

Impact case study (REF3b)

<p>Institution: University of Oxford</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: UOA27</p>
<p>Title of case study: Jews and Judaism in the Roman World</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>There has been a continuing demand for public lectures to audiences of all ages demonstrating an appetite for understanding the early marginalisation of Jews: Martin Goodman’s research on the place of Jews and Judaism in the Roman world from the first century BCE to the fourth century CE has expanded public awareness of the treatment of minorities in imperial systems, the origins of anti-Semitism, the early development of Rabbinic Judaism, and the relationship between Christianity and Judaism in antiquity (which has implications for interfaith relationships in the present day). Goodman’s research findings are also sought after on undergraduate teaching courses and have advised a historically-themed television series.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The research has been carried out by Professor Goodman as a member of the Oriental Studies Faculty at the University of Oxford, where he has been Reader in Jewish Studies since 1991. Combining his expertise in Jewish and in Roman history, and taking advantage of the rich research environment in Oxford for Classics and Religious Studies as well as Hebrew and Jewish Studies, he has sought to use the extensive evidence for Jews and Judaism in the Roman empire as a means to increase understanding of the variegated nature of ancient Judaism, the place of Jews and Judaism as a minority people and religion within a complex imperial system, and the value of the Jewish evidence for the interpretation more generally of the treatment of ethnic and religious minorities in the Roman world.</p> <p>The research has directly tackled the challenges posed by the selective preservation of evidence about Jews and Judaism in this period by the two religious systems, rabbinic Judaism and Christianity, which emerged from the world of first-century Jews, and the need to avoid imposing on the evidence assumptions derived from these later traditions.</p> <p><i>Mission and Conversion</i> (1994) challenged the presumption (standard up to then) that Jewish missionary activity laid the foundations of early Christian mission, finding the evidence for such missionary activity to be lacking. In so far as Jewish and Christian traditions were related in this area, it was through Christian influence on the assumptions of later rabbinic Jews. By contrast, a project on apologetics in the Roman empire demonstrated that a highly rhetorical defensive composition by the first-century Jewish author Flavius Josephus, his <i>Contra Apionem</i>, was an early example of what was to become a very popular Christian literary genre in the second century.</p> <p>Another series of studies investigated the extent to which Jews, as just one people among many minorities in the multicultural society ruled by Rome, were really as different from other peoples as was sometimes claimed in antiquity in the light of the violent uprisings of Jews against Rome in 66-70, 115-117 and 132-135 CE. Investigation of other groups and religions in the Roman world showed that preservation of national characteristics was by no means unique to Jews, and that the impression of their special nature was largely the result of the preservation of so much more material by and about them than about other provincial peoples and religious cults.</p> <p>These studies culminated in a work of synthetic research, <i>Rome and Jerusalem</i> (2007), which showed that the war between Rome and the Jews in Judaea in 66-70 CE, which ended in the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple and the marginalisation of the Jews in the Roman world, was the product not of an intrinsic culture clash but a series of miscalculations by individual Jews and Romans and the political imperatives of the new Flavian imperial dynasty whose public justification for seizing power in Rome in 69 CE was the defeat of the Jews and the destruction of Jerusalem.</p>

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

M. Goodman, Rome and Jerusalem: the clash of ancient civilizations, (2007). Available on request.
Review: "The whole book is based on impressive scholarship which is equally at home in the Roman and Jewish worlds, and is thus something which probably only Goodman could have written. It would provide an excellent introduction for a newcomer to Roman or Romano-Jewish history, but also has an important role in the ongoing academic debate about relations between Jews and Romans." D. Noy, *Journal of Roman Studies* 98 (2008), 195-7.

M. Goodman, Judaism in the Roman World: collected essays, (2007). Available on EBSCOhost via institutional account.

Review: "Those wanting both information but also a fresh way of thinking about early Judaism in general, or about issues of identity and authority, religious pluralism, the Temple...the image of God, and sacred space, will not be disappointed by looking in this collection." G. Brooke, *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 32 (5) (2008), 215.

