

**Impact case study (REF3b)**

<p><b>Institution: UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM</b></p>
<p><b>Unit of Assessment: D28 Modern Languages and Linguistics</b></p>
<p><b>Title of case study:</b>  Promoting wider access to key works by Max Weber (<i>Political Writings</i>) and Friedrich Nietzsche (<i>The Birth of Tragedy and other Writings</i>) through the provision of new translations/editions.</p>
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b>  The principal, interrelated forms of impact claimed for these two new editions/translations are <b>educational</b> and <b>economic</b>.</p> <p>The <b>educational impact</b> derives from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring that the discussion of Nietzsche and Weber rests on reliable versions of key writings</li> <li>• providing the first English versions of some less well-known, but important writings</li> <li>• providing detailed commentaries and annotations to assist new readers</li> <li>• facilitating wider public access to seminal writings in their respective fields by their publication in two influential and widely respected series</li> <li>• using English to bring Nietzsche and Weber to a worldwide audience of learners.</li> </ul> <p>The <b>economic impact</b> (totalling £200,328 to date) has been generated by high annual sales (so far 24,204 copies of Nietzsche and 9,866 copies of Weber sold), with £67,279 generated between 2008 and 2012. These sales figures reflect the widespread adoption of the texts on educational courses across a range of disciplines and in many different countries.</p> <p>The new versions of Weber’s foundational political essays also “<b>enhance public understanding</b>” of key issues in “<b>civil society</b>”. The new version of “The Birth of Tragedy” has presented a key part of the “<b>cultural capital</b>” of Europe to a wider international readership.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research:</b>  The research embedded in the two translations (see outputs R1 and R2 below) was carried out by R. Speirs while Senior Lecturer at the University of Birmingham in 1992-3 (Weber) and 1997-98 (Nietzsche) respectively. Each edition was a joint, inter-disciplinary undertaking. Speirs co-edited Nietzsche with the philosopher Raymond Geuss, University of Cambridge. Speirs co-edited Weber with the political scientist Peter Lassman, University of Birmingham. Translation and linguistic commentary were entirely the work of Speirs.</p> <p>The detailed work of translation was preceded by a period of extensive and intensive reading and systematic analysis of the characteristic lexis and syntax of each author, as evidenced both in the texts chosen for translation and in the much larger body of writings produced by each of these very prolific thinkers. The writings of each author had in turn to be studied in and related to the context of the cultural and intellectual communities in which they were framed, in order to reflect the discursive usage to which Nietzsche and Weber made reference and in relation to which they defined their own views of the topics they were writing about.</p> <p>The aim was not to transfer the work of Nietzsche or Weber out of their original German intellectual and cultural context and into an English one, but rather the opposite: to build a bridge which would allow English readers access to an intellectual and rhetorical culture that many would find unfamiliar in significant respects. The translations therefore knowingly sacrificed elegance for the sake of bringing the reader as close to the source texts as possible. If this meant that the English reader would have to concentrate hard to follow Weber’s complex periods, for example, so be it; Weber’s original essays do not make easy reading in German either.</p> <p>For purposes of consistency, it was particularly important to examine closely the meaning or range of meanings attached by each author to a number of recurrent key terms in their arguments across a range of contexts in order to establish whether they could be rendered by a</p>

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single term in English or whether different emphases in different situations called for a variety of translational equivalents. Where no single one-for-one (approximate) equivalence was available, key terms were marked by an asterisk in the text, referring the reader to an explanatory glossary.

This approach to translation was a particular desideratum for a new translation of Weber's political writings, not only because some important texts were being translated for the first time, but also because English-speaking readers had access to Weber until that point mainly through translations into American English made in the 1930s by Talcott Parsons, where the terms used to render Weber were too often taken from the specific kind of (functionalist) sociological discourse inhabited (and largely shaped) by the translator. In addition to the research embedded in the many linguistic decisions made when translating the texts, each edition included numerous brief explanatory footnotes (historical or conceptual).

### 3. References to the research:

- R1) Weber, *Political Writings*, Cambridge University Press, first published 1994. ISBN 0 521393 124 hardback, ISBN 0521 397197 paperback; reprinted 2002. Licensed English language reprint for China, 2003, ISBN 7 5620 2368 9.
- R2) Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, Cambridge University Press, first published 1999. ISBN 0521 63016 9 hardback, ISBN 0 521 63987 5 paperback.

### Articles arising from the research:

- R3) R. Speirs, 'Apollo aber schließlich die Sprache des Dionysus': Harmony or Hegemony in *Die Geburt der Tragödie*? In *The Challenge of German Culture*, ed. M. Butler and R. Evans, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2000, pp. 51-8. ISBN 0 333 80090 7.
- R4) R. Speirs, Nietzsche's 'Thier mit rothen Backen': The birth of culture out of the spirit of shame. *German Life and Letters*, January 2013, 1-21.

[outputs R1 – R4 available from HEI on request]

**Evidence of research quality:** The Weber translation was awarded the **Schlegel-Tieck Prize for Translation** in 1995. Both editions/translations were submitted as **outputs in the RAE** for the relevant period (Weber in RAE 1996, Nietzsche in RAE 2001).

### 4. Details of the impact

Professor Speirs' translations of Weber and Nietzsche are having sustained and demonstrable impact upon educators, students, the general public, and on the publishing industry in the UK and abroad. The range of impacts upon these groups includes: contributing to economic prosperity in the publishing industry through sales; influencing education through inclusion in numerous teaching bibliographies outside the submitting HEI; and informing wider public understanding in a number of fields as a reliable source for a number of non-academic publications, resources and other writings. These are outlined in more detail for each translation below.

