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Translating *familiar Stranger* into German: the particularities of the historical cultural and political context

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The translation of *Familiar Stranger* by Stuart Hall into German was a particular challenge, especially with regard to the concept of race. Hall uses the term 'race' to fan out the countless cultural meanings, which are not covered by a homogeneous theoretical conception of race. The result is the ambivalent articulation of race – as well as of colour – which unites racist as well as emancipatory meanings in the same term. This ambivalent chain of meanings has no equivalent in the German language, as the conceptual history of race cannot be detached from the context of German fascism, either theoretically or in everyday language. Another requirement was the translation of gender, not because Hall problematizes this, but because the German language is a deeply rooted genus-typifying language. With some examples of translation, we want to show how we have tried, to consciously act in the space of the displacement of culture, to recognize the specific situatedness of the heterogeneous representations that Hall talks about in *Familiar Stranger*, and not to unify them in favour of a homogeneous German textuality.

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Argument Verlag is the publishing house of the German edition of *Familiar Stranger* by Stuart Hall (2020). With good reason, the publishing house *Argument* and the journal *Das Argument* have cooperated with Stuart Hall and have published his work since the times when he was director of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Birmingham. The first text was published in 1977. Five volumes with his work have been published since the 1980s. *Argument* is also well-known for the German Translation of

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Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks*, laying the ground for a broad reception to Hall's readings of Gramsci. The centrality of Hall's approach is visible in the publications of the *Projekt Ideologietheorie* (a research project on the Theory of Ideology).

However, the researchers around *Argument* are not the only ones in Germany who have gained much by using Hall's concepts and ideas in their work. Looking only at the last 10 years we can find Hall's work used by researchers investigating issues as diverse as: male identities among German men from a migrant background, football fiction, emotional structures of football fan cultures, experiences of racism and exclusion, studies on spatially embedded art, theories of journalism, theatre analysis, postcolonial history, cultural identities in the diaspora, video games in capitalism, the bible, gender and fashion satire, theories of education, education for migrants, Muslim religious identities, identity politics of the far right, globalization, hegemony, and populism.

When *Argument* translated Hall's work in the past, the translators they commissioned were familiar with Hall's subject areas, such as racism and cultural studies, neoliberalism and the state, and globalization. They had a command of the vocabulary of critical theories. Translation issues encompass concept-specific and linguistic policy decisions that go beyond issues of style. They transfer a strategy of thinking and writing into a context with other norms, routines and denotations, with different (epistemological) battles and imaginaries. Since *Familiar Stranger* is a biographical journey that links theoretical approaches and historical events, everyday culture and personal experiences, the editors at *Argument* wanted the translation to not only clarify Hall's theoretical reflections but also to emphasize the narrative moment in *Familiar Stranger*. Therefore, they appointed a fiction writer as well as an editorial group consisting of researchers working in the area of Critical Cultural Studies but within different disciplines. We have all included Stuart Hall's work in our research but using different approaches to it. One of us has been translating Hall since the 1980s and has worked with him personally, two of us are young academics, the next generation in Critical Cultural Studies with a focus on education, but who also worked with Hall for more than 10 years (i.e. in organizing an obituary event in Berlin in 2014, where John Akomfrah's film was presented, the German fifth volume of Hall's selected writings was introduced, and guests like Nikhita Dhawan, María do Mar Castro Varela and Angela McRobbie presented their work with Stuart Hall).

The task of our editorial group was to see to it that the translation would do justice to the complexity of the book and at the same time remain readable for a broad readership. In the German edition, we have reflected on the possibilities and limits of the translation processes in a preface, not least because it was important to us to discuss translation itself as a situated,

shared and debatable practice. Questions that occur are for instance to which degree a translation should remain faithful to the original and to which degree it should adapt to the language into which it is translated to be more readable. In *The Task of the Translator*, Walter Benjamin (1996) argues:

a real translation is transparent; it does not cover the original, does not block its light, but allows the pure language, as though reinforced by its own medium, to shine upon the original all the more fully. p. 260)

Presenting our readers with the key decisions regarding our translation and by explaining the specifics of the English terms for a German context, we aimed to 'shine the light on the original text. The challenge is to translate these decisions and the difficulties we encountered in the translation process back into English. To do this, we will explain some of the peculiarities of German terminologies in the context of their history, which has profound significance.

