

Institution: University of Bristol
Unit of Assessment: 31 Classics and Ancient History
Title of case study: The Reception of Classical Antiquity: Raising Public Awareness and Influence on Higher Education
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>The Bristol department of Classics and Ancient History has long been well known for its work on the reception of antiquity. In addition to scholarly publication it has sponsored a great many public events on reception topics, bringing aspects of the classical heritage to the attention of diverse audiences. The first aspect of the impact therefore relates to “creating and interpreting cultural capital” (Main Panel D Criteria, para 84). The second aspect is the influence this research has had on education during the REF period in HEIs both in the UK and North America with respect to the undergraduate curriculum.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Nearly every member of the department publishes on reception and one could in a sense cite the entire body of work, since it is this shared commitment to a reception-based approach to antiquity that has determined the prevailing ethos in the department. This has been a dominant focus since the early 1990s, leading first to the foundation of the Centre for the Classical Tradition and then of its successor the Bristol Institute of Greece, Rome and the Classical Tradition (BIGRCT, founded in 2000). The research has been both theoretical, with ground-breaking studies defining the concepts and models of reception, and empirical, with substantial work devoted to nineteenth-century Britain, modernism, film and other areas. Some specific outputs are highlighted here. For general influence pride of place goes to C. Martindale’s <i>Redeeming the Text: Latin Poetry and the Hermeneutics of Reception</i> (1993) [1] (Martindale was at Bristol from 1990–2013). A programmatic manifesto, it is one of the most important books in the field. It lays out a (for the time) radical hermeneutics based on the reception theories of Wolfgang Iser and Hans-Robert Jauss. Volume 5.2 of <i>The Classical Receptions Journal</i> (2013) was devoted entirely to an assessment of the impact of this work, twenty years on. Another pioneering project in the mid 1990s was ‘Receptions of Rome’, a three-year, Leverhulme-funded research project (£100,000) led by Martindale and C. Edwards (then at Bristol). A major exhibition at the Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery 3 May–23 June 1996 was part of the project; alongside the exhibition catalogue, the edited volume <i>Roman Presences</i> [2] was the principal published output of this research programme. More recently, <i>Classics and the Uses of Reception</i> [3], edited by Martindale and R. Thomas (Harvard), may be cited as an exemplary work with a typically strong Bristol contribution.</p> <p>For more specific influence, three programmes of research are cited which were presented at public events. First is the <i>Oxford History of Classical Reception in English Literature</i>, co-edited by Martindale and D. Hopkins (Bristol, English) [4]. This five-volume project is one of the largest ever undertaken in the field. Volume 3 (1660–1790), the first to be published, appeared in 2012. The second example is the work of P. Michelakis (Bristol since 2002) on antiquity in silent cinema [5].</p>

Together with M. Wyke (Professor of Latin, UCL) Michelakis has been recovering what has become since the invention of talkies a vast forgotten territory. The project has identified some 800 films in archives when previously only a handful were known. A rich chapter in the history both of classical reception and of modern culture is here being written for the first time. Third, the AHRC-funded project (£461,000) of N. Morley (Bristol since 1995) on the reception of Thucydides [6]. The extent of Thucydides' influence stretches well beyond historiography to embrace political philosophy, international relations, war theory and military strategy. He has been central to debates about citizenship, the functioning of democratic constitutions, and the causes of war, but one of the paradoxes of his reception is how selective (and inaccurate) the knowledge of his text often is. The project has brought to light forgotten and surprising chapters in the history of Thucydides' influence.

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

- [1] C.A. Martindale, *Redeeming the Text : Latin Poetry and the Hermeneutics of Reception* (Cambridge 1993). Can be provided on request.
- [2] C. Edwards (ed.), *Roman Presences:Receptions of Rome in European Culture, 1789-1945* (Cambridge 1999). Can be provided on request.
- [3] C.A. Martindale & R. Thomas (eds.), *Classics and the Uses of Reception* (Oxford 2006) incl. contributions from the editors and Bristol colleagues Kennedy, Leonard, Lianeri, Liveley, Michelakis, Saunders, Zajko. Can be provided on request.
- [4] C.A. Martindale & D. Hopkins (eds.), *Oxford History of Classical Reception in English Literature Volume 3 (1660–1790)* (Oxford 2012) with contributions from the editors and former BIGRCT fellow H. Power. Can be provided on request.
- [5] P. Michelakis and M. Wyke (eds.), *The Ancient World in Silent Cinema* (Oxford 2013) (Michelakis REF Output 2)
- [6] K. Harloe & N. Morley (eds.), *Thucydides and the Modern World* (Cambridge 2012). Harloe (co-editor) and contributor E. Potter are former BIGRCT fellows. (Morley REF Output 3)

All of these publications were submitted in previous RAEs or are being submitted in the REF. Morley's project is supported by an AHRC grant *Thucydides: reception, reinterpretation and influence* (£461,000; 01/12/2009—30/11/2013).

