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0521619785 - Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe: The City of Rome, Volume 2

David Noy

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Although there was a substantial Jewish population in Western Europe from at least the first century BC, literary evidence for it before the end of the sixth century AD is very sparse, amounting to a few mainly hostile references by Roman writers and some material of doubtful historical value in rabbinic and hagiographic sources. Knowledge of the Jewish communities of the West is therefore almost entirely dependent on inscriptions, which contain information on community organization, the use of biblical texts and religious symbols, linguistic habits, naming practices and social status, and burial customs and beliefs about life after death. This volume, the second of a two-volume work, concentrates on the inscriptions of the City of Rome. Hitherto it has been necessary to consult specialist publications to gain a complete picture of the inscriptions: this book fills a notable gap in the market.

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WESTERN EUROPE

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The City of Rome

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## PREFACE

This book completes the work of the Jewish Inscriptions Project in the Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge, following *Jewish Inscriptions of Graeco-Roman Egypt* and *Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe* i. The Project has been funded by the British Academy, with an additional grant from the Bethune Baker Fund. The work was finished after I joined the Classics Department of St David's University College, Lampeter.

The book aims to collect all Jewish inscriptions from the city of Rome which can be dated before A.D.700, updating and replacing the relevant part of J.B. Frey's *Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum* (1936). Some of Frey's omissions and errors were corrected by his reviewers, and by Leon (1960) and Lifshitz in his revised edition of 1975. Other inscriptions have been published more recently.

The same criteria have been used for determining an inscription's 'Jewishness' as in *JIWE* i. In most cases this means provenance from a Jewish catacomb. The problem of possibly pagan inscriptions being reused in the catacombs is discussed in the introductions to individual sections and in App.2. Inscriptions from outside the catacombs are treated as Jewish if they use Hebrew or Aramaic, or if they contain specifically Jewish terminology, formulae, names or symbols.

The entry for each inscription is arranged as in *JIWE* i. For the inscriptions published in *CIJ* and by Leon, the 'Text follows' section notes if there are significant differences between the version given here and their versions. If there is no such comment, it can be assumed that my text agrees with theirs, except that the *CIJ* practice of 'correcting' spellings has not been followed here, and restorations which make unjustified assumptions about gender are not followed. The translations keep as closely as possible to the word-order of the Greek or Latin, and therefore sometimes have a rather unnatural English structure.

Deviations from standard letter forms are noted. In the Greek inscriptions, the standard forms of *alpha*, *epsilon*, *sigma* and *omega* were respectively Α, Ε, Σ and Ω. In Latin, E was

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normal. These forms are therefore not noted. Approximate representations of the forms of other letters are given; these are not to scale and not intended to be exact.

The epigraphic conventions are the same as in *JIWE* i: (*abc*) = resolution of an abbreviation; [*abc*] = restoration of lost text; <*abc*> = correction where letters were omitted or written incorrectly in the inscription; {*abc*} = superfluous text to be ignored; [[*abc*]] = text erased on the stone. [...] = lost text where the number of letters is known approximately but no restoration is suggested; [ - - ] = lost text of uncertain length. A dot beneath a letter means that the reading is doubtful. <sup>vac.</sup> = space left by the inscriber. | = end of a line; || = end of the fifth line.

Variations from standard spelling have been noted in the apparatus for each inscription, except in the case of κᾶται and εἰρήνη, which were written as κᾶτε/κᾶτε/κᾶται and εἰρήνη so frequently that it would be superfluous to mark each occurrence. The common omission of ἦ before κοίμησις and the ending -ις for -ιος in men's names have also not been noted.

The inscriptions have been re-examined wherever possible, and many measurements and other details are published here for the first time. Limitations of time and funding have prevented this from being done in all cases.

The first section of bibliography shows where the full text of the inscription has been published (excluding some early collections based only on secondary sources which are cited in *CIJ*); the second section shows where the inscription has been discussed. The indexes are arranged on the same principles as in *JIWE* i. ? against an inscription's number in the indexes indicates that the spelling of the word is uncertain.

Comments on the inscriptions have, on the whole, been made as short as possible in order to keep the book to a reasonable length. The main aim has been to state, in brief, as much as is known about an inscription's discovery, to summarize the most significant interpretations, and, where appropriate, to offer new suggestions. Matters of linguistic and onomastic interest are not usually discussed. Various abbreviations are

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used to save space, which readers are asked to excuse; Vigna Randanini and Villa Torlonia are often abbreviated to Randanini and Torlonia.

There are many people to whom I should like to express my thanks. Joyce Reynolds read painstakingly through a draft version of the work and made an enormous number of valuable suggestions; I am sorry that lack of space and occasionally obstinacy have prevented me from acting on all of them. William Horbury and Margaret Williams also read the draft, and did much to improve it. The contributions of all three have been too many to acknowledge individually. Dr Horbury's encouragement is responsible for the work having been undertaken at all. The book's defects are of course my own responsibility. Douglas de Lacey dealt with the computing aspect of the work, and continued to develop the programs which produced this book from a computer database. Graham Davies administered the Project's finances.

I am very grateful to the Direzione Generale dei Monumenti, Musei e Gallerie Ponteficie for their consent to the work on inscriptions in the Museo Vaticano, and especially to Giorgio Filippi for his great help. The co-operation of the Sovrintendenza Archeologica di Roma also facilitated the work in Italy, as did the help of Valerie Hope, and of the British School at Rome (especially Maria Pia Malvezzi). Michael Vickers of the Ashmolean Museum went out of his way to make the inscriptions there accessible.

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