The **economic impact** is evident from receipts and sales (for details, see below). The economic impact mainly arises from the **educational impact** (evident in the international adoption of both texts in many educational courses of different kinds), which in turn reflects the perceived reliability of the translation and explanatory apparatus. The consistently high annual sales figures confirm the widespread uptake of both texts not only in the UK, but across the world, especially in the US. The translations/editions of both Weber and Nietzsche are cited or listed as standard works of reference in many other books in their respective and related fields, so that the **social and educational impact** is multiplied through the readership of these books in turn. In this way each edition/translation has enhanced **public understanding of cultural capital** or of **civil society**.

#### 1) Weber, *Political Writings*

Each year Weber's *Political Writings* sells ca. 550 copies (total 9866, with receipts of £75,801 since 1994), including an English-language paperback edition (2,000 copies) licensed for China (2002), to be followed in 2013 by a full Chinese-language version (3,000 copies). Receipts for the Weber volume in 2008-12 were. £17,512 (1479 copies).

The Weber translation currently (October 2012) has 26,700 **citations on Google** and is used in

a range of contexts.

The Weber translation has been adopted on the following (selected) **course reading lists**: LSE, Social Theory and Political Commitment: the case of Max Weber and Nationalism; University of Warwick : Politics and Social Theory; Univ. of York: Reason and Power in European Political Thought; Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts: History of Political Thought; Carleton College, Minnesota: Global Society and World Politics; Cambridge University: Politics Psychology and Sociology Tripos; Central European University, Hungary: Theories of International Relations: The Classical Debates; Princeton University: European Political Development (see source 2 below). One course convenor at LSE writes that the volume is 'invaluable, even indispensable... all in the most reliable and clearest translations available' (source 1).

**Permission to reproduce** parts of the Weber edition was granted through the United States Copyright Clearance Centre between 1999 and 2011 and through ALCS in the UK, New Zealand, Denmark, South Africa, and France.

**Citations** of the edition/translation have contributed to the **public understanding of civil society**. The following books, selected from ca. 200, illustrate the multiplier effect of the impact of the Weber edition on the educated public in the fields of **politics, education, culture, and social understanding**: Runciman, *Political hypocrisy: The mask of power, from Hobbes to Orwell and beyond*; Runciman/ Vieira, *Representation*; Lane, *Democracy: A Comparative Approach*; Jamal, *Media politics and democracy in Palestine: political culture, pluralism, and the Palestinian Authority*; Hagen, *German History in modern times: four lives of the nation*; Piedra, *Natural law: the foundation of an orderly economic system*; Rynning, *NATO in Afghanistan: The Liberal Disconnect*; Smokescreen: Aranas, *How the US and NATO Governments Justify the Illegitimate Use of Force*; Brown, *Body Parts on Planet Slum: Women and Telenovelas in Brazil*; Winter, *Us, Them, and Others: Pluralism and National Identity in Diverse Societies*; Baehr, *Caesarism, Charisma, and Fate: Historical Sources and Modern Resonances in the Work of Max Weber*; Gane, *Max Weber and Contemporary Capitalism* (sources 3 and 4 below)

The decision of Beijing University Press to follow up their Chinese cover licensed edition (of the English text) with a full translation of Weber's *Political Writings* into Chinese based on my English version, indicates that the latter is considered to render Weber's thought with a high degree of reliability.

## 2) Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy and other Writings*

Approx. 1,800 copies of Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings* are sold each year (total receipts of £124,517 on sales of 24,904 copies since 1999). In the period 2008-2012, 7,663 copies were sold (with receipts of £49,767).

The Nietzsche translation currently (October 2012) has **51,685 citations on Google**, indicating wide use for a variety of purposes.

The edition has been adopted on **reading lists** for a range of different **educational courses** around the world, e.g. Toronto (Politics), Boston College (Philosophy), Washington (Nietzsche on Truth and Lying), Melbourne (Ancient Greek Theatre), Harvard (Tragedy Ancient to Modern), Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts (Foundational Texts: Plato to Kristeva) (source 6).

**Permission to reproduce** parts of the Nietzsche edition has been requested and granted through the United States Copyright Clearance Centre every year between 2001 and 2011 and through ACLS in the UK and the EU.

The translation has been **anthologized** in: *A Nietzsche Reader*; *The Faber Book of Opera*; *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*; *How to Read Nietzsche*; *The Nature of Art*. The edition has been **cited in works** on such varied topics as *Greek and Roman Aesthetics*

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(textbook); *Modern Antiquity: Picasso, 'de Chirico, Leger* (catalogue raisonné); *Shiva onstage: Uday Shankar's Company of Hindu Dancers and Musicians* (sources 7 and 8).

The **impact on public discourse** is also evident in the following indicative examples:

- **encyclopaedia entries:** *Wikipedia: Tragedy; Reference: Tragedy; Psychology Wiki: Nietzsche;*
- **online articles on websites:** *Existential Primer: Friedrich Nietzsche thus spoke the radical individual; The Nietzsche Circle: Peter Greenaway's Writing on Water*
- **essays on blogs:** *The Loyal Opposition to Modernity; The Christian Humanist Podcast; The Turbo Times: Nietzsche's The Birth of Tragedy; Nietzsche on the cross: the defence of personal freedom in the birth of tragedy* (source 9).

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

All available from HEI on request:

#### **Weber. Political Writings**

- [1] Collected statements from users of Weber's Political Writings
- [2] Collated details of courses using the Speirs edition in teaching
- [3] Collated details of anthologies featuring the Speirs edition
- [4] Collated details of popular books citing the Speirs edition.

#### **Nietzsche: The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings**

- [5] Popular reviews of the Speirs edition
- [6] Collated details of courses using the Speirs edition in teaching
- [7] Collated details of anthologies featuring the Speirs edition
- [8] Collated details of popular books citing the Speirs edition
- [9] Collated details of websites citing the Speirs edition.