In particular, the conceptual work around race and gender-specific language have provoked discussion among us. The sensitivity and treatment of race and gender in everyday culture in Germany has changed significantly. This has been driven by the women's movement and the LGBTQAI+ movement, by anti-racist and migration policy activism, and by urban multicultural lifestyles. They are also a response to the conjunctures of right-wing populism, racism and sexism. Although these changes and contradictions have been and continue to be recognized and debated in academia, it is still quite common – even in critical theories – to disregard the degree to which discrimination, degradation or even domination are reproduced in language. Predominant arguments against using an inclusive language are that it is grammatically incorrect, that texts become unreadable, that ordinary people are put off, or that the beauty of the traditional language is destroyed.

In dealing with concepts and contradictions around race and gender, each of us brought different positions to the table. When discussing the relevant terms in certain historical, cultural and political contexts, which are addressed in *Familiar Stranger*, we had to negotiate different interpretations and perspectives. It was always a matter of deciding on the appropriate relationship between the well-founded connection to previous conceptual work and sensitive linguistic-political reinterpretations, shifts or changes. The following translation examples are intended to illustrate what this means in concrete terms.

One central problem that is not specific to Stuart Hall's writings was the translation of terms from the largely gender-neutral English into the largely gender-differentiating German language. This was not just a question of using the *innen* word ending for every noun to include male, female, and non-binary people, for instance into the term 'labour movement' (*Arbeiterbewegung*). This question came up because Stuart Hall (2017,

pp. 37–42) reports on the labour movement in the Caribbean in the 1930s. Was this at the time a movement in which women, non-binary people and men were represented equally, and had equal rights? The ending *innen* whereby the ‘*’ stands for including non-binary people and ‘innen’ stands for including women) as a recently common word-addition in the German language in order not to reproduce the patriarchal practice of naming, and thereby thinking, only in the male gender. Stuart Hall does not explicitly refer to gender here. However, in our research of historical texts, we found references to active women in strikes and labour uprisings in the Caribbean (Reddock 2005). The German labour movement was a movement dominated by men. Women had been allowed to organize in trade unions since 1908, but the suppression of their interests was organized by men based on a ‘proletarian anti-feminism’ (Jacob and Streichhahn 2020) until the second women’s movement in the 1970s. Therefore, the feminist point of view emphasized that the term ‘labour movement’ was a masculine term. We finally decided that gender-marked terms are to be disambiguated with an *innen* if it can be assumed that different genders were present in the context, leaving aside whether they had equal power. However, this does run the risk that what is meant to be emancipatory may conceal power relations.

In addition, it was often impossible to reconstruct whether genders were involved in the plural within certain historical social groups. In this sense, decisions were made translating ‘planters’ as purely male (Pflanzer) and the ‘civil rights movement’ as a diverse movement (Bürger*innenrechte). These discussions gave rise to the call – beyond the work on this book – to promote gender-political language variants and to contribute to a greater visualization of gender relations in historiography. It also contributes to important arguments in Hall’s work, especially against a form of critique that does not take language politics and representation seriously.

Of particular importance in the translation of *Familiar Stranger* are terms used in the context of ‘race’. Given the recent German fascist history, it is impossible to use the term ‘Rasse’ as a quasi-innocent denomination of people according to phenotypical characteristics. Of course, there is a broad and developed research into racism in Germany today that critically scrutinizes the history of the term. But using the term ‘Rasse’ (race) in German everyday language – without explicit critical reference – connotes not only that different races exist, but also that they are to be arranged hierarchically with the ‘white race’ on top. The term is still inextricably linked to racist practices, laws and language, suggesting a continuity from German fascism to today. This explains why racial consciousness in the German language with its history implies a racist or fascist perspective – or vice versa: for people of colour in Germany, a critical, rebellious racial consciousness may appear unsettling.