M. Goodman, Mission and Conversion, (1994). DOI:

10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198263876.001.0001

Review: "In sum: this is an important and stimulating book on an important subject. It will be widely read and widely cited." S. J. D. Cohen, *Journal Of Jewish Studies* 46 (1995), 297-300.

Martin Goodman, ed., Jews in a Graeco-Roman World. Oxford University Press, Oxford. 1998.

(Paperback edition, January 2004). Available on ProQuest ebrary via institutional account.

Review: "These essays are truly challenging, and Goodman and his colleagues are to be commended for their independence of judgment." L. H. Feldman, *The American Historical Review* 105(3) (2000), 982-983

Mark Edwards, Martin Goodman and Simon Price, eds., Apologetics in the Roman Empire: Pagans, Jews, and Christians. Oxford University Press, Oxford. 1999. Available on request.

Review: "The volume offers an interesting glimpse of recent trends in English scholarship on religion in the Roman empire, and that is its strength." N De Lange, *Journal of Jewish Studies* 52(2) (2001), 377-379.

Prof. Goodman held a British Academy Research Readership, during which *Rome and Jerusalem* was completed. In 2009-2010, he was the Principal Investigator of a Leverhulme Project on Tolerance of Variety within Judaism from 200 BCE to the present, with a team of three research fellows. (http://www.orinst.ox.ac.uk/research/tolerance_within_judaism.html)

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Professor Goodman's research insights – conveyed to a wide audience through numerous public lectures, his involvement in the creation of the third episodes of the BBC series *Ancient Rome: the Rise and Fall of an Empire* and the BBC documentary *Mothers, Murderers and Mistresses*, and especially as detailed in *Rome and Jerusalem* which has been widely read outside academia – challenge many common assumptions about the history of anti-Semitism and the history of the policy of western powers toward Palestine, and so have influenced the public understanding of contemporary issues related to the Middle East, as well as the public understanding of religious communities in a multicultural and civil society.

Goodman's book *Rome and Jerusalem* continues to sell well with over 35000 editions sold in hardback, paperback and ebook format across the Old British Commonwealth. Foreign editions are also available in France, Italy, USA, Germany, The Czech Republic, and Poland^[1]. The range of reviews the book has received on public forums such as *amazon.co.uk* demonstrates the effect it has had on readers' understanding of the themes involved. In 2009, Tallscotin stated that "[t]hose who have a fragmentary knowledge of either Roman or Jewish history will find his book makes helpful connections. The scope of the study is impressive as is the authority with which it is written. It is also very accessible in its writing style". In 2012, Matthew Hosier wrote, "[t]he fact that the

Temple was never rebuilt is a greater anomaly than I had previously understood. ...The main theme through this book is to unpick why Roman hostility towards Jerusalem was so disproportionate. ...[The book is] very helpful in gaining a deeper understanding of the social, political and religious background to the birth of Christianity, and the development of Western civilisation". Jeremy Bevan also commented, "there's no doubt this is a major contribution to how we understand the dynamics of an encounter that changed history decisively, and I have no hesitation in recommending it"^[1].

Professor Goodman has further propagated his research findings to a wide audience, from schoolchildren to much older members of the public, through an impressive series of public talks and lectures. In Oxford, he convenes weekly public lectures during term times on general topics within Jewish Studies during term times on Wednesday evenings at the Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies in Yarnton Manor. These lectures generally attract an audience of between 30 and 60 people. He also organizes similar public lectures in London on behalf of the Centre. These lectures are held in either the London Jewish Cultural Centre or the Jewish Museum, and generally attract audiences of approximately 100 people. He is chairman of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society, which exists to bring to the attention of the public in England the importance of archaeological research in Israel and its environs, both through lectures (in the British Museum, UCL or KCL) and through publication of *Strata*, the Society's journal.

