on May 18 delivered startling finds. The walls and ceilings of two cubicula (Ba–b) were found painted with images of real and mythological animals, including those of fish, horses, rams and birds, as well as a scene of Victory crowning an Athlete and another of Fortune or Tyche bearing a cornucopia.⁸⁰ A number of galleries had rows of shafts excavated at or below pavement level and perpendicular to the wall, many with multiple burials separated from each other by tiles in a similar manner to those in the *arcosolia* in area M, and sealed, like the former, with walls of rubble and concrete.⁸¹ Although conserving very little epigraphic material to identify their occupants, they were immediately characterized by Garrucci as “*kokhim*”—or “oven” tombs, based on the description of similar tombs in the

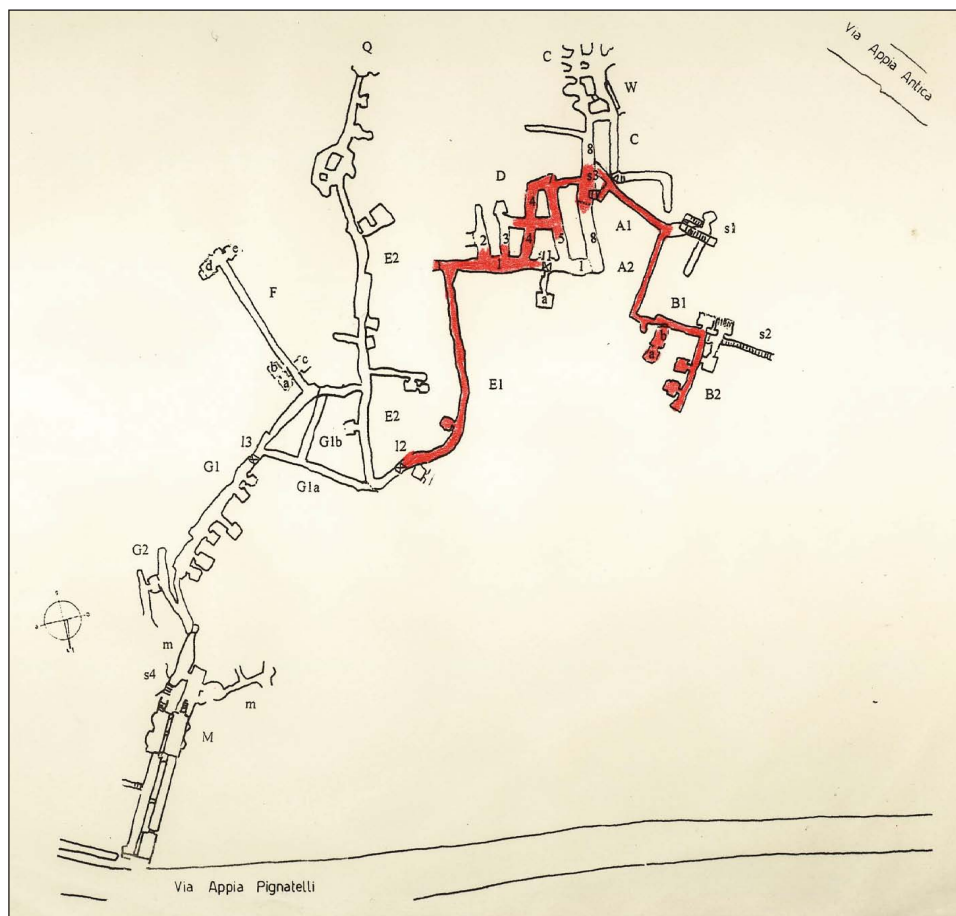


Figure 6. Plan of the Vigna Randanini Catacomb Excavations on May 18, 1862. Author's elaboration of the 1984 PCAS plan.

Micna.⁸² The back wall of the inner painted chamber Bb also held tombs very similar in size and appearance to the *kokhim*. Both the painted cubicula and *kokhim* were in areas of the catacomb (A–B–D) that had been joined by means of structural modifications (stairs, galleries) carried out in antiquity, although each area possessed its own direct access from the grounds above.

Despite the consensus of many that the paintings in Ba–b indicated a pagan tomb later annexed to a larger cemetery used by Jews, Garrucci is adamant that the painted cubicula belong to an exclusively Jewish site (pointing out the apparent *kokhim* in the second painted chamber (Bb) and very small number of Jewish inscriptions found—although not *in situ*—in the corridors right outside).⁸³ Yet other material without a distinct Jewish identity Garrucci either publishes separately or ignores.⁸⁴ This approach may explain in part why he never describes the “lower floor” mentioned in the conclusion to his lecture to the Pontificia Accademia

Romana di Archeologia on June 11, 1862, or many other items later found.⁸⁵

THE FINAL SEASON OF EXCAVATIONS IN THE VIGNA RANDANINI: 1863–1864

Excavations in the catacomb between December 1862 and January 1863 cleared the galleries first explored on May 18, 1862.⁸⁶ (Figure 7) A fourth painted cubiculum now emerged in area D behind debris in the shaft of *lucernarium* L1, with its decoration of floral borders, imitation marble panelling and other motifs still brilliantly preserved.⁸⁷ Other areas blocked by rubble proved to be stairwells to the grounds above or to other levels.⁸⁸ The stairway in area A, with two loculi in the brick walls at its base, led to a rectangular chamber *sub divo* lined with a thick bank and painted with panel designs.⁸⁹ Another stairway was found in the area of the double cubicu-



Figure 7. Excavations in the Vigna Randanini catacomb from December 1862–January 1863. Author’s elaboration on the 1984 PCAS plan.

lum and other large but undecorated chambers (B).⁹⁰ It is not clear if this stairway continued to a lower floor. (Figure 8)

Work in the southern galleries in January of 1863 recovered about 30 inscriptions, while digging in another part revealed two sepulchers, one with a hypogaeum not identified as part of the catacomb.⁹¹ Additional chambers in area M also came to light at some point between 1862 and 1864, including a second doorway and stair to the long atrium of galleries G1 and G2 (also flanked at right by a walled-in window or shallow rectangular niche).⁹² These discoveries were reported upon and reviewed in person by the Antiquities Commission, but did little to guarantee an easy future for the columbarium, catacomb and the artifacts they contained.⁹³ Indeed, regarding their purchase, Grifi was told to be as evasive as possible until the necessary funds were found.⁹⁴ The Secretary’s own opinion was that little would be gained by the catacomb’s conservation, no matter its star power on the local archaeological scene. To him, it still seemed an “anonymous” site, contain-

ing little of real artistic value unlike the columbarium of the Junii Silani with epigraphic ties to Rome’s Republican past.⁹⁵ Grifi resolved to package both columbarium and catacomb together in a one offer; at any rate, the government had already bought time by forbidding the removal of artifacts from the site. In the end, it was the columbarium, not the catacomb that paid dearly for the delay, being soon emptied of its contents and then reburied, much in the manner of other monuments in the vineyard centuries before.

AFTER THE EXCAVATIONS: 1864–1882

On March 11, 1864, all excavations were suspended in the vineyard.⁹⁶ Already in the previous year the Randanini had pressured the Papal Ministry of Public Works for a finder’s reward and government acquisition of the site.⁹⁷ By 1867, claiming dire financial need, they petitioned to sell the prop-

erty to other prospective buyers, including the Jewish banker Baron James de Rothschild and *cavalieri* Guidi and Castellani (P. E. Visconti and de Rossi continued fruitless negotiations all the while on behalf of the Papal State and Vatican Museums).⁹⁸ The matter reached the Pope on two occasions, but the Pontiff rejected the offer both times.⁹⁹ The Randanini did receive permission in 1867 to cover up the columbarium of the Junii Silani, at that point damaged beyond repair.¹⁰⁰ Authorities were unaware, however, of a second “cover up” being carried out at this time to conceal the family’s illegal sale of Jewish artifacts to a private collector.¹⁰¹

At the end of 1870, Giuseppe Randanini’s son Ignazio appealed to the newly formed Italian government at Rome for a license to excavate in his Appia estate.¹⁰² Permission was denied, as was all work in the catacombs between the fall of the Papal State in September of 1870 and institution of a new governing body for Antiquities in November of 1871.¹⁰³ In consequence, Ignazio Randanini did not obtain a new permit to excavate until 1874.¹⁰⁴ Nothing is known of the dig. In 1882, Ignazio Randanini sought permission once again to excavate the Jewish catacomb.¹⁰⁵ Work on the walls surrounding the property in 1885 also brought ancient remains to light.¹⁰⁶

