


Section A		
Institution: University of St Andrews 		
Unit of Assessment: UoA 29: Classics		
Title: Shaping modern perceptions of military culture through Roman experiences		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2006 - 31 December 2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Jon Coulston Alice König	Role(s) (e.g. job title): Senior Lecturer Senior Lecturer	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: 01 September 1995 - present 01 September 2003 - present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2014 - 31 December 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No		
Section B		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words) St Andrews Classics research on military culture and practice has changed perceptions of ancient Roman military society and influenced present-day military culture. Our research has expanded modern understanding of ancient military culture and its ever-pressing relevance for the modern world. The research has led to better understanding of the influence of historical events on individual and group attitudes and behaviours in modern conflict zones, and has helped to improve relationship-building [text removed for publication]. In addition, our research has shaped the cultural sector by influencing curatorial practice in 7 museums (21 exhibits between 2014 and 2019, including the Victoria & Albert, London in 2017), by influencing theatrical practice in 1 theatre company, and by influencing 4 military reconstruction groups as well as 7 high-circulation magazines. Moreover, through sustained engagement with museums (e.g. Victoria & Albert, London; Arles, France; Koblenz, Germany) and regular and specialist press (e.g. <i>National Geographic</i>), this research has directly engaged approximately 10,500,000 and reached approximately 44,540,000 people (general public).		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words) St Andrews research into ancient military identity, visual imagery and writing underpins this impact case study. This work centres around research on ancient constructions of military identity by both soldiers and civilians (R1-R3), and on military discourse and the evolution of military ideas in a range of ancient cultures (R4-R6). Research by Coulston on ancient constructions of military identity is in three related areas of Roman archaeology: (i) Trajan's Column in Rome (R1), (ii) soldiers and military equipment in figural art (R2), and (iii) the imagery created for and by Roman soldiers, especially cavalrymen, in the culturally diverse frontier region of Hadrian's Wall, UK (R3). Trajan's Column has been central to the study of ancient warfare, imperialism, and triumphal display since the Renaissance, influencing 19 th century painters and 21 st century filmmakers alike. Coulston's current research (including analysis of the sculptural frieze directly accessed via scaffolding covering the monument, on visits conducted between 2014 and 2017) builds on a much larger body of work going back four decades. He has also conducted extensive comparative study of military artefacts and iconography from other archaeological contexts, across the territory of the former Roman empire. His research demonstrates how the Column provides a view of military achievement and of the roles of soldiers in Roman society as seen from the imperial capital (R1). He has published research on arms and armour, archaeological <i>corpora</i> and comprehensive regional and subject studies: for example, analysis of figural gravestones and other monuments depicting Roman cavalrymen (R3), sculpture found along Hadrian's Wall, and the standard work on Roman military equipment (R2; Spanish edition 2016). His research has transformed		

understanding of how soldiers were represented and perceived in Roman society, including issues of their training, identity, status, welfare, trauma experience, societal dysfunction, and family dependents. The range of his projects illuminate continuities and changes over time and place, allowing for more nuanced appreciation of Roman military society as a comparative window into modern military cultures.

St Andrews research on the evolution of Greek and Roman military ideas and their influence on other cultures and communities, ancient and modern, focuses on three interlocking areas, (i) ancient technical writing (R4-R6), (ii) interplay between battle narratives and discourses of war in ancient and modern cultures (R5), and (iii) interactions between Greek, Roman and 'barbarian' military thinkers and soldiers in the Roman empire (R6). König's publications have shed new light on classical military theory and on ancient methods of learning and teaching strategic leadership and decision-making. In showing, for example, that some ancient military handbooks function like battle-simulation exercises (R4), König has enhanced understanding of the dynamic relationship between ancient military theory and practice, and illuminated the role played by exemplary anecdotes in shaping military mindsets and proficiency. Her study of Medieval and Renaissance uses of ancient military handbooks has underlined the powerful resonance of historical narratives in visualisations of future war, leading to new research on the complex feedback loop between narrative and reality in the planning, conduct and prevention of armed conflict (R5). In 2017, König co-founded an interdisciplinary research network ('Visualising War') to explore the ways in which ancient battle narratives migrate across different genres and media, in different periods and places, canonising particular ideals about military culture and practice, and shaping different communities' discourses of war. From this project, several of König's contributions have emerged:

- her field-changing research into literary and cross-cultural interactions in the Roman empire (R6), which has pioneered new methodologies for studying the transmission of values and ideas between different cultures;
- more recent publications have explored how the accumulation of battle narratives from many different periods and places in Frontinus' *Strategemata* might have complicated Roman definitions of and attitudes to 'civil' war (R5);
- how military experts from different cultural communities in the Roman empire exchanged military know-how and represented their respective military identities (R6).

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

All six of these publications have been submitted to REF as outputs and/or appear in peer-reviewed publications by recognised academic presses.