We are aware that there is a discussion about the problem of using the term 'race' in the anglophone world as well, since race is an ideological construction, not a descriptive term. Nevertheless, most intellectuals use the word, like Stuart Hall does, without implying that races exist but to analyse the construction of race and how it positions people within the societal power relations. In some German translations of English texts, Race is translated as 'Rasse' and racial as 'rassisch'. This is legitimized using the argument of 'authenticity' or of staying true to the 'source'. But using a word that has a different, and even a pejorative meaning in the destination language as opposed to the original language does not mean staying true to the source but quite the opposite, distorting it. Such contributions decontextualize the terms when moving them into a different context where they become essentialised, hence working against Hall's project of de-essentialising political categories.

In the Anglo-Saxon context race has contradictory connotations. These contradictory connotations are analysed in Hall's work on racism as well as throughout *Familiar Stranger*. We want to illustrate these contradictory connotations using a few examples from the book. Hall shows how the description of people as a different race is used in the everyday as a carrier of racist discrimination:

Groups of white kids – later identified by the media as Teddy Boys – lined the pavements, screaming *racial* abuse and harassing the women, egged on by their elders. [...] They gave me the stock *racial* line: 'The blackies are over here, with their big sporty cars, playing their loud music, taking our [*sic*] women, and stealing our [*sic*] jobs.' Hall 2017, p. 258)

Gruppen von Weißen Jugendlichen – später von den Medien als Teddy Boys identifiziert – säumten die Straße, brüllten *rassistische* Beleidigungen und belästigten die Frauen, angestachelt von den Erwachsenen. [...] Sie kamen mir mit den üblichen *rassistischen* Sprüchen: »Die Schwarzen kommen hierher, fahren fette Sportwagen, spielen laute Musik, nehmen uns unsere [*sic*] Frauen weg und klauen unsere [*sic*] Jobs. Hall 2020, p. 257)

In other contexts, the notion of race serves Hall as a conceptual element enabling the critique of racist ideologies and practices, of exploitation and enslavement during colonialism and until today, e.g. when Stuart Hall 2017, p. 96) refers to Fanon:

Frantz Fanon believed that colonial societies worked through *race*. By this he meant that the social *relations of race* – which governed the primal antagonism between settler and native – carried with particular force the weight of colonial authority. [...] Much of what I have been arguing, especially about the ways in which the impress of *racial* subordination left its mark on my family, would appear to bear this out.

Frantz Fanon glaubte, dass koloniale Gesellschaften durch *Race* funktionieren. Damit meinte er, dass die gesellschaftlichen *Race-Verhältnisse* – die den

ursprünglichen Antagonismus zwischen Siedler und Einheimischen prägten – besonders rigoros das Gewicht kolonialer Herrschaft stützten. [...] Vieles von dem, was ich erörtert habe, vor allem die Art und Weise, wie die *rassisierte* Unterordnung meiner Familie ihren Stempel aufgedrückt hat, scheint dies zu bestätigen. Hall 2020, p. 108)

In yet other contexts, race can become part of the self-definition and of strategies of representation of emancipatory movements:

Through Rastafarianism and reggae Jamaica played a disproportionate role in this global reimagining of what *racial emancipation* might promise. Hall 2017, p. 100)

Durch Rastafarianismus und Reggae spielte Jamaika eine überproportionale Rolle bei den weltweit entstehenden neuen Vorstellungen davon, was die *Emanzipation von rassistischer Unterdrückung* versprechen mochte. Hall 2020, p. 111)

Thus, 'racial emancipation' is understood as a process in which people become politically aware that they are socially, politically and ideologically constructed as a race and discriminated:

I felt in touch with the slow-burn emergence of a new sort of *black consciousness*, which might one day enable us Jamaicans to speak our experience – after all the evasions, euphemisms, double-talk, disavowals and self-deceptions – in a *conscious language of race*. Hall 2017, p. 130)

Ich fühlte mich dem schwelenden Aufkommen einer neuen Form von *Schwarzem Selbstbewusstsein* verbunden, das uns Jamaikaner*innen vielleicht eines Tages befähigen mochte, unsere Erfahrungen zu benennen und auszusprechen – nach all den Vermeidungsstrategien, Verharmlosungen, Verschleierungen, Verleugnungen und Selbsttäuschungen – in einer *Sprache, die bewusst Race thematisiert*. Hall 2020, p. 140)