A JEWISH CATACOMB FOR THE PUBLIC

The commercialization of the site began very early.¹⁰⁷ As early as 1861, a year before the discovery of the painted rooms, a display of pagan and Jewish artifacts was set up in a small room at the confines of the vineyard.¹⁰⁸ A decade later, Augustus Hare found a “lapidary” within, although not that in J. H. Parker’s photographs from the late 1860s, for by the time of Hare’s visit, most of the inscriptions in Parker’s photographs had already been sold.¹⁰⁹ To attract foreigners like Hare, a sign in English was placed outside the entrance from the via Appia, welcoming visitors for a fee.¹¹⁰ The galleries on direct route to the painted rooms were cleared of debris (with side galleries and deep shafts in some of the *kokhim* used to store the dirt shifted during these operations).¹¹¹ Bone fragments were arranged in the wall cavities as part of the show.¹¹² This is the plan (minus the bones) still in use today.¹¹³

At some point during the late nineteenth century, Randanini or one of his immediate successors executed another notable change: the reconstruction of the exterior walls in area M. Photographs from the 1860s show these ancient structures sloping inward and buttressed by stacks of wooden poles to prevent their total collapse. But the modern walls that take their place give the false illusion of uniformity, and many original features were simply removed, like the piers down the center of M for the vault and one of the two deco-

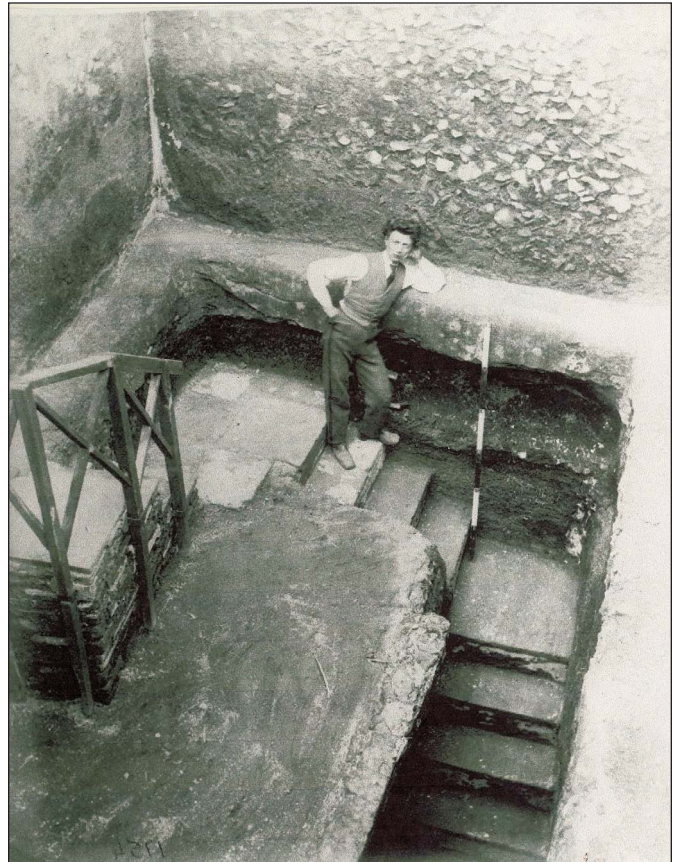


Figure 8. “Staircase as exit to the Jews’ Catacomb” in the Vigna Randanini. J. H. Parker photograph, n. 1754 (ca. 1868).

rated niches behind a later wall of *arcosolia*.¹¹⁴ This elimination of key structural elements greatly complicates any modern topographical survey of the site.

Our own survey of archaeological excavations in the Vigna Randanini ends in December of 1895, a decade or so before its purchase in the early twentieth century by current owners, the Principi del Gallo di Roccapiovine.¹¹⁵ Randanini’s declaration of bankruptcy brought the vineyard to auction that year, and a bitter end as well to his family’s long struggle to profit from the site. But the Randanini legacy would be the first Jewish catacomb in Rome to be excavated and studied in modern times. The excavations in their vineyard between 1859 and 1864 had coincided with a sort of “golden age” of Christian Archaeology, the point at which de Rossi’s influence was at its height, and the Jewish catacomb was quickly sensationalized as yet another sign of Christianity’s peculiar domain over Subterranean Rome, in the sense that distinctions between the Jewish and Christian cemeteries (and their origins) could now be better defined. Giuseppe

Randanini had not originally set out to explore a catacomb, but the torrents of wonder and praise that greeted his discovery led to not unreasonable expectations of a monetary reward (Pope Pius IX, after all, had purchased neighboring vineyards for the Christian cemeteries that they contained). Only when money failed to appear did things rapidly fall apart on the site. Even the Antiquities Commission, so observant of the Pacca Edict in the dig's early stage, did little to prevent Randanini from opening up the catacomb to all and sundry, tearing down and rebuilding its ancient walls at will and selling many artifacts long before they could be catalogued and restored. The Jewish catacomb's rare fame secured its preservation: in fact, as an archaeological site, it has fared better than a good number of the other Christian and non-Christian cemeteries in Rome. De Rossi's original pronouncement, that it belonged to the Jews, has also held up to later scrutiny. But one part of his statement was later modified. The CDAS did finally recognize the "pertinenza" of the Jewish catacomb and maintained the cemetery for the better part of the twentieth century until its long-overdue release to Italy's Jews in 1984.

NOTES

The following abbreviations are used:

- AA.BB.AA. = Antichità e Belle Arti
 ACS = Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome
 APCAS = Archivio, Pontificia Commissione di Archeologia Sacra, Rome
 ASR = Archivio di Stato di Roma, Rome
 BCAR = Bollettino della Commissione Archeologica di Roma
 Bull.Ist.Corr.Arch = Bollettino dell' Istituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica, Rome
 BIASA = Biblioteca dell' Istituto Nazionale d'Archeologia e Storia dell' Arte, Rome
 Cod. Vat. = Codice Vaticano (Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana)
 CIJ = Corpus Inscriptionum Judicarum
 CIL = Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum 1863–
 ICUR = Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae 1861–
 IGUR = Inscriptiones Graecae Urbis Romae 1918–79
 JIWE 2 = Jewish Inscriptions in Western Europe 2: Rome
 LTURS = Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae: Suburbium
 MPI = Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, Rome
 RACr = Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana
 SAR = Soprintendenza Archeologica di Roma, Rome

1. The Ministero del Commercio, Belle Arti, Industria, Agricoltura e Lavori Pubblici (Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti) had asked the CDAS if it would assume authority over the Randanini site. According to the APCAS, Atti 1858–1859, n. 16, anno 3, sez. 5 (July 21, 1859): "Il Comm.

de Rossi, avendo sostenuto che quell'ipogeo era ... di persone ebreo, suggeriva che non era di nostra pertinenza e la Commissione fu di parere di rispondere al Ministro... (che) l'ipogeo scoperto nella vigna sopra indicata essendo di origini e pertinenza di ebrei non appartenga alla CDAS."

2. According to CDAS founding member V. Tizzani, *Della Commissione di Archeologia Sacra, del Museo Cristiano-Pio, e dell'antica basilica di San Clemente*, Rome, 1886, pp. 3–4, Pope Pius IX's concern for the "distribuzione delle ss. Reliquie e la conservazione degl' ipogei cristiani" led to his recognition of the CDAS on January 6, 1852. The CDAS, under the direction of the Cardinal Vicar of Rome, had "esclusivamente e collettivamente la direzione e conservazione di tutte le catacombe romane nel suolo romano" (p. 8, n. 6).

3. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., "estrazione di oggetti d'arte," b. 420/29: "Roma. Randanini, Ignazio. Sulla vendita di sei iscrizioni appartenenti all' ipogeo giudaico" (December 21, 1860–September 12th, 1870), f. 5931 (May 20, 1859).

4. De Rossi's involvement with the Vigna Randanini excavations in: Cod. Vat. 14241 (1858–1859), f. 80 (May 19, 1859); also ff. 313 & 501, and ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 3937 (May 5, 1862); and f. 4546, (July 19, 1862); f. 2792 (April 13, 1863); f. 3539 (May 29, 1862); f. 9790 (July 7, 1862); f. 298 (July 14, 1863); f. 3593 (June 4, 1862).

5. G. B. de Rossi, "Scoperta d'una cripta storica nel cimitero di Pretestato," *Bollettino di Archeologia Cristiana* 1.1 (1863), p. 1.

