Section A	
Institution: University of St Andrews	
Unit of Assessment: UoA 27: English Language and Literature	
Title of case study: 'Making it New': Medieval Poetry in Modernity	
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2001 – 31 December 2020	
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:	

Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Chris Jones	Professor	15 September 2001 – present
Ian Johnson	Professor	01 October 1985 – present

Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2014 – 31 December 2020
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N
Section B

1. Summary of the impact

Still from episode 5 of BBC's *Five Fables*, 'The Fox, the Wolf and the Farmer'

Drawing on their research in medieval poetry, Jones and Johnson collaborated with media companies in adapting Seamus Heaney's translations of medieval Scottish poet Robert Henryson for TV and app. This work (1) resulted in co-production of new cultural artefacts; (2) made accessible and interpreted an historically remote but important figure in the literary heritage of Scotland; (3) contributed to the economic prosperity of an innovative digital publishing company. Further, media appearances and workshops by Jones (4) increased understanding of and participation in our medieval literary heritage; and (5) contributed to the economic viability of a literary festival. Collaboration by Jones on an interactive, digital version of a thousand-year-old riddle (6) led to increased cultural participation with medieval poetry during lockdown in the pandemic. Beneficiaries of this research include: the BBC; a digital publishing company; a St Andrews-based literary festival with registered charity status; an Exeter-based print workshop; the reading and listening public.

2. Underpinning research

Twenty years ago, the connections between medieval and contemporary literature had been little studied and were hardly recognised, let alone understood; many authorities used to dispute that Old English was properly part of the canon of English Literature at all. Since being appointed at St Andrews in 2001, Jones has extensively researched the influence of medieval literature on modern and contemporary writers. Often drawing on archival research with unpublished documents (including at Harvard's Houghton Library, Yale's Beinecke, The New York Public Library's Berg Collection, The Pierpont Morgan Library, The Bodleian Library, and The British Library), Jones has unambiguously identified numerous, previously unnoticed, allusions to and quotations from medieval literature in a number of nineteenth-, twentieth- and twenty-first-century poets. In several cases, Jones has established for the first time specific editions and publications with which modern poets taught themselves to read medieval literature.

Moreover, in several research publications, Jones analyses and conclusively demonstrates, often for the first time, the prosodic and other formal and technical debts that many prominent modern practitioners owe to medieval poetry (including, but not limited to, the monograph and 3 chapters published between 2016 and 2018 [R1-R4] and a previous 2006 monograph [R5]).

Jones also exposes and thoroughly discusses the ideological assumptions in arguments for or against considering medieval poetry as part of the ongoing English literary tradition. [R3] As a result of this body of work, the argument that Old English is not part of living English literature is no longer tenable.

Although Jones's early work concentrated on twentieth-century uses of Old English, more recently it has addressed twenty-first-century Old English, [R2-R4] as well as influences from Middle English and Middle Scots on contemporary poetry. [R3] His work on Seamus Heaney, published in 2006 in *Strange Likeness*, [R5] discovered new archival evidence of Heaney's first encounter with the medieval Scottish poets Henryson and Dunbar; this later led to the impact described below at [i1]. As a result of this body of research, Jones has become a recognized authority on what he has termed 'The New Medieval Poetry', [R4] his expertise being sought by a number of third-party beneficiaries with a view to staging or interpreting medieval poetry in the modern world: 'making it new'.

While Jones's research is primarily on modern uses of medieval poetry, colleague Ian Johnson specializes in later medieval English and Scots literary cultures. His expertise on the Scots poet Henryson, [R6] was combined with Jones's skills in order to assist Waddell Media and Touchpress in presenting and interpreting Seamus Heaney's translations of Henryson to a public audience. [i1-2]

3. References to the research

All listed outputs were published following anonymous peer-review process by presses. R1, R2 and R6 are submissions to REF2021 (R1 double-weighted) and R5 was submitted to REF2014.

R1) Chris Jones, *Fossil Poetry: Anglo-Saxon and Linguistic Nativism in Nineteenth-century Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018). Research monograph. 312 pp. DOI: 10.1093/oso/9780198824527.001.0001. ISBN-13: 9780198824527.

R2) Chris Jones, 'Digital Mouvance: Once and Future Medieval Poetry Remediated in the Modern World', in *The Middle Ages in the Modern World*, eds, Bildhauer and Jones (London: Proceedings of the British Academy/Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 168-85. Book chapter and co-edited volume. ISBN: 9780197266144, DOI: 10.5871/bacad/9780197266144.003.0010.