R1. 'Roman victory and barbarian defeat on the pedestal reliefs of Trajan's Column', Coulston, J.C.N., 2017, in *Traianssäule – Siegesmonument und Kriegsbericht in Bildern*, in Schöner, G. & Mitthof, F. (ed.), Wien, 95-112 (ISBN: [978-3-902976-53-6](#))

R2. *Roman Military Equipment: From the Punic Wars to the Fall of Rome*, Bishop, M.C. & Coulston, J.C.N., 2006, Oxbow. pp. 321 (ISBN: 1-84217-159-3; DOI: [10.2307/j.ctvh1dtw2](#))

R3. *Cavalry in the Roman World*, Coulston, J.C.N. (ed.), 2020, Armatura Press, pp. 300 (ISBN: [978-1-910238-16-5](#))

R4. 'Conflicting models of authority and expertise in Frontinus' *Strategemata*', König, A.R. 2016, in *Authority and Expertise in Ancient Scientific Culture*, König, J. & Woolf, G. (ed.), CUP, 153-81 (ISBN: 978107060067; DOI: [10.1017/9781107446724.008](#))

R5. 'Reading civil war in Frontinus' *Strategemata*: a case-study for Flavian literary studies', König, A.R. 2018, in *After 69 CE: Writing Civil War in Flavian Rome*, Ginsberg, L.D. & Krasne, D.A. (ed.), de Gruyter, Trends in Classics, Supplementary Volumes 65, 145-178 (ISBN: 9783110583960; DOI: [10.1515/9783110585841-008](#))

R6. 'Tactical Interactions: dialogues between Greece and Rome in the military manuals of Aelian and Arrian', in König, A.R., Langlands, R. & Uden, J. (ed.) 2020, *Literature and Culture*

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

Coulston and König's research has enhanced the experience of defence professionals, museum professionals, broadcasters, theatre professionals, re-enactors and school teachers, delivering significant social, cultural and educational benefits: (a) by equipping over 100 people (serving soldiers) with historical knowledge and cultural understanding that enhances their operational effectiveness, and (b) by shaping the cultural sectors through influencing curatorial and theatre practices, military reconstructions, and high-circulation magazine articles.

Enhancing Military Training: Professional Development for Cultural Advisors in the Army, Navy and RAF

König has helped improve the cultural awareness and decision-making abilities of cultural advisors in the Army, Navy and RAF. [text removed for publication] Her teaching drew directly on her research into ancient military training manuals (R4, R5, R6), the feedback loop between battle narratives and behaviours in military contexts (R4, R5), and cross-cultural interactions in the Roman empire (R6). The soldiers she trains need to be able to [text removed for publication]. The overarching goal of these courses was to improve the operational effectiveness of British armed forces at home and abroad. Evaluation of course feedback by [text removed for publication] reveals that König's use of ancient military history and texts has positively influenced trainees' role-preparedness and decision-making in the field. [text removed for publication]

Shaping the cultural sectors through influencing curatorial and theatre practices

Since 2014, our research has transformed curatorial and theatre practices regarding the Roman army and war narratives, primarily through promoting a series of events in the cultural sector. Testimony collected at these events demonstrates the benefits delivered to a variety of constituencies, specifically museum and gallery professionals, the museum visiting public, theatre professionals, and the theatre-going public.

Coulston has been instrumental in restructuring several museums and exhibitions, which has in turn influenced museumgoers' understanding of the place of the Roman army in its contemporary society. In 2014-15, Coulston worked with McManus Galleries in Dundee to produce the Roman armour display for the [Power & People](#) exhibition. He advised on captions and images for the exhibition and gave gallery talks and a public lecture, 'Roman armour' (see R1). This exhibition attracted 50,583 people (visitors), 15% higher than its average attendance numbers (S2). In addition, the exhibition led to a change in museumgoers' habits, with 22% saying they would be more likely to attend other cultural events after this, as well as opening up collaborations for the McManus with the British Museum and other collections (S2)., as well as opening up collaborations for the McManus with the British Museum and other collections (S2). Similarly, through Coulston's work with English Heritage, refurbishing the museums along Hadrian's Wall at Corbridge (the largest site-based collection of Roman sculpture in Britain), Housesteads (Northumberland; the most visited Roman site in northern Britain), and Birdoswald (Cumbria). Coulston wrote the consultation document and the full captioning for all sculptural and epigraphic exhibits at Corbridge and Housesteads, many of which vividly present Roman soldiers to the modern viewing public (S3). This work was instrumental in increasing footfall at Corbridge from 16,000 to 25,000 people (visitors) (S3). Museum visitors came away from the exhibitions with a new appreciation for the place of the Roman army and soldiers' own self-understanding. The value of this consultation is summed up by the Senior Curator at English Heritage: "*Dr Coulston has contributed to five projects over the past decade. His advice and academic analysis has helped steer research strategies, improve object catalogues and enabled English Heritage curators to deliver more nuanced and informed exhibition content, drawing on the most current academic thinking*" and "*The input of Dr Coulston over the past 10 years...is crucial if we are to present the most up to date analysis, and interrogate our collections to bring out new and engaging narratives for our visitors.*" (S3) Between November and December 2017, Coulston