6. Including those in de Rossi, Cod. Vat. 10559: "de Coemeterio vetero judaeorum prope S. Sebastiano," and the ICUR notes published in *CIJ* 1 (1936). In a letter to de Rossi of 1881, Ignazio Randanini, son of the original excavator, recalls that "ogni qualvolta che (Randanini trovava) iscrizioni, (de Rossi) ne prendeva copia" (Cod. Vat. 14267, f. 23). In many instances, de Rossi's notes are our best or only source of information about artifacts long missing from the site (*CIJ* 1 nn. 174, 187, 194, 196, 202, 228, 245, 251, 159). New details continue to emerge from de Rossi's notes. In their studies on the Randanini site, E. Herzog and R. Garrucci both describe a singular artifact found in 1859 inside the painted cubiculum Gb, close to the site of the gilded and painted sarcophagus "of the Muses" (E. Herzog, "La catacomba degli ebrei in vigna Randanini [*sic*]," *Bull.Ist.Corr.Arch* (1861), pp. 97–98; R. Garrucci, *Cimitero degli antichi ebrei scoperto recentemente in vigna Randanini*, Rome, 1862, p. 9 and "Osservazioni intorno al 'Cimitero degli Antichi Ebrei,'" *Dissertazioni Archeologiche di Vario Argomento* 2, Rome, 1864–1865, p. 151). It is a rectangular piece of sculpted clay with concave sides that de Rossi (Vat. Cod. ICUR 41, f. 16293) illustrates as a lamp-handle decorated with the image of the menorah above a series of geometrically arranged dots. Regrettably, not even de Rossi recorded all such finds.

7. Tizzani, 1886, p. 8.

8. By merit of the documents cited above, it is not possible to agree with Fr. U. M. Fasola's 1986 claim that the Jewish catacomb (of the Vigna Randanini) was "fin dal momento della sua scoperta nel 1859 sotto la tutela della PCAS" ("Consegna della catacomba ebraica di vigna Randanini alla Soprintendenza Archeologica di Roma," *Osservatore Romano*, June 13, 1986, p. 3). It is true, nonetheless, that CDAS officers were involved with the study and publication of the Vigna Randanini Jewish site, as well as with those of the Vigna Cimarra, Vigna Apolloni and Monteverde. The Villa Torlonia Jewish catacombs, discovered in late 1919, are excluded from this list because other measures were by then in place to protect Jewish sites, including a "special convention" between the Italy and the Papacy in 1912 that gave the CDAS control over the Jewish and "heretical" catacombs in Rome. Until then, the Commission's lack of administrative involvement with the Jewish catacombs was justified in light of its 1859 decision regarding the Vigna Randanini catacomb decades before (see n. 1).

9. G. De Angelis d'Ossat, *La Geologia delle Catacombe Romane*, Vatican City, 1943, p. 176. ACS, M.P.I., Dir. Gen. AA.BB.AA, vers. 3, pt. 2, b. 421: "Roma: via Appia 1882–1896. Catacombe ebraiche nella Vigna Rondanini [sic] 1895: epigrafe, permesso di scavo, vendita giudiziale del fondo."

10. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, and b. 414/18, f. 11246: "Licenza di scavo concessa ad Ignazio Randanini" (November 10–December 6, 1870). ACS, M.P.I., Dir. Gen. AA.BB.AA, vers. 3, pt. 2, b. 421, f. 4660 (February 2, 1896): catasto m. 161.11 511, 512, 513 (sub 1 & 2), 514 (sub. 1 & 2), 515 (via Appia), 862–863 (fabbricati), including a "casa del vignarolo e tinello; casa e gabinetti d'antichità, e casa di villeggiatura."

11. The ancient via Asinaria, extending across Rome's southern suburbia from the via Ostiense to the via Prenestina, crossed the Appian Way just beyond the Church of St. Sebastian's, near to where a second Jewish catacomb was found in 1866 (Vigna Cimarra). Discussion of the via Asinaria in Z. Maria, "Asinaria, via," *LTURS* 1 (2001), pp. 160–161, pl. 16; S. Mineo, "Appia, via," *LTURS* 1 (2001), p. 105; and L. Spera, *Il paesaggio suburbano di Roma dall' antichità al medioevo: il comprensorio tra la via Latina e via Ardeatina dalle Mura Aureliane al terzo miglio*, Rome, 1999, pp. 421–422. A. M. Nieddu has recently examined the origins and use of the toponym "ad catacumbas" in *La Basilica Apostolorum sulla Via Appia e l'area cimiteriale circostante*, Monumenti di antichità cristiane 19, Vatican City, 2009, p. 4, n. 17.

12. The properties belonged to the churches of St. Paul Outside the Walls (511–513) and St. Sebastian (514–515), but were leased out long-term in *enfiteusi*. According to G. Tomasetti, *La campagna romana antica, medievale e moderna 2: via Appia, Via Ardeatina, via Aurelia*, eds. L. Chiumenti and F. Bilan-

cia, Florence, 1975, p. 40, St. Paul's had "dominio diretto" over part of Maxentius' Circus, as well as other properties between Domine Quo Vadis and St. Sebastian on the left side of the Appian Way, including the *Montes Alamagno et Albini*. Spera, 1999, p. 473, table 1, identifies "Vigne di San Paolo e di San Sebastiano" as part of the Randanini estate, and, on p. 328 (n. 624), a possible 17 century reference to tunnels below the "vigne di San Sebastiano." The Christian catacombs in the Appia region were long believed to continue below "the terrain which rises in front of the Church of Saint Sebastian" (Vigna Randanini), all the way to the via Latina": G. Marchi, *Monumenti delle Arti Cristiane Primitive nella metropoli del Cristianesimo disegnati ed illustrati: Architettura*, Rome, 1844, p. 20.

13. BIASA, Lanciani Collection, Roma XI.34, n. 26 and n. 115, "via Appia, tav. 11a, Pietro Rosa, 1850: estensione della catacombe, pianta delle vie ed adiacenze." Rosa's map illustrates a number of tombs, including underground galleries with cubacula, below the Vigna Randanini. The catacombs below the Church of Saint Sebastian were known to reach the Appian Way: while exploring underground galleries east of the basilica in the late sixteenth century, Philippe De Winghe heard horses on the street overhead: C. Schuddeboom, "Research in the Roman Catacombs by the Louvain antiquarian Philips van Winghe," in *Archives And Excavations: Essays on the History of Archaeological Excavations in Rome And Southern Italy from the Renaissance to the Nineteenth Century*, ed. I. Bignamini, Rome, 2004, p. 30 n. 46.

14. BIASA, Lanciani Collection, Roma XI, vol. 34 (via Appia, vol. 1), f. 118, "Pianta circo di Massenzio e Tenuta Capo di Bove" from the mid nineteenth century. Note the three-chambered structure (columbarium of the Junii Silani?) next to the buildings opposite the via delle Sette Chiese. Similar documentation in: ASR, Maps and Drawings Collection, coll. 1, cart. 91, n. 167, and in Spera, 1999, p. 260, n. 438.

15. Regione Lazio, *Repertorio dei Beni di interesse archeologico ai sensi dell' articolo 12,5 e di interesse storico monumentale di cui all' articolo 20 delle norme di PTP 15/12: Valle della Caffarella, Appia Antica ed Aquedotti*, Rome, 2004.

16. G. De Angelis d'Ossat, 1943, pp. 176–178 and M. Vitale, "La presenza ebraica a Roma dalle origini all'Impero. Catacombe. Sarcofagi, lucerne, vetri dorati, anfore, stampi," *Arte ebraica a Roma e nel Lazio*, ed. D. Di Castro, Rome, 1994, p. 25.

17. Vitale, 1994, p. 25.

18. I. Bignamini & A. Claridge, "The Tomb of Claudia Semne and Excavations in Eighteenth Century Rome," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 56 (1997), p. 227, fig. 9, and Spera, 1999, pp. 262, CT S, nn. 444–447 and t. 3.