R3) Chris Jones, 'From *Eald* Old to New Old: Translating Old English Poetry in(to) the Twenty-first Century' in *Translating Early Medieval Poetry: Transformation, Reception, Interpretation*, eds, Birkett and March (Cambridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2017), pp. 13-28. Book chapter based on plenary lecture as invited keynote at international conference, University of Cork, June 2014. DOI: 10.1017/9781787440654.002

R4) Chris Jones, 'Medievalism in British poetry', in *The Cambridge Companion to Medievalism*, ed. D'Arcens (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2016), pp. 14-28. Book Chapter. DOI: 10.1017/CCO9781316091708.002

R5) Chris Jones, *Strange Likeness: The Use of Old English in Twentieth-century Poetry* (Oxford University Press, 2006). Research monograph. 266 pp. Part funded by British Academy Small Research Grant award to carry out archival work (c. £1,300, awarded 2004). Shortlisted for European Society for the Study of English's best book prize 2008. Available in Oxford Scholarship Online DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199278329.001.0001

R6) Ian Johnson, 'Reading Robert Henryson's Orpheus and Eurydice: Sentence and Sensibility', in *The Impact of Latin Culture on Medieval and Early Modern Scottish Writing*, eds, Johnson and Petrina (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2018), pp. 175-97. Book chapter and co-edited volume. ISBN: 9781580442824. DOI: 10.2307/j.ctv19x4mn

4. Details of the impact

i1) As a result of their research expertise, Jones and Johnson were invited to make several substantive contributions to a BBC adapation of Seamus Heaney's version of Henryson's *Fables*, thereby: co-producing a new cultural artefact (the animated TV documentary films); and increasing cultural participation in, and understanding of, an

historically marginalised and minority linguistic area of the literary heritage of the British Isles (medieval Scots).

In 2009 Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney published his translation of seven Aesopian animal fables by the critically important, but linguistically difficult, medieval Scottish poet Robert Henryson. Heaney had first studied this poet as an undergraduate at Queen's University of Belfast, as Jones's research has demonstrated. [R2; R5] In 2013 Heaney was working on a series of animated adapations of five of these tales for television. Working with Flickerpix Animations, Waddell Media commissioned the animations, as well as a suite of music by composer Barry Douglas. Voiceover of Heaney's translation was provided by Billy Connolly. The Executive Producer of Waddell Media approached several academics with relevant research expertise to contribute contextual 'talking heads' perspectives on Henryson's poems and Heaney's adaptations. That two of these (Jones and Johnson) were based at St Andrews indicates the concentration of research expertise the UoA has in this area, and the wider influence of its research. [R1-R6] Jones's archival research on Heaney's undergraduate study of Henryson [R5] fed directly into content choices Waddell Media made for one scene of the adapations. *Five Fables*, featuring explanatory contributions by Jones and Johnson, was screened on BBC Two Northern Ireland during March and April 2014, reaching approximately 150,000 people (viewers), "*a remarkable number for a relatively highbrow subject*". [S1, p. 2; Executive Producer, Waddell Media] On 15 March 2014, *The Irish Times* described the films and their expert-driven content as *more like short arts documentaries, revealing the creative process and the people involved*. Full episodes are available on BBC iPlayer and in the USA on Amazon Prime. [S1-S2]

i2) Jones and Johnson were invited, as a result of their work for Waddell Media, to produce new content for an app version of Heaney's *Five Fables*, thereby: co-producing an innovative literary artefact for an entrepreneurial digital publisher; contributing to the economic prosperity of that sector of the creative industries; and further increasing cultural participation in, and understanding of, an historically marginalised and minority linguistic area of the literary heritage of the British Isles (medieval Scots).

