

## Research Assessment Exercise 2020

### Impact Case Study

University: Hong Kong Baptist University |

Unit of Assessment (UoA): 34 History |

**Title of case study:** Research on the Military History of Hong Kong during the Colonial Period (1841-1997): Impacts on Museums, Heritage Conservation, and Education |

#### (1) Summary of the impact

██████████ research on the military history of Hong Kong during the Colonial Period (1841-1997) adds long-missing content to museums, influences how Hong Kong history is being taught in schools, and changes the conservation practice for historical military structures in Hong Kong. Through participating in the revamping of local museums, advising on conservation approaches for historical military structures, creating education materials, and providing teachers' training, his work has changed the public's understanding of Hong Kong history and raised awareness in the government and the public at large about the importance and benefit of conserving historical military structures in Hong Kong.

#### (2) Underpinning research

Since 2011, ██████████ has studied the military history of Hong Kong, a topic that received public interest but little scholarly attention. His goal has been to construct a systematic narrative on the military history of Hong Kong, and to produce a number of thematic studies on important topics such as the Japanese invasion of 1941 and the subsequent occupation, the role of local Chinese in the colonial garrison, and the important built heritage sites related to this history. The main source of information for the abovementioned works, unlike previous studies that rely almost exclusively on oral history and reminiscences, are archival sources from the United Kingdom, Japan, the United States, China, and Taiwan.

In 2012, ██████████ published his first work on the topic, a study on the ██████████ (Reference Item 1), a defensive line built by the British during the 1930s that consisted of around one hundred defensive structures scattered along the Kowloon Ridge. Based on previously unseen archival sources, his work discusses the contexts that led to the construction of the line, its overall planning, and the design and function of individual structures. It showcases the distinctive role of historians in built heritage conservation, as the article upturned many assumptions held by survey and architectural scholars who studied the line without consulting archival materials.

██████████ then published a monograph on the ██████████ (Reference Item 2), the first account on the battle that consulted original records of both the British and Japanese forces. By so doing, it dispels myths surrounding the Battle, especially that the garrison offered lackluster resistance because of racist contempt towards the Japanese and that the Japanese had little difficulty in capturing the city. It exhibits the complex international context of the Battle, and the problems of fighting in Hong Kong because of its peculiar topography. ██████████ then published an overview of the military history of Hong Kong during the colonial period (Reference Item 3), the first of its kind, with particular attention paid on the changing defence layout, the technological, geopolitical, and political contexts behind the changes, and the impact of the military on urban development and government practices.



studies on the history of British fortifications in Hong Kong (RI 1, 2, 3) are major reference works for users who are engaged in conservation of historical military structures. In 2017, helped a team from in the research on the history of a site that became the in Hong Kong. supplied the team with background information and archival materials based on Reference Items 2-4. Because of works, a section of the added contents about the history of the site as a coastal gun battery and the history of the Chinese servicemen in the British Army. works led to a change in the practice of built heritage conservation, as historical military structures, previously ignored, now receive attention by conservationists. For example, when the was asked by to create a historical trail at Lung Fu Shan Country Park, where an anti-aircraft gun battery built in the 1930s could be found, the referred the case to , who was entrusted to write the text of the interpretation panels, based on his previous works (RI 3). The impact of his work in built heritage conservation is well-recognized.

, wrote “he demonstrated convincingly that the military history of Hong Kong was by no means irrelevant...His books are widely read by my colleagues in who are responsible for a variety of heritage conservation works”.<sup>2</sup> Because of his works, was also invited to assist in the future tour of the , an international organization focusing on military built heritage, to Hong Kong.

research also has an impact on history education in Hong Kong. As the result of the inclusion of contents related to Hong Kong during WWII in Junior Secondary Chinese History and History Curricula in 2018, His works (esp. RI 2, 3, 4, 6) helped the teachers to change their teaching materials and adapt to the new curriculum. He was asked by the to provide seminars and workshops for secondary school teachers who are about to teach the new contents. Around 150 teachers have attended these training sessions. He also created a teaching material set that covered the (RI 3); 1,000 sets were sent to secondary schools. Furthermore, to create a set of teaching materials on Hong Kong during the Second World War (based on RI 2, 6). 1,500 sets were distributed to secondary schools in 2015. , wrote “ works... cleared up many previously unknown aspects of the period, are important reference books for teachers. [They] encourage a more even-handed and dispassionate treatment of this period of history.”<sup>3</sup>

##### (5) Sources to corroborate the impact

1. , 24 April 2018.
2. , 15 March 2018.
3. , 22 April 2018.
4. ( )
5. ( )

<sup>2</sup> , 15 March 2018.

<sup>3</sup> , 22 April 2018.