19. The ruins of Maxentius' Palace and Circus between the second and third miles of the Appian Way were known during the Middle Ages as the "Palatium Titi et Vespasiani foris Romam ad catacumbas," giving the area its legendary con-

nection to the Emperor Titus, conqueror of Jerusalem in 70 CE. The subterranean Jewish cemetery in the Vigna Randanini containing tombs marked with the image of the seven-branched candelabrum that Titus had removed from Jerusalem's Temple and brought in triumph to Rome was close by. Its very proximity to the "Palatium Titi" could have inspired a Medieval rabbi's tale of "a cave, in which Titus, the son of Vespasian, hid the vessels of the Temple, which he brought from Jerusalem" (particularly when what is translated as "cave" in the very next sentence of Rabbi Benjamin's account is the funerary site often identified as the Jewish catacomb on the Monteverde): *The World of Benjamin of Tudela, a Medieval Mediterranean Travelogue*, trans. S. Benjamin, Madison, WI, 1995, pp. 87–89. Titus' strong association with the ancient Jews of Rome gave credence to such legends. His "arcus septem lucernas Vespasiani et Titi ad S. Mariam Novam" still dominates the ancient Forum from the Velia. A series of Biblical "relics" on display in Medieval Rome were said to have been taken from the Forum of Peace built by Vespasian and Titus to celebrate their success in the Jewish wars. A list of these "Jewish relics"—including the "'ani aurei, tabulae testamenti, virga Aaron, urna aurea habens manna, vestes et ornamentea Aaron, candelabrum aureum cum septem lucernas, tabernaculum, septem candelabra, septem cathedrae argenteae, mensa, propositio sancta, turibulum aureum, virga Moysei, cum qua percussit mare" is published by R. Valentini & G. Zucchetti, *Codice Topografico della città' di Roma 3*, Rome, 1946, pp. 83–84.

20. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 11519 (December 26, 1860): "Il nuovo tratto sotterraneo in essa pervenuto e' prossima a quell'ipogeo e perciò credersi che ne abbia fatto parte, quantunque essendo stato in altro tempo aperto e devastato."

21. CIJ 1.150/JIWE 2.329 was found in two separate fragments in area A. CIJ 1.92/JIWE 2.336 (also broken) was discovered close to the painted cubicula in area B. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 2706 (April 16, 1862): describes "cotesto sepolcreto ... devastato nei tempi antichi."

22. Herzog, 1861, p. 94 & 98 (a cubiculum or gallery off G1 not yet excavated in 1860). Regarding "Jewish" tombs in the neighboring Christian cemetery, Nieddu, 2009, pp. 20–21, nn. 121–122, notes an oil lamp with the menorah image found in the catacomb of St. Sebastian, as well as considerable structural and decorative evidence for burial by non-Christians in a series of small hypogaea north of the basilica, one of which contains paintings done in a style evocative of that in the cubiculum Gb in the Vigna Randanini catacomb (St. Sebastian's cubiculum "del fallo," illustrated also by Spera, 1999, p. 223, n. 376). An inscription in the lapidary of St. Sebastian's (CIJ 1.202/JIWE 2.392) is attributed by de Rossi and later A. Ferrua to the Vigna Randanini site, although no contempo-

rary record apart from that of de Rossi supports this attribution: A. Ferrua, "Analecta Romana: San Sebastiano," *Epigraphica* 5–6 (1944), p. 24, n. 118, fig. 22.

23. Government records date the Jewish catacomb's official discovery to 1859, but in a communication of December 26, 1860 (ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 11519), Antiquities Commissioner P. E. Visconti, who had excavated previously on the site (and later oversaw a dig on the Vigna Grandi as well), states that "nella Vigna Randanini gia' Profili, posta fuori la Porta San Sebastiano quasi di contro alla basilica che la' da nome, si trovo', sono ora tre anni, un ipogeo giudaico." O. Marucchi, in *Guida alle Catacombe Romane*, Rome, 1903, p. 214, also dates the catacomb's discovery to 1857. This was the year that excavations were carried out on the properties of Benedetto Grandi: ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5a., b. 398/2, f. 15908: "Roma. Licenza di scavo concesso a Benedetto Grandi in una sua vigna nei pressi della Chiesa di San Sebastiano" (December 6, 1856–June 30, 1857). While most of Grandi's properties occupy the site near Maxentius' Circus, an early twentieth century plan (A. Frutaz, *Le Piante di Roma 3*, Rome, 1962, n. CCXXII, t. 573) indicates that, for a time, Grandi also possessed catasto n. 511, between the vicolo di S. Urbano and the Randanini estates. When granting Grandi an excavation license, Visconti noted a high risk of intercepting catacombs in the zone, a concern he would later raise again for excavations in the Vigna Randanini. The Grandi kept a collection of antiquities in their residence in via Bocca di Leone, 32 in Rome; de Rossi considered at least one piece (CIJ 1.251/JIWE 2.629) to be Jewish.

24. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5a., b. 398/2, f. 15908 (February 19, 1858). The policy read: "si sospende di scavare appena accade di trovare l'indizio di catacombe."

25. Drawings of the "tempietto" by G. B. Sangallo, S. Serlio, P. Ligorio and S. Peruzzi are reproduced in F. Rausa, *Pirro Ligorio: tombe e mausolei di Roma*, Rome, 1997, pp. 88–91, fig. 15.1–15.8. The C. Labruzzi print is in *Via Appia: Sulle ruine della magnificenza antica*, ed. A. La Regina, Milan, 1997, p. 142. Another image of the tomb from this same period is by A. Uggeri (late eighteenth century): "Tomba di fronte a San Sebastiano/Tomba Buttero via Appia Antica," Marco Besso collection, Rome, n.1748/13. The J. H. Parker photograph is n. 1753 in J. H. Parker, *The Archaeology of Rome 10: Tombs in or Near Rome*, London, 1876, p. 36. The tomb has been included most recently in studies of Mineo, 2001, p. 109, and Spera, 1999, p. 260 (n. 440), although the latter assigns a different location for the tomb illustrated in Labruzzi's print; see p. 267, (n. 452).

26. Spera, 1999, p. 261 (n. 440) and pp. 327–328, nn. 621–622, identifies tombs of the *Caesilii*, *Caerelii*, and *Rubelii*. Rausa, 1997, pp. 91–93, n. 16, also names those of the *Avil-*

l*ii*—tentatively located by Rausa, p. 72, near the tomb of Claudia Semne; and those to *Vibia Polla* and the *Gaii Calvisi*. Ligorio saw most of these on the property of a “(Man)Nicola Baricello (or Man(n)icola Bargello,” whom G. Ripostelli & O. Marucchi, *Via Appia a l’Epoque Romaine et de nos jours*, Rome, 1908, p. 59, identify as the captain of the Bargello on the Campidoglio in Rome, on whose property there were “desolate duecento sepolture di piu’ famiglie antiche” (p. 73).

27. A “Jubilee” study identified fourteen small funerary edifices in the modern walls flanking the via Appia. These structures tentatively date from the late Republican period to the fourth century CE: R. Paris, M. de Vico, & A. Mucci, “Riqualficazione ed adeguamento della sede stradale dell’ Appia Antica da Piazzale Numa Pompilio al GRA,” *BCAR* 101 (2000), pp. 339–340. The necropolis in this area of the vineyard is also cited by Mineo, 2001, p. 106, and 109–110; and by Spera, 1999, p. 259 (nn. 432–433, 435); pp. 260–261 (nn. 435–439).

28. Bignamini & Claridge, 1997, p. 229, n. 19, quote A. Uggeri’s description of a “vigna di proprieta’ di Filippo Bellucci, nella quale si vedono avanzi sepolcrali quasi tutti sottoterra, che si manifestano dalla montruosita’ del terreno, e da qualche foro nelle volte impermeabile. Un’ edicola laterizia assai ruinata (Spera’s UT 440) rimane isolata sul colmo di un pendio, e resta quasi dicontra alla Basilica di San Sebastiano.”

29. Bignamini and Claridge, 1997, pp. 215–244, esp. p. 238, n. 47 and Spera, 1999, p. 260, n. 434 (Claudia Semne). A. Rem Picci, in *Monumenti e Ruederi antichi che veggonsi lungo i lati delle due prime miglie della via Appia incisi all’aqua forte in venticinque tavole e con breve indicazione illustrati*, Rome, 1844, p. 19, pl. 25, adds a “Continazione degli scavi. Da una vigna attigua a quella indicata nella tavola precedente” that Bignamini & Claridge, p. 238, however, believe to illustrate a later excavation of Fagen’s on the 5th mile of the Appian Way in 1795. These authors, pp. 243–244, also note Fagan’s discovery of lead piping, perhaps for a bath: a possible underground water reservoir had been seen in the area a century before (Spera, 1999, p. 328 n. 624).