This awareness forms the basis for resistance against racism and racist structures:

Yet despite this profound and long-lasting experience of *métissage*, after Independence Pan-Africanism has been the prime motivating political force in the *collective consciousness and freedom struggles of the black populations* of the Caribbean, and so too of the New World more generally. Hall 2017, p. 86)

Doch trotz dieser grundlegenden und lang anhaltenden Erfahrung von *métissage* wurde nach der Unabhängigkeit der Panafrikanismus die vorherrschende politische Kraft im *kollektiven Bewusstsein und im Freiheitskampf der Schwarzen Bevölkerung* der Karibik wie auch der Neuen Welt im Allgemeineren. Hall 2020, p. 98)

Consequently, 'racial consciousness' can be an act of becoming a subject, in the sense of 'becoming active', and proud of who one is. It is an act of liberation from the objectifying process of 'being constructed as a race':

It came, not just from the desire to construct an alternative culture out of more indigenous, vernacular or African sources [...] but from the drive to subvert from within the very colonial cultural inheritance which had shaped and misshaped us; and in that way to lay claim as fully *modern black subjects* to a future which we were coming to regard as rightfully our own. Hall 2017, p. 138)

Sie resultierte nicht nur aus dem Wunsch, eine alternative Kultur aufzubauen, die sich eher auf indigene, volkstümliche oder afrikanische Ursprünge bezog [...], sondern aus dem Bedürfnis, das kulturelle koloniale Erbe, das uns geformt und verformt hatte, aus seinem Innersten heraus umzustürzen. Und auf diese Weise den Anspruch zu erheben, als *moderne Schwarze Individuen* einer Zukunft anzugehören, die wir als unsere eigene beanspruchten. Hall 2020, p. 148)

As we can see from these passages from *Familiar Stranger*, the Anglophone conceptual history of race includes the concept as a resource of identity and collective practices of emancipation. This conceptualization is not available in the history of the German terminology of 'Rasse' (race). On the basis of this blank space, if we translate the term 'racial consciousness' literally as 'Rassenbewusstsein', it will connote a consciousness of racial superiority and will therefore equalize white supremacism with a racial consciousness that liberates itself precisely from the concept of white supremacism.

Accordingly, the opposing meanings of 'racial politics', namely, to signify racist political practices and policies or legislation against racism – for example *The British Race Relations Act* of 1965 – do not have an equivalent in the German language. In Chapter 9 *Politics* Stuart Hall uses the term 'racial politics' for those both meanings. In German, the term 'racialized politics' could be translated as 'rassiierte Politik', and based on a blank space again, that would be read as politics that construct people as races and which signifies racist hierarchies of people. This led to our decision not to translate the terms race/racial, racial consciousness and race politics/racial politics, but to keep them in English, because there are no politics actively referring to or connected with the German word 'Rasse' except explicitly right extremist politics. Of course we explained that in the preface of the German edition.

However, when Hall refers to biologisms or racist ideologies or practices, we translated for example 'miscenigation' into 'Rassenmischung' with quotation marks – to clarify and emphasize the ideological construction of the term. When the term 'racially' refers to oppression, discrimination, stereotyping – we use the translation 'rassistisch' like in the following sentence in *Familiar Stranger*:

But it was also productive because it bred a troubled refusal of, and resistance to, all the values it harboured in its bloodstream: servitude, poverty, patriarchy, class inequality and *racialized* difference, of course, but also cultural colonization, all the petty humiliations of daily life. Hall 2017, p. 21)

Zugleich war das auch produktiv, denn es erzeugte eine angestrenzte Verweigerung von und Widerstand gegen all die Werte, die das koloniale System beherbergte: Unterwürigkeit, Armut, Patriarchalismus, Ungleichheit der Klassen und *rassistische* Unterscheidung natürlich, aber auch kulturelle Kolonisierung, all die kleinen Demütigungen des täglichen Lebens. Hall 2020, p. 37)

The meaning of rassistisch in English is racist. But if 'racial ly) refers to the process of 'racial construction we use the German term 'rassisiert :