Since 2008, he has twice spoken at the Godolphin and Latymer School Classics Breakfast Club in London, to an audience of about 70 each time. His most recent visit was in October 2012; afterwards, one audience member was compelled to write, "Thank for a fascinating talk on Friday morning. It has really stimulated my interest in this area and I look forward to reading your *Rome and Jerusalem* and *The Roman World*, both of which I have just ordered"^[2].

It is probable, however, that the research has had its greatest impact on English Jewish readers, since most requests to give talks come from Jewish groups. The organizers of these talks are often explicit that they have been encouraged to send an invitation either by having read *Rome and Jerusalem* or by having heard a lecture by Professor Goodman at Limmud, a British-Jewish educational charity. Lectures for Limmud generally attract an audience of 100 or more, and Goodman spoke for the charity on 'Ancient Limmud: toleration of variety within Judaism in Second Temple times' in Leeds and Warwick in 2009^[iii].

Other talks delivered by Goodman include: the Michael Weitzman Memorial Lecture in 2008; 'Varieties of Judaism in the Ancient World' to Stanmore and Canons Park Synagogue, Middlesex^[iii]; 'Writing a history of Judaism', to around 30 people at the Jewish Historical Society in July 2012; and 'The destruction of the Temple: the ancient origins of antisemitism', to an audience of approximately 25 people at DAVAR (a Jewish cultural group in Bristol) in December 2012.

In 2006, Goodman acted as historical advisor for episode 3 of the BBC drama *Ancient Rome: the Rise and Fall of an Empire*. At the time this programme was watched by 3.3 million viewers^[iv], and since 2008 438 copies of the DVD have been sold in the UK^[3]. He also participated in episode 3 of the 2013 BBC documentary *Mothers, Murderers and Mistresses: Empresses of Ancient Rome*, discussing the life of Berenice. This programme made it to the top 10 of BBC 4 shows for that week^[v].

Goodman is considered an important scholar in his field and many of his publications are incorporated on undergraduate reading lists. Some prime examples were evidenced following a series of public and university lectures in and around Sydney and Melbourne, Australia, in April 2013. Professor James McLaren, Associate Dean (Research) at the Australian Catholic University stated that Goodman's publications "are set as readings for specific topics and as part of the general bibliography. His research has also informed and help[ed] shape the way subject matter is presented in lectures"^[4]. In reference to a taught unit on the Dead Sea Scrolls at the University of Sydney, for which Professor Goodman's publications are also included on the reading list, Associate Professor Ian Young attested that "Martin's theories play a significant role in my approach to this course". Professor Suzanne Rutland, also of the University of Sydney, added that

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“Professor Goodman’s deep scholarship of the Second Temple Period and Roman world has been impressive and inspiring to staff and students alike. He gave two lectures to my Jewish Civilisation class in the course ‘Palestine: Rome to Islam’... He helped to provide the students with a deeper understanding of these developments, and also challenged some of the more orthodox interpretations of the situation in Judea in first century CE... I know that my students gained a lot from his approach and I shall be incorporating the material from his handouts into my lectures in the future”^[5].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)*Testimony*

- [1] Correspondence from Publishing Director, Penguin
- [2] Email from Student, Godolphin and Latymer School
- [3] Email from Customer Service Executive, BBC Shop
- [4] Email from Associate Dean (Research), Australian Catholic University
- [5] Email from Professor, Sydney University

Other evidence sources

- [i] Customer reviews of *Rome and Jerusalem*, http://www.amazon.co.uk/product-reviews/014029127X/ref=dp_top_cm_cr_acr_txt?ie=UTF8&showViewpoints=1
- [ii] http://www.limmud.org/files/day/leeds/leeds_handbook_09.pdf
- [iii] <http://www.sacps.org.uk/29november08.pdf>
- [iv] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Rome:_The_Rise_and_Fall_of_an_Empire
- [v] <http://www.barb.co.uk/viewing/weekly-top-10?> For BBC4 week Jun 10 – Jun 16 2013