30. P. E. Visconti’s opinion is that “il luogo non e’ di molto a sperare,” ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 4540 (April 11, 1859). Gaetano (d. 1836), Alessandro (d. 1848) and Felice Profili were former owners of the Vigna Randanini (acquiring the site shortly after 1818, when Francesco Mignani and Giuseppe Bragi are listed as the owners: Spera, 1999, p. 473). Although R. Lanciani (BIASA, Lanciani Collection, 116, f. 50) locates Visconti’s excavations in the area later purchased by Benedetto Grandi, described by G. B. de Rossi in the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* 6.2 as “in praedio vulgo la Giostra via Appia ad S. Sebastiani.” Visconti himself explicitly mentions excavating near a tomb of freedmen of the gens *Ulpia* (i.e., the tomb of Claudia Semne): P. E. Visconti, *Le iscrizioni poste*

nel vestibolo della casa dell’ Abbate Francesco Cancellieri, Rome, 1826, p. 10. Among Visconti’s finds are sixteen inscriptions of “gente di condizione assai meschina,” including several to freedmen of the *gens Aelii*. Nearly a quarter century later, from 1845–1849, Visconti witnessed new excavations (provoked by landslides) by Gaetano Canestrelli and Giovanni Guidi in areas he had previously explored as well as in zones “non anteriormente scavte”: ASR, Cam., pt. 2, tit. 4, b. 165, f. 1762 (May 12, 1849).

31. Spera, 1999, p. 259, nn. 430–432 (1834, 1825 and 1836). The Antiquities Commission issued several permits during the 1820s and 1830s to excavate on the site that was for the period kept under relatively tight control: see ASR, Cam., pt. 2, tit. 4, b. 165, f. 351 (the 1825 excavation license to Alessandro Profili and P. E. Visconti); b. 165, f. 4391 (license renewal in 1826); bb. 226–227 ff. 2062, 2072 and b. 243 f. 2539 (pozzolana quarrying by A. Profili and G. M. Boldrini by vicolo di San Sebastiano in 1834; police inspection of antiquities and application by owner for their removal to Rome, 1834–1836); b. 239, f. 2430 (D. De Puccio quarrying for pozzolana at intersection of Appian Way and via Appia Pignatelli and discovery of an arcosolium with a painting taken to Vatican Museums in 1836, also described in *Diario di Roma*, 48, June 17, 1837 and in L. Grifi, *Intorno ad un sepolcro disotterato nella vigna del Conte Lorenzo Argoli*, Rome, 1840, p. 19). Spera places the discoveries in the Profili vineyards by the Appian Way p. 260, nn. 435–436: testimony by the widow of de Puccio also indicates work done in 1836 near the so-called “Casale dei Pupazzi” (thought to be entrance to the Catacombs of Praetextatus) at the intersection of the Appian Way and via Appia Pignatelli (BIASA, Lanciani Collection, 116, f. 2551).

32. Alessandro Profili died in 1848, and his heirs filed suit for financial compensation for antiquities removed and sold from their land (ASR, Cam., pt 2, tit. 4, b. 239, f. 2430). In the early 1850s, the Floridi family owned the former Profili estate later purchased by the Randanini family (ASR, Maps and Drawings Collection, coll.1, cart. 91, n. 688, “suburbio ed agro romano—strade da Porta San Sebastiano”).

33. Ignazio Del Frate, engineer and antiquarian, participated in the initial stage of the excavations, no doubt for a percentage of the finds. *JIWE* 2.553 was seen in the gardens of one Gastone del Frate on the Monte Mario.

34. According to ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 11246 (July 14, 1862) Randanini had leased the vigna “in enfiteusi” from the Abbey of San Sebastiano. Only once during the excavation did the land’s “traditional” owner take an interest in the dig: ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 4816 (July 16, 1862) is a letter from Cardinal Martel, President of the Azienda de’ Spogli, concerning financial compensation for excavations in the Vigna Randanini (a share of the finds).

35. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 4342 (April 7, 1859).

36. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 4540 (April 18, 1859): annual license granted to Giuseppe Randanini and Ignazio del Frate.

37. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 4540, (April 9–15, 1859).

38. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 4540 (April 18, 1859), and f. 5223 (May 2, 1859), a report of Inspector G. B. Guidi to Minister C. Amici, alerting Amici to the dig's risk of encountering "le catacombe di S. Sebastiano e di S. Callisto."

39. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 5224 (May 2–3, 1859): Giuseppe Randanini to C. Amici.

40. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 5931 (*processo verbale*). The CDAS, at that time including Card. Patrizi Naro, Mgr. F. Profili, Mgr. Castellani, Mgr. V. Tizzani, M. Marini, G. Marchi, S.J., and G. B. de Rossi, resolved to submit the case to the Cardinal Vicar Patrizi, President of the CDAS (ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 6814, July 7, 1859). On the same day as the CDAS visit, P. E. Visconti ordered copies of the inscriptions, sarcophagi and pictures found in the mausolea and hypogaeum: ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 5462, (May 11, 1859).

41. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 5462 (May 11, 1859).

42. According to Herzog, 1861, p. 94, original walls similar to those containing the niches were also found behind the ruins next to the via Appia Pignatelli (covered by the later walls of arched recesses and *arcosolia*). For other observations on the chronology of M: C. Vismara, "Ancora sugli ebrei di Roma," *Archeologia Classica* 38–40 (1986–1988), p. 154. According to Garrucci, 1864–1865, p. 88, bodies had been placed in the "arched" recesses in M before they were sealed with rubble and mortar. D. Nuzzo, *Tipologia Sepolcrale delle catacombe romane: I cimiteri ipogei delle vie Ostiense, Ardeatina e Appia*, Oxford, 2000, p. 123, n. 247, proposes that similar arched tombs in gallery A1 of the Catacomb of Praetextatus "dall'aspetto tutto inconsueto per gli ambienti catacombale" were used for incineration burials prior to a Christian occupation of the site.

43. Herzog, 1861, p. 92 and Vismara, 1986–1988, p. 154.

44. The second entrance was discovered later in 1861–1862. J. B. Pentland, *A Handbook of Rome and Its Environs*, 9 ed., London, 1868, p. 347: writes "(there is) a square chamber, in which there are the remains of a well, and of several graves and sarcophagi sunk into the floor." Also noted by Garrucci, in *Storia dell'Arte Cristiana nei Primi Otto Secoli della Chiesa*, 6, Prato, 1881, p. 352.

45. Garrucci, 1862, p. 16: a Jewish sarcophagus was found "fra molti rottami di sculture parte cristiane, parte pagane." It was even pointed out in ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 5462 (May 11, 1859) that while the palm and menorah image had been found on Jewish sarcophagi (i.e. CIJ 1.283), they could also be "employed by the Christians."

46. Secretary Grifi asks to send an inspector from each of the two commissions (CDAS and Antichita') to better "define" the site (ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 5462). Other documents relating to this debate are f. 5931 (May 25, 1859) and f. 6814 (July 21, 1859) from Mons. Amici to Card. Patrizi, summarizing the meeting of the CDAS after members had visited the site, as well as the CDAS's unanimous resolve.

47. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 5931 (May 14, 1859 and May 23, 1859); also f. 1462 (May 11, 1859), when L. Grifi points out that, if identified as Christian, the Randanini catacomb would fall under the jurisdiction of the CDAS.

48. CIJ 1.134/JIWE 2.228.

49. APCAS, Atti 1858–1859, n. 16, anno 3, sez. 5 (July 21, 1859): copy in ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 6814.

50. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 6814 (July 26, 1859).

51. C. Fea, *Replica ultima al Sig. Settimio Lattanzi difensore del Sig. Vincenzo Trojani: Osservazioni di fatto con defese annesse*, Rome, 1827, p. 73, and Marchi, 1844, p. 54 & p. 57.

52. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 11072 (December 13, 1860): annual renewal of excavation license with the same conditions as those in the license for 1859. The second hypogaeum is noted in ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 11184 (February 2, 1859), and f. 11519 (December 21, 1860); once again, given its proximity to Christian catacombs, the CDAS was summoned to the site.

53. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 4956 (July 17, 1862).

54. C. L. Visconti, "Archeologia: Nuova Scoperta di un' ipogeo israelitico" in the appendix of the May 1, 1862 edition of the *Giornale di Roma*, p. 396 (reprinted in *L'Educatore Israelita* 9, (1862), pp. 365–366). Jewish scholars are not named as consultants to the dig, but Garrucci, 1864, p. 175, remarks on an unnamed rabbi's interpretation of CIJ 1.154/JIWE 2.227 & 571.

55. The last titulus in Visconti's 1861 article on pagan epitaphs bears a Semitic-sounding name: M. ABENNA/ZABDA (CIL 6.2. no. 7663/CIJ 1.*7). CIL 6.2 n. 7779/CIJ 259 is another epitaph believed to be that of a "Romanized Jew," found near the Columbarium of the Junii Silani in 1862.

56. C. L. Visconti, “Scavi di Vigna Rondanini [*sic*]” in *Bull.Istit.Corr.Arch* (March 1861) pp. 16–22; and Spera. 1999, pp. 261–262, nn 442–443; pp. 328–329, n. 623. Visconti’s reports in the ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 307 (1861) note also terracotta lamps and vases. The published inscriptions do not always correspond to the copies Visconti submitted to the Ministry.