advised on the Casts Court project at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, dedicated to the restoration and cleaning of the only 'assembled' cast of Trajan's Column. This helped disseminate knowledge of the monument's creation, recording, preservation and modern reception among museum visitors (footfall of approximately 4,400,000 people (general public) in 2017-18), but also had a direct effect on the museum staff. According to the Senior Sculpture Conservator at the V&A, Coulston's St Andrews [website](#) on Trajan's column (based on R1) was a key resource for V&A staff: *"we referred to this often and followed up references suggested on the website"*, and *"V&A colleagues agree with me it has be [sic] a valuable aid to our understanding and interpretation of the form and narrative of our Museum object."* (S4). Coulston also wrote the keynote paper for the exhibition catalogue for an exhibition on the Roman army at the Musée départemental Arles antique, *"France's top-ranking provincial museum in terms of Roman Archaeology, with [approximately] 160,000-200,000 [people] visitors annually"*. The resident archaeologist confirmed the exhibition *"was of tremendous success, since 41,390 people came to see it between the 15th of December 2018 and the 22nd of April 2019, despite the tense local situation due to the 'Yellow Vest' demonstrations in full swing at that time ...[it] is to a great degree due to Dr Coulston's involvement, and its impact will be long-lasting through his important contribution to the exhibition catalogue"* (S5).

König has also helped change thinking about war narratives in the cultural sector, through her consultancy work in 2019 and 2020 with [NMT Automatics](#) theatre company, which updates classical texts to give them relevance for a modern audience, fusing dance and drama and taking music as a primary source of inspiration. König's work has helped to inform the creative practice of this up-and-coming theatre group: *"König's research... has had an enormous impact into the way we have approached creating a show"*; *"Her research has given us an impetus to explore the way we, as performers, can break cyclical habits of visualisation, and impact a general public in a way which edifies their acuity in regards to war."* (S6). Through the mouthpiece of NMTA, König's research on perceptions of warfare, ancient and modern, has also won a wider audience via the webinar of Love, War, Myth and Reality' of the [Army at the Fringe event](#), launched 19 August 2020.

Increasing public awareness of the Roman Army through influencing historical re-enactment and high-circulation magazines

In addition to museum and theatre collaboration, St Andrews research (as described in Section 2) has also increased awareness of the Roman army through public re-enactment events. Coulston organized the Nineteenth International Roman Military Equipment Conference (RoMEC XVIII) at St Andrews in 2016, taking the theme 'Cavalry in the Roman World', and incorporated both a dedicated session for planning the *Hadrian's Cavalry* exhibitions, and mounting a tactical display by two reconstructed Roman cavalrymen. The conference series is inclusive, appealing to a broad, interested public, with the approximately 100 people (attendees) having varied interests and backgrounds. According to the Head of Programmes and Collections at Tyne & Wear Museums: *"This event provided an unheard of opportunity to bring academics, museums professionals, heritage resource managers and members of the general public together in an open forum to plan and discuss exhibition organisation, themes and content."* (S7) Sustained involvement with cavalry projects thereafter led to Coulston's collaboration in *Hadrian's Cavalry* (between April and September 2017), a multi-location exhibition held in 10 museums along Hadrian's Wall (UNESCO World Heritage Site). This led to a *"12% increase in visitors to the Wall and garnered international coverage"* (S7). Coulston advised on the acquisition of loan-objects, gallery design and reconstruction of cavalry equipment. This climaxed with the *Turma!* event in Carlisle (1-2.7.17), featuring 30 people (Roman riders) in a unique re-enactment of exercises described by the Roman writer Arrian (S7). Audience feedback for this event was extremely positive: for example, *"The Turma was awesome"*; *"Turma was a real experience of Roman history"* (S7).

Similarly, Coulston gave 9 talks and seminars for re-enactment groups in New Zealand (July-August 2019: Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin), holding workshops with members of the public in order to advise on equipment and improve reconstructions. In the words of an Associate Professor at the University of Auckland: *"This instilled a renewed ethos of faithful reconstruction within these groups, brought them up to date with the latest archaeological finds and*

developments, and directly impacted their construction and display practices for the future.” (S8)

Finally, St Andrews research has engaged wide public audiences through influencing high-circulation publications in 7 popular magazines. Among these, Coulston contributed to graphic reconstructions and text for a major article on ‘Trajan’s Amazing Column’ in *National Geographic* (227.4, 2015, 116-29; online version is available here: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/trajan-column/article.html>), for which the gatefold won gold in the prestigious Malofiej graphic design prize for 2016 which is “*akin to winning an Oscar in the infographics field*” according to the Senior Artist at National Geographic (S9). In 2016, National Geographic had a [worldwide circulation](#) of approximately 6,100,000 people per month, with a worldwide readership of approximately 30,000,000 in 41 languages (S9).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of ten references)

1. [text removed for publication]
2. McManus Gallery and Art Museum, Dundee
3. English Heritage
4. Victoria and Albert Museum
5. Centre Camille Jullian, Aix-Marseille Université
6. NMT Automatics
7. Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums
8. University of Auckland
9. *National Geographic*