Jamaica's intricately articulated social hierarchies were characteristic of what Mary Louise Pratt calls the colonial 'contact-zone', in which different national, social, economic, ethnic, gendered and *racially* defined groups were obliged by the imperial system to inhabit the same space. Hall 2017, p. 82)

Jamaikas verklausulierte soziale Hierarchien waren charakteristisch für das, was Mary Louise Pratt die koloniale 'Kontaktzone' nennt, in der das Herrschaftssystem unterschiedliche nationale, soziale, ökonomische, ethnische, geschlechtliche und *rassisierte* Gruppen zwingt, ein und denselben Raum zu bevölkern. Hall 2020, p. 94)

The meaning of rassisiert in English is racialized. We had to choose this unambiguously negative translation because in German there are no ambiguous terms for race.

We encountered similar translation problems concerning the terms 'colour' or 'coloured'. The history of the term colour is more complex than the term race. On the one hand, it was a euphemism used by well-meaning white people, who found 'black' offensive – especially in the USA. However, the term was vehemently rejected by the Black liberation movement. Hall 2017, p. 261) points out that 'black' was a central building block for a new identity, that appropriated what had been used as an insult, thereby turning it into a strength, expressed in the sentence: 'Black is beautiful'. In Jamaica, on the other hand, coloured is a term that enables people with a lighter skin colour to distinguish themselves proudly from 'the blacks': We are coloured, we are something better, like Hall 2017, pp. 14–18) explains with a review to his family experiences, so that the title of his book gains a layer of feeling strangely familiar and of being estranged by his family too. Today, 'people of colour' is an established self-designation – originating in the USA – for those who see themselves as non-white or are perceived as non-white by the majority society.

However, the traditional practice of translating 'coloured' into the German term 'farbig' is not tenable. On the one hand because the term is often used to talk about race in what is *deemed* as less offensive but is often equally offensive. On the other, in contrast to 'of colour', it is not a political self-designation that also establishes common ground. On the contrary, 'coloured' is used to create a scaled gradation of skin colours. For this reason, we usually did not translate the term. However, where colour is used as a phenotypical description, we translated it as skin colour (Hautfarbe). This gave rise to

controversial discussions within the Editorial Board, as at some points we disagreed on whether the countless variations of Hall's use of the term colour should be more of a description or a category, or whether it implies a reproduced or strategic essentialism. The following example will explain our doubts:

In tracing race in the Caribbean, colour was the joker in the pack. Gail Lewis has explored the complexity of 'the skin's language and [its] social validation'. One important aspect of the significance of skin in the Caribbean was the game of hide-and-seek which race and colour played with each other in the post-slave social system, into which the stark categories of enslaved Jamaica had evolved over three centuries. In this society the consciousness of race and colour operated constantly at a high pitch. Hall (2017, p. 96)

Hall works with colour on different levels. Firstly, colour is the phenotypical description of skin colour that is produced and reproduced by everyday consciousness. Hall then elevates colour to a systemic-structural category. Then they become everyday cultural markers of distinction again. For us, it was not clear here – as in other passages in the book – where colour is used by Hall as a form of strategic essentialism that is appropriating colour (as well as race) as a significant self-description, and where it is an analytically based classification system. For this reason, we have translated colour as a phenotypical description with *Hautfarbe* (skin colour) and left colour as a conceptual category in English.

Wenn man in der Karibik Race erforscht, ist Colour der Joker im Spiel. Gail Lewis hat die Komplexität der 'Sprache der Haut und ihrer gesellschaftlichen Bewertung' untersucht. Ein wichtiger Aspekt bei der Bedeutung von *Hautfarbe* in der Karibik war das Versteckspiel, das Race und Colour im Gesellschaftssystem nach der Sklaverei spielten, das sich im Laufe von drei Jahrhunderten aus den starren Kategorien des versklavten Jamaika entwickelt hatte. In dieser Gesellschaft arbeitete das Bewusstsein von Race und Colour ständig auf Hochtouren. Hall (2020, p. 108)

Another example for such a controversial translation debate is the following sentence:

But I lived in a bustling, multi-class, *multicoloured* colonial metropolis with all its intersecting social and spatial lines and carefully constructed gradients; and in