57. “Several columbaria” are described in ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 11519 (December 21, 1860). L. Grifi also delivers a warning to Giuseppe Randanini for failing to report the discovery of the columbarium of the Carvili. After many delays, and the threat of a fine for violating the terms of the license, Giuseppe Randanini consigns to Ministry copies of the inscriptions found in the vineyard in December of 1860: 5 incinerary urns and 12 epitaphs (ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 11519). On April 18, 1862, Giuseppe Randanini is again reprimanded for not submitting regular reports to the Ministry (f. 2704).

58. P. E. Visconti, ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 11519 (December 21, 1860), reports a site in devastated condition, and no inscriptions. The CDAS returned to inspect this second hypogaeum for signs of Christianity.

59. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 2726 (April 22, 1862). Visconti had copied the inscriptions “complete or almost complete, leaving for now the many fragments.” De Rossi acquired a copy of Visconti’s notes for the *ICUR*. Frey also used Visconti’s notes for the *CIJ*.

60. A. Nibby, *Itinerario di Roma e delle sue vicinanze*, 8th ed., Rome, 1870, p. 344, n.1: “questo ragguardevole ipogeo fu guasto e spogliato in epoca non molto remota.”

61. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f.1237 (February 12, 1862); Visconti notes that he had copied the inscribed and painted epitaphs, but due to a lack of time and humidity inside the site, he was unable to copy all fragments. *LTURS* 3 (2005), pp. 106–107, publishes articles by R. Biccini Leotardi on a “Juniorum, praedium,” and by M. Macciocca, on the “Juniorum, sepulchrum” (inscriptions from the site are in *CIL* 6.2 nn. 7600–7643). The latter dates the use of the site by freedmen to the mid second century CE. The columbarium itself—three nearly intact sepulchral chambers—had been found by the Randanini shortly after the renewal of the annual excavation license on January 24, 1862. It lay below a sepulcher that had been already robbed in a location vaguely described as at the “confines of the vineyard” (ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 139: 1862 license renewal by Visconti & Grifi, f. 4964, February 2, 1862). Its discovery caused great excitement in Rome for its excel-

lent condition and attribution to freedmen of the consular family of the Junii. The site held a well at the entrance, large number of inscribed and painted epitaphs (many *in situ* next to small loculetti for cremation burials), three marble urns and many other examples funerary goods (small clay lamps, glass ampollae, etc.). The Antiquities Commission visited the columbarium and catacomb on several occasions between February, 1862 and March of 1863, and ordered C. L. Visconti to make copies of all the inscriptions, and Francesco Fontana, Ispettore della Polizia dei Monumenti, to draft a site plan and estimate of expenses for the columbarium’s restoration, strongly advocated by both P. E. Visconti and G. B. de Rossi: (ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 1237, February 24, 1862).

62. In Cod. Vat. 14242, f. 274, G. B. de Rossi identifies Herzog as W. Henzen’s assistant.

63. Herzog, 1861, pp. 91–104.

64. That not all of M was visible is clear from the measurements Herzog (1861, p. 92) provides for “three” chambers: “lunghi passi 36, larghi 5,” and his observation that only the right wall of the chamber nearest to m had been preserved.

65. De Rossi, “Le varie e successive condizioni di legalità dei cimiteri,” *Bullettino di Archeologia Cristiana* 3.12 (1865), p. 97, identifies the Jewish catacomb’s exterior chambers in M as a scuola, a sort of *triclinium* for funerary banquets. Other reports, such as that for the *Illustrated London News*, vol. 60, of January 27, 1872, p. 86, describe the catacomb “among the remains of what is supposed to have been a Roman dwelling house.” Garrucci initially thought the site a synagogue, a view he later retracted: Garrucci, 1862, p. 5 (retraction is in the second volume of his *Dissertazioni* of 1864–1865, pp. 150–151).

66. Herzog (p. 92) and Garrucci (1862, p. 8) clearly state that the right wall of m contained two openings onto galleries. Garrucci, too, shares Herzog’s impression that the galleries in this area were excavated after the construction of the exterior building, “upon which they depend.” Neither author comments on another, sealed opening next to the staircase into m, apparently walled up in antiquity.

67. In particular, H. J. Leon, “The Jewish Catacombs and Inscriptions of Rome: an account of their discovery and subsequent history,” *Hebrew Union College Annual* 5 (1928), p. 310, n. 57.

68. Herzog, 1861, pp. 103–104.

69. Herzog, 1861, pp. 95–96. For Herzog, this meant dating the Jewish catacomb to no earlier than the second quarter of the third century CE (the first Christian catacombs were believed at the time to date to a period much earlier, at least century before).

70. Garrucci, 1862, p. 16. Joseph Barclay Pentland (1797–1873), in Rome since the 1840s, had been conducting geological surveys of the Roman suburbs for his *On the Geol-*

ogy of the Country about Rome, London, 1859. He corresponded with both Garrucci and de Rossi on the discovery of the Jewish catacomb (Cod. Vat. 14241 (1858–1859), f. 80, f. 501, and f. 313), and would include the Randanini site in his editions of *Murray's Guide to Rome and Environs*.

71. Garrucci, 1864–1865, pp. 150–179.

72. A. Ferrua, "Indicazione Topografica della via Latina dalla Porta Ononima ai "Cessati Spiriti," *RACr* 40 (1964), p. 110.

73. Herzog, 1861, pp. 97–98; Garrucci, 1862, pp. 8–9; and p. 21. O. Marucchi, 1903, p. 238. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 2918 (January 14, 1863): Giuseppe Randanini reports to the Ministry "lumini di terra cotta simili ai primi rinvenuti nella suddetta catacomba."

74. Herzog (1861, pp. 92–93) mentions that the floor level of the first interior chamber m had been excavated to a depth of about 7 meters (30 Roman palms) to see if the stairway into the site from area M continued to a lower floor. Garrucci reveals (1862, pp. 5–6) that rather than steps, conduits were discovered on this spot that led to a well in the center of the room (soon reburied). This may be the "pozzo" reported in ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 2921 (April 19, 1862). The well is mentioned as being covered with marble slabs.

75. R. Garrucci, *Veteri ornati di figure in oro travati nei cimteri cristiani di Roma*, Rome, 1858 (reprinted in 1864).

76. *Bull. Ist. Corr. Arch.*, 1860, p. 5; Garrucci, 1862, pp. 19–22; and 1864–1865, p. 151. It is in his discussion of this piece that Garrucci, 1862, p. 12, publishes the first known reference to the famous "Seasons Sarcophagus" at the Kircherian Museum. The Vigna Rananini sarcophagus's decoration and dating are discussed by L. V. Rutgers, "Ein in situ erhaltenes sarkophagfragment in der judischen Katakomba an der via Appia," *Journal of Jewish Art* 14 (1988), pp. 16–27.

77. Garrucci, 1862, p. 5.

78. Garrucci, 1862, p. 60, had published a *graffito* on a brick still *in situ* (CIJ 1.170/JIWE 2.394), probably hidden for many years beneath debris in the gallery E2. Garrucci, 1862, p. 64: finds "sepolcri arcuati in qualche cubicolo," like those outside the atrium, as well as a *mensa* tomb. On April 19, 1862, Randanini also reported on the discovery of a well (pozzo) with marble cover (note 74).

79. Garrucci, 1862, pp. 64–69. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 3539 (May 7, 1862): the finds included another 40 inscriptions, a sarcophagus, and three painted rooms.

80. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 3537 (May 24, 1862 and June 3, 1862). A third cubiculum (Da) was inaccessible behind debris from L1: ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., f. 3739 (June 1, 1862). Giuseppe Randanini reported about forty new inscriptions, including graffiti,

paintings, sarcophagi, and new catacomb regions. The "sarcofago sfondato nel coperchio" may refer to that of "Eudoxius" (CIJ 1.109/JIWE 2.277).

81. J. B. Pentland, p. 347: "these cocim consist, like those in the atrium at the entrance, of several tiers of cells placed one above the other, each capable of holding a corpse."

82. Garrucci, 1862, pp. 64–65.

83. Garrucci, 1862, pp. 155–157. Garrucci's insistence on the exclusivity of the site to the Jews is largely ideological, and doubtless influenced by his teacher G. Marchi. S. J.'s claim that barriers had once existed inside hypogaea to separate Christian catacombs from pagan burial sites, and that the indiscriminate plundering of these cemeteries had destroyed the alterations made by the Christians themselves to maintain exclusive burial grounds. Observing that the "isolated cells," columbaria, and hypogaea of the Etruscans and Jews had never developed into vast communal cemeteries, Marchi had dogmatically proclaimed that "the holy cemeteries have an exclusive character and within these holy cemeteries of Rome are buried only Christians." Marchi, 1844, p. 57.