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

Reception is a major part of what Classicists do nowadays compared to twenty years ago. Bristol has been a leading player in this trend from the start, in its research, teaching and institutional arrangements. Throughout the REF period, and long before, it has been standard practice in the department to share our work with the public, principally through the Bristol Institute of Greece, Rome and the Classical Tradition [a] and its predecessor the Centre for the Classical Tradition. The Institute supports research into any aspect of Greco-Roman civilisation, but places particular emphasis on the links that bind the ancient and modern worlds. 9 of its 15 postdoctoral fellows have done research on reception. In the REF period it sponsored 45 events, many of them extending over several days ([b]). Of these, 33 were on reception topics. The public is invited as a

matter of course but they are most in evidence at the two annual showcases, the Blackwell-Bristol Lectures (four lectures annually since 2008) and the annual Donors' Event. The Lectures and the Donors' Event consistently attract audiences of between 50 and 100 people including many people from outside the University. At the Donors' Event, a public thank-you to supporters, some aspect of the Institute's current research is presented in a way that is accessible yet without sacrificing academic quality. Three of the Donors' Events have highlighted the research programmes mentioned above: 'Milton at 400', 12 November 2008, with papers from Martindale and Hopkins of Bristol, and S. Brown of Anglia Ruskin (former Bristol undergraduate and postgraduate); 'Greece and Rome in Silent Cinema', 3 December 2011 (speakers Michelakis and Wyke, featuring excerpts from films and live, improvised piano accompaniment); 'Constitutionalism: Ancient, Modern and American', 8 December 2012 (speaker P. Rahe, Hillsdale College, Michigan; the lecture was part of a meeting of the Legacy of Greek Political Thought network, hosted by Morley in the context of the Thucydides project). All of these events contribute to the public understanding of classical reception, linking directly to longstanding core research of the Bristol department.

Feedback from these events is consistently enthusiastic (and audiences keep returning). Comments are often heard, particularly from alumni, about the change in Classics since their day and about how reception studies have vastly expanded the subject's reach and their own appreciation of it. Perhaps the most tangible and persuasive evidence of impact is that people are inspired to donate financially. Operating costs of the Institute, which in the REF period has raised £422,000, are met entirely from charitable donations from individuals and corporations. A typical supporter writes that the work of the Institute has "broadened my horizons" and "educated me in an area of which I knew little... I am sufficiently impressed with what has been achieved and is planned to be achieved to want to help fund the work, which I have just done for this academic year". The Institute receives annual donations of approximately £15,000 from individuals; we have also had an individual gift of £100,000 and another of £50,000. The A.G. Leventis Foundation acknowledges the Institute's distinctive approach and commitment to the classical tradition as a reason for its ongoing and substantial support.

The second aspect of impact in this case study is the way reception is now embedded in the curricula of classics departments. A survey of teaching carried out by the Classical Reception Studies Network found that 18 of 23 departments in the country offered reception-focused undergraduate modules (41 between them) in 2008-09 and a further 45 modules that had a significant element of reception. 5-10 students every year in these departments write a final-year dissertation on a reception theme. One-third of departments see reception as integral to the curriculum, not an add-on ([c]). This is a complete transformation of the pedagogical landscape. Bristol, being among the first to develop this approach, has been a leader in effecting this change. In the nature of things such indirect causal links are hard to prove, but the close association of Bristol Classics and reception is long-standing and acknowledged nationally and internationally. As a concrete example we offer the impact of Martindale's *Redeeming the Text*. A special issue of the *Classical Receptions Journal* (5.2, 2013) marked the 20th anniversary of its publication and includes a chapter on teaching in which the author, a scholar teaching in Vassar College, acknowledges Martindale's decisive influence ([d]). Recent testimonials from both sides of the Atlantic assert that Martindale 'led and did not simply contribute to the trend of reception study' ([e]); that *Redeeming the Text* is 'one of the most important and influential books in classical reception studies' whose teaching would look 'very different' without it ([f]); that the book has been

'utterly formative' of the author's teaching ([g]); that the change in classical pedagogy 'is in no small part due to the echo Martindale's work has had' [h]); that it has 'helped to reconfigure the modern discipline of Classics', and is a 'permanent fixture on the critical bibliography of key works' given to students [i]. This colleague also refers to a panel on teaching classical receptions at the 2013 meeting of the American Philological Association, where *Redeeming the Text* began the discussion. 'It is no exaggeration to say,' this colleague concludes, 'that all my teaching in Classical Reception Studies is in dialogue with *RTT*.'

Reception studies are inherently interdisciplinary, aiming to equip students with a broad outlook and the skills needed to pursue further work. They also lead readily to an engagement with the world outside the academy and an enhanced awareness of the historical environment. Apart from the purely academic rewards offered by reception studies, they have proven a highly successful response in educational terms to changing circumstances, refreshing our curricula, forging links with the whole range of arts and humanities, and underscoring the continuing relevance of Classics and Ancient History.

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

Corroborating reach and extent of Institute activities:

[a] Website of the Bristol IGRCT <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/arts/birtha/centres/institute/>

[b] List of Institute events 2008–2013 (available from UoA coordinator)

Corroborating impact of reception work on higher education:

[c] CRSN 2011 Survey <http://www.open.ac.uk/arts/research/crsn/files/crsn/file/ecms/web-content/CRSN-Report-TeachingCRS.pdf>

[d] *Classical Receptions Journal* vol. 5.2 (2013) <http://crj.oxfordjournals.org/>

[e] Testimonial: Professor, University of California Irvine

[f] Testimonial: Professor, University of Reading

[g] Testimonial: Lecturer, Open University

[h] Testimonial: Associate Professor, Princeton University

[i] Testimonial: Professor, Yale University

Items [e] through [i] available from UoA coordinator.