As a direct result of the success of the televised version of Heaney's Henryson's *Fables*, [i1] Waddell Media subsequently collaborated with Faber and Touchpress, a company specialising in digital presentation of literary texts, to produce an iPad app version of *Five Fables*. [S3] Touchpress had become known for innovative, high-quality literary apps with previous releases on *The Waste Land* and *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, and needed to consolidate this reputation with another groundbreaking product, this one successfully bringing linguistically complex medieval Scots poetry to a wider non-specialist audience. The app re-uses the animations, Connolly's voice-overs and several 'talking heads' clips of the BBC films, but additional new material was needed. As the app requires Heaney's Modern English text to be alternated and compared with Henryson's medieval Scots, Johnson was commissioned, on account of his expertise in this area, [R6] to record the entirety of the medieval Scots in original pronunciation and keeping pace with Connolly's delivery so that the two audio files are interchangeable. As a result of his previous research in this area, [R5] Jones was commissioned to write an extensive set of notes interpreting and cross-referencing both Henryson's text and Heaney's adapation of it, suitable for a non-specialist audience. Jones wrote approximately 10,000 words of explanatory material included in the app, also writing up this process of 'digital remediation' as part of output [R2], creating a cycle of research informing impact informing further research. Waddell Executive Producer noted that Jones "*provided a formidable set of notes that were wonderfully eclectic, immensely illuminating, entertaining and smart.*" [S1, p.2] *Five Fables* was launched on the App Store on 22 May 2014, then retailing for GBP8.99, and by December 2020 had been downloaded over 3,500 times, with those original purchases being updated over 5,000 times: "*an indication that many of the original purchasers are continuing to engage with it.*" [S1, p.2] The *Five Fables* app won the Torc 'best app' award at the Celtic Media Festival 2015 (where Jones is credited as writer), [S4, p.2] and been favourably reviewed on several occasions, with a number of reviewers praising Jones's notes and/or Johnson's readings. Website Culture Northern Ireland observed: "*Deeper study is possible thanks to the detailed notes written by Dr Chris Jones from the University of St Andrews.*" [S5, p.2] *Breac: A Digital Journal of Irish Studies* described the app as "*well-executed and sleek*" and also noted Jones and Johnson's contributions. *The*

Telegraph (circulation 530,246 in 2014) called the app "*ungimmicky and thoughtfully made*", while the reviewer of the American online magazine *Slate*, after describing Johnson's contribution, commented "*never before have I seen or heard an iPad do anything quite so charming*". *The Times* (circulation 382,198 in 2014) also covered the app on 29 May 2014, quoting both Jones and Johnson.

i3) Following interest in the Heaney/Henryson *Five Fables* app, Jones made several contributions to BBC radio programmes on the subject of medieval poetry and its place in the modern world: collaborating with broadcasting professionals on the co-production of new cultural artefacts (radio programmes); and increasing awareness and understanding of medieval literary heritage among radio audiences.

As a result of the interest generated by the combined impact of the BBC and iPad *Five Fables*, [i1-2] Jones's research has become known to BBC radio producers, who have sought his research contribution to several radio programmes during which medieval poetry has been featured. These include:

Radio 3's The Verb, 31 January 2014, following the death of Pete Seeger, talking to Ian McMillan about the medieval *ubi sunt* device in relation to 'Where Have All the Flowers Gone?'. A blog on the topic is also hosted at Research@StAndrews.

Radio 4's We British: Foundation Stones, 8 October 2015, together with poet Jacob Polley, talking about the Old English poem *The Ruin*, from the site of its possible inspiration, the ruins of Roman Bath, as part of the BBC's National Poetry Day celebrations, *An Epic in Poetry*.

Radio 3's The Verb, 31 March 2017, reading and talking about the Northumbrian version of 'Caedmon's Hymn', perhaps the oldest poem in English, as part of the Free Thinking Festival at Sage, Gateshead on the theme of 'Englishness' .

Radio 4's 'The Glories of Northumbria', episode 2 of Radio 4's autumn flagship series The Matter of the North, narrated by Melvyn Bragg. First broadcast 30 August 2017, discussing the eighth-century runic *Crucifixion Poem* on The Ruthwell Cross in Dumfriesshire.

Average audience figures for *The Matter of the North*'s time-slot reach up to 2,970,000 people (listeners) and "*in the week of Episode two, Radio 4 recorded 143,376 [people] unique visitors to 'The Matter of the North' website – a figure which exceeded visits to 'The Today Programme' site – and which was only beaten by 'The Archers'*" [S6]. Four minutes of Jones's interview was subsequently chosen to represent the series on Pick of the Week by Farrah Jarral, who broadcast that Jones's story of the Cross had 'really moved me': 4 September 2016.