84. In more than one instance, there is confusion about the provenance of an epitaph from the Randanini site. In the article, "Scoperte Epigrafiche," published in the *Bollettino Archeologico Italiano* in 1862, pp. 3–4, Garrucci announces the discovery of thirty new epitaphs in the Jewish catacomb. "Tra le quale," he adds, "trascelgo questo esempio che dice così": D M/JULIAE/ATTICULAE PHILAE/MATRI MEREN/TI JULIA PHILIA/FILIA BENE FE/CIT. The editors of the CIL assign this same epitaph "in letteris malis" to the necropolis overhead (CIL 6.2 no. 7682). It has never been included in the collections of Jewish funerary inscriptions from Rome. Clearly, Garrucci thought it profane and published the piece separately because of its invocation to the *inferi*. An example of a piece of evidence that Garrucci either never saw or ignored is the lost polychrome mosaic found in April of 1862 with the busts of a woman and man crowned with a diadem ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 2706 (April 16, 1862); C. L. Visconti: "vi e' scoperto inoltre un frammento di musaico a colori di finissimo e squisito lavoro, in cui ci sono due teste, l'una muliebre, l'altra virile barbata e diademata."

85. R. Garrucci, "Descrizione del cimitero ebraico di Vigna Randanini sulla via Appia," *Memorie della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia* 15 (1864), p. 97. Garrucci does not return to the discussion of this "second floor." De Angelis D'Ossat, 1943, p. 177 sees a second gallery from the staircase to area A that led to an "irregolare ... scaletta ... ad gallerie sottostanti ... non praticabili," but Garrucci's description suggests instead a floor below area B.

86. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 471 (January 30th, 1863): Renewal

of Randanini license to 1863, signed: Enrico Maggenti, agent for Giuseppe Randanini.

87. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. V, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 3739 (June 1, 1862): report by G. Randanini. Description in Garrucci, 1864–1865, pp. 155–156.

88. A short flight of four steps linked areas A and D.

89. Marucchi, 1903, pp. 246–247, believes it a “room for funerary use or prayer.” The site report in ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 284 (January 14, 1863) for excavations of December 1862–January, 1863, notes the “grande scala d’ingresso come appresso” for area A “di forma quadrangolare palmi 22 larga palmi 36 e profonda de 74, a tre rampe nella pareti di questa sonvi vari dipinti in forma tutta di bugnato a vari colori. Dal secondo al terzo rampante evvi due loculi mortuari ed in uno di essi fu rinvenuta una epigrafe rotta con il candelabro a rovescia (CIJ 1.139/JIWE 2.208)... nello sterro fatto furono rinvenute vari lumini di terracotta, simili ai primi rinvenuti nel sotteraneo.” The condition of this stairwell in the mid-twentieth century is recorded by de Angelis d’Ossat, pp. 176–177.

90. Garrucci, 1864–1865, p. 156: “una scala si vede ancora interrata” (to area B).

91. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 258 (January 16, 1863). According to f. 584, (January 26, 1863), one week later the diggers found 1. a large sepulcher “a cassettoni grandi arcuati... un mosaico con vari ornamenti, con sua scala annessa.” 2. a columbarium with staircase and “loculetti, tutto intero con le sue lapidi piccoli, pitture ed altri oggetti ad esso connessi.” 3. about thirty new inscriptions from the Jewish catacomb.

92. Not shown in Garrucci’s 1862 plan (ca. May, 1862), but photographed around the year 1864 by Carlo Baldassare Simelli (print in the Marco Besso Foundation, Rome: “catacombe ebee, no. 93”).

93. A list of inscriptions and other objects found in the columbarium of the Junii Silani conserved in the ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 990 (*processo verbale* of January 30th, 1863). Inspectors L. Grifi, P. Jefferani, T. Minardi, F. Podesti and G. B. de Rossi were ordered to return to the site and document the “sepolcreto, columbajo, scale, iscrizioni ebraiche.” ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 4969 (April 16, 1862): C.L. Visconti writes to Minister P. D. Costantini Baldini that “the Jewish catacombs for form, vastness, rarity and inscriptions, of great historical and monumental importance,” and, in f. 4656, (July 7, 1862), Visconti and de Rossi suggest a “retribution” of 1000 scudi to adequately provide for the maintenance of the site and its accessibility to all. Secretary Grifi, in response, makes no actual decision regarding a price, stating only that the Ministry must make all decisions in conformity with the law.

94. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 139 (January 19, 1863): Minister P. D. Costantini Baldini to Antiquities Secretary L. Grifi.

95. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 298 (January 24, 1863).

96. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 1160 (February 1, 1864): the Randanini excavation license is extended to 1865 by P. E. Visconti and G. B. Guidi. Giuseppe Randanini also petitions to bring a marble sarcophagus “istoriata” into Rome for repairs: it had been discovered in many pieces at a depth of 7 palms in excavations from January 23–February 7, 1864: ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 258 (January 16, 1863). A later report states there had been no new finds: ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 1719 (March 9, 1864). After a disappointing season, the excavation was again suspended and agricultural activities resumed on the site: ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 1719 (March 9, 1864).

97. The Randanini claimed that they had been encouraged to continue the excavation by members of the Antiquities Commission as well as by Garrucci: ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 4188 (May 23, 1870). Calculating the total cost for excavation at 1,000 scudi, the family wanted a “recompense” of 1,500 scudi for opening and maintaining the archaeological sites in their vineyard. *A processo verbale* (ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 479a (July 28, 1870), denied the Randanini’s requests.

98. According to ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 5441 (July 13th, 1870), Randanini proposed through his agent A. Panzieri to sell: 1. The Jewish catacomb “and all it contained.” 2. The columbarium and inscriptions to the Junii Silani and Carvillii families, including the incinerary vases. 3. Miscellaneous inscriptions found during the excavation and cultivation of the vineyard. 4. A sarcophagus “d’epoca cristiana ma servito ad un pagano.” 5. The fragments of the Jewish sarcophagus from the mausolea. 6. Sundry objects, including Christian, Jewish and pagan inscriptions. After visiting the site with Visconti, as well as on other occasions, Baron de Rothschild offered (according to Randanini) 60,000 scudi for the purchase of the vineyard, catacomb and columbarium. Rothschild died in 1868, however, before the sale could go through. An Englishwoman, however, later reports that another reason why the sale of the catacomb to Rothschild had not been made was because “competent judges” had informed Rothschild that the catacomb was “not entirely Hebrew, although the candlestick and other unmistakable symbols prove that here a number of Jews were laid to rest.” (E. H. Hudson, *A History of the Jews in Rome, BC 160–AD 604*,

2d ed., London, 1884, pp. 365–367.) Both Guidi and Castellani offered far less than Rothschild for the Randanini site: scudi 8,000 and 6,000 respectively. Agostino Castellani did obtain a Jewish inscription from the Vigna Randanini (CIJ 1.130/JIWE 2.355) for the Capitoline museum, although its provenance was not specified at the time (JIWE 2. p. 300). In ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 254 (January 14, 1862), de Rossi and Visconti value the maintenance of the site and its artifacts at 1,000 scudi (price quoted by Giuseppe Randanini to the Commission on March 27, 1863). A price of 150 scudi for the inscriptions and cinerary urns was proposed during a *processo verbale* of April 13th, 1863 (f. 2792). Randanini countered, in f. 1754 (February 27, 1867), with a price of 250 scudi for these objects, plus the right to cover the columbarium. Several members of the Antiquities Commission advised the Papal government to acquire the Randanini vineyard because of its potential for future archaeological discoveries (see the *processo verbale* of July 7, 1869). Ultimately, however, Randanini was advised to “sell the vineyard to whomever he wished”: ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 6422 (August 16, 1869).

99. Papal audiences of February 27, 1869 and August 24, 1870 (ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 5934). With limited financial resources, Pope Pius IX denied the motion to spend 150 scudi on the inscriptions and cinerary urns from the columbarium of the Junii Silani for the Vatican Museums. It was argued that the Randanini had taken upon themselves the excavation at their own expense, and the government was therefore not obliged to pay for a service that it had not desired.

100. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 94951 (February 18, 1867). The columbarium chambers “rimaste alle intemperie” had not only lost their paintings but “tutta la intonacatura corrosa e consulata, di modo che non vi e’ rimasto che il solo scheletro, non presentando piu’ alcun interesse.” In f. 9495 (January 25, 1867), Luigi Grifi approves of the reburial of the columbarium, with the purchase of its inscriptions and cinerary urns for the Vatican museums.

101. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 4538 (July 6, 1870): Randanini had been warned by Grifi not to remove any antiquities from the vineyard as per the Pacca Edict of 1820 (“e’ vietato di rimuovere dal luogo ove si trovano, le iscrizioni esistenti negli antichi ruderi”). Lord C. W. Wilshire (1814–1906) personally selected the seven inscriptions that he would purchase: see JIWE 2, pp. 286–287, nn. 342–349. Wilshire even praises the Papal government for its “vigilance” when he was caught trying to add the sarcophagus with Jewish symbols to his order: ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I,

art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 4188 (May 23, 1870). According to Grifi’s notes, Randanini received many other offers to purchase antiquities from the site, and inscriptions published by Garrucci would later appear in private collections in Velletri, Bergamo, Rome and the United States (CIJ 1/JIWE 2 nn. 99/255 239/331, 135/327, 152/339). In 1881, Ignazio Randanini claimed that he had recovered inscriptions “stolen from the Jewish cemetery and museum” by a Sig. Dalboni (Cod. Vat. 14267, f. 178).

102. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5a., b. 414/18, f. 7871: Rome, “Licenza di scavo concessa a Ignazio Randanini in una sua vigna fuori Porta San Sebastiano” (November 10th, 1870–December 12th, 1870). This new contract (December 3, 1870) forbade excavation in the Jewish catacomb.

103. F. Barnabei, *Le Memorie d’un archeologo*, Collana di studi archeologici 2, ed. M. Barnabei & F. Delpino, Rome, 1991, p. 408, recalls that there was for a time considerable tension between the CDAS and the new Excavations Director, Pietro Rosa, regarding government authority over the catacombs, that, in the end, remained under the supervision of the Cardinal Vicar and CDAS. Also, according to Barnabei, p. 114, n. 1, the laws governing antiquities in the now-suppressed Papal States were temporarily upheld until the government of Italy could ratify its new laws. These “temporary measures,” Barnabei adds, “lasted until 1902!”

104. ACS, M.P.I., Dir. Gen. AA.BB.AA, vers. 2, ser. 3, b. 246, f. 43228 (1885); and Spera, 1999, p. 27, n. 70. A. Berliner, *Storia degli ebrei di Roma. Dall’Antichità allo smaltimento del ghetto*, trans. A. Audisio, Milan, 1992, pp. 50–53, describes his visit to the site in April of 1874 in the company of Hebrew scholar Ignazio Guidi.

105. ACS, M.P.I. Dir. Gen. AA. BB. AA., vers. 2, ser. 2, b. 246, f. 43228 (July 31, 1882): petition to excavate submitted by Ignazio Randanini.

106. Spera, 1999, p. 259, n. 433. O. Marucchi records the Jewish inscriptions recovered by Ignazio Randanini from the Jewish catacomb in 1882 in “Scavi nella vigna Randanini,” *Chronachetta Mensuale delle piu’ importanti e moderne scoperte del Prof. Tito Armellini e notizie archeologiche raccolte dal suo figlio Mariano Armellini* 3.2 (1883), pp. 188–190. D. Noy, *JIWE* 2, 1995, p. 181, believes Marucchi did not actually follow the excavations, which, according to Berliner, p. 49, recovered a very small number of artifacts. The full text of another inscription (CIJ 1.140/JIWE 2.338), seen in part by Garrucci, was published by the German scholar Nicholas Muller in an appendix to his 1885 study on another hypogaeum on the via Appia Pignatelli: “La cataomba degli ebrei presso la via Appia Pignatelli,” *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archaeologischen Instituts Rom* Abteil. 1 (1886), pp. 49–52. The planting of trees along the via Appia Pignatelli also reopened a shaft nearly 20 meters deep close to the catacomb: ACS, M. P. I., Dir. Gen., AA. BB. AA, 3

vers., ser. 2, div. 10, b. 55 (“Roma: altri scavi privati”) f. 70: “Lastre di peperino sulla via Appia Pignatelli, 1899”).

107. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 479a (June 14, 1870), in which Randanini testifies that he had “faithfully” made improvements at his own expense “for the confort of visitors.”

108. Herzog, 1861, p. 91.

109. A. Hare, *Walks in Rome*, 2d edition, vol. 1 (London, 1871), p. 446. In ACS, M.P.I., Dir. Gen. AA.BB.AA, vers. 3, pt. 2, b. 421, f. 4660, vineyard listed with a “gabinetto di curiosita’.” O. Marucchi’s *Guida delle Catacombe Romane*, Rome, 1903, pp. 238–240, mentions many clay lamps in its collection. The English archaeologist John Henry Parker (1806–1884), accompanied by photographers Carlo Baldassare Simelli, Charles Smeaton and Filippo Lais and the artist William Ewing, visited the Randanini excavations between 1864 and 1868. They took several interior and exterior shots of the Jewish catacomb and one of the temple-tomb on the hillside above (n. 1755), but were unable to record the other sepulchers in the vineyard, by then reburied. The results are discussed in Parker’s 1876 and 1877 volumes on tombs and catacombs for the series *The Archaeology of Rome*. Parker’s articles were published during the 1870s, when access to the Jewish catacomb was nearly impossible due to legal concerns. His photographs of elaborately painted chambers and decorated sarcophagi are visual testaments to his notion that the catacomb “appears not to have been exclusively, though chiefly, confined to the Jews” (Parker, 1877, p. 120). On Parker and his collaborators in the Vigna Randanini: K.-D. Dorsch & H. Reinhard Seeliger, *Romische Katakombenmalereien im Spiegel des Photoarchivs Parker*, Munster, 2000, pp. 181–186 and A. Terry & J. Osborne, “Un Canadiene errant: Charles Smeaton and the Earliest Photographs of the Roman Catacombs,” *Canadian Art Review* 32, 1–2 (2007), pp. 99–100.

110. ASR, Min. LL. PP., Ind., Agr., Comm., Belle Arti, sez. 5, tit. I, art. 5c., b. 420/29, f. 4790 (June 23, 1870). Luigi Grifi writes that Randanini “ha sempre tenuto aperta l’ipogeo, ed e’ scritto sulla porta della vigna l’invito ai forestieri per visitarlo, sicche’ era diventato un provenuto del fondo.” The sign is also noted by U. Leoni, G. Staderini, *On the Appian Way: a Walk from Rome to Albano*, Rome, 1907, p. 48 and by I. Cohen, *Travels in Jewry*, New York, 1953, pp. 271–273.

111. In many areas of the catacomb, the floor level has been raised to protect floor tombs “a fossa,” and those described as “graves in the floor, divided into a number of cells for the corpses” (possible reference to *kokhim*), *Illustrated London News*, January 27, 1872, p. 86. Marucchi, 1884, p. 12, notes that the minor galleries off m were completely filled, as was the staircase mentioned by Garrucci that led directly to area B (Marucchi, 1884, p. 27).

112. That the bones were a particular attraction is evident from the comments of English-speaking tourists to Rome at

this time: C. R. Weld (interestingly, in the company of a “Dr. Heidenheim, a learned Hebrew scholar”), is struck by the “vast number of bones,” *Last Winter in Rome*, London, 1865, p. 223. S. Wood, *New Curiosum Urbis*, London, 1875, p. 224, finds that “no reverence being attached to the relics of the persons buried here, the bones have been allowed to remain untouched, and consequently this place has all that evidence of reality that the Christian catacombs seem to want.”

113. According to caretaker Alberto Marcocci, many bones were later moved to the less accessible areas of the catacomb, including the well shaft in the vestibule by the via Appia Pignatelli.

114. Tomassetti, 1975, p. 82, mentions marble fragments, including a “puteale con figure di animali in rilievo.”

115. In 1896, F. Barnabei, Director of the National Roman Museum, strongly advocated that the Jewish community in Rome collaborate with the government on tutelage of the monument; for which a local politician and future mayor of Rome, E. Nathan (of Jewish descent) sought lire 20,000 in funding (ACS, M. P. I., Dir. Gen. AA. BB. AA., 2 vers., ser. 2, b. 421, f. 4269 (February 7, 1896); a similar proposal was made to the Jewish community for excavation of the Jewish catacombs on the Monteverde in 1905; see Leon, 1928, p. 307, n. 47. A unnamed American negotiated to purchase epitaphs from the Vigna Randanini catacomb in 1907: ACS, M.P.I., Dir. Gen. AA.BB.AA, vers. 2

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