The BBC Producer Jones worked with on *The Matter of North* testified to Jones's involvement with the episode's content as well as its delivery: "*In an initial exchange of emails, Dr Jones was able to give me an extremely useful account of Bede's role [...] in the evolution of the idea of the English as 'one' people. [...] Dr Jones' generous account of the cultural importance, and sheer achievement of the Ruthwell Cross made a great impression on me – and so I invited him to take part in a recorded interview about this artefact (in situ at Ruthwell) for Episode Two of the* [Bragg's] *series. He brought telling details, great research and passion to the interview. As a result it was the section of the series which was celebrated on Radio 4's 'Pick of the Week' – representing the best of the ten part series.*" [S6]

i4) As result of his work on the Heaney/Henryson App [i2] and appearances on the radio, [i3] Jones was invited to give a series of 'Old English for Poets' creative writing workshops at StAnza, Scotland's International Poetry Festival: aiding audience understanding of an historically and linguistically remote period of literature; and contributing to the economic prosperity of a literary festival which in turn supports the local tourist industry.

StAnza is a local, St Andrews-based poetry festival with an international reach (having attracted participants from more than 60 countries). With attendances in recent years exceeding 18,000 people (general public), [S7, p.1] the festival, now in its 24th year and consistently supported by the School of English, runs in the first week of March, a date chosen for being a seasonal lull in the local tourist economy. The Festival Director, having heard Jones discuss medieval poetry on

the radio, [i3] and "*impressed by the outcome of his involvement with Seamus Heaney's translation of Henryson fables for an app*", [i2] invited Jones to design a series of workshops for aspiring poets to learn skills and techniques unique to Old English poetry. [S7, p.1] Launched in 2018, this series of annual workshops will finish in 2021 (postponed from 2020 due to Covid-19) and have already "*enabled a non-specialist audience to learn about this fascinating field*" [of Old English]. Jones waived his performer fees (saving the StAnza organization £750), delivering these workshops *gratis*, which in turn generated the festival approximately £350 in ticket fees. The Festival Director has acknowledged that Jones's workshops have, in a funding climate that has become increasingly difficult for medium-scale literary organisations such as this, assisted StAnza, a registered charity, to meet its aim of "*keeping our prices affordable*" and ensuring that the poetry festival "*should be accessible to everyone*". Both the 2018 and 2019 workshops were sold out (16 and 18 people (general public) attended), receiving very positive feedback and reviews. [S7, pp.1-4]

i5) As a result of his expertise on digital remediation of Old English riddles, [R2] Jones was invited to collaborate with Exeter-based print workshop Double Elephant in co-producing a new cultural artefact, a digital, interactive version of Old English *Riddle 57*, allowing increased cultural participation with, and understanding of, a thousand-year-old poem during lockdown in the pandemic.

Jones had previously collaborated with the poet Jacob Polley on tweetable translations of the Old English riddles from The Exeter Book, a medieval manuscript housed in Exeter Cathedral Library. [R2] As a result of this collaboration, in March 2020 Jones was invited by Double Elephant, an Exeter-based print workshop, to take part in a collaborative project that aimed to facilitate wider public interaction with some of the contents of the famous Exeter Book, itself inaccessible during lockdown. This resulted in a multimedia, digital version of [Riddle 57](), animated using crowd-sourced artwork, and with which users can interact by making choices from three newly commissioned translations (Jones's using the proposed solution to the riddle of 'bees'), to create their own composite translation of the Old English out of a total of 2,187 possible variants. [S8] Launched on 20 August 2020, by 7 September the site had achieved an online monthly readership of 2,750 people, had been featured on BBC Spotlight (audience 350,000 people), BBC Radio Devon (circulation 68,000 people), [S9] and was featured by the BBC as one of their 'Culture in Quarantine' projects for Galleries, Museums and Archives. [S10]

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

S1) Testimonial letter from the Executive Producer, Waddell Media.

S2) Episodes of *Five Fables* viewable on BBC iPlayer. https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b03ygf6x/episodes/player

S3) Touchpress website where *Five Fables* app can be downloaded. https://www.touchpressmedia.com/

S4) Website for Celtic Media Awards 2015. https://www.celticmediafestival.co.uk/view-entry/2226

S5) Website for Culture Northern Ireland. https://www.culturenorthernireland.org/features/literature/seamus-heaneys-five-fables-app-launches

S6) Testimonial letter from Radio Producer for BBC Manchester.

S7) Testimonial letter from the Festival Director for StAnza.

S8) Website for Double Elephant Print Workshop *Riddle 57*. https://www.doubleelephant.org.uk/riddle-57

S9) PR report by Gillian Taylor on Double Elephant *Riddle 57* project (also available as PDF download). https://gilliantaylor.coveragebook.com/b/1429cfcd0ae51c8c

S10) Screenshot of BBC 'Culture in Quarantine' website gallery, featuring *Riddle 57* on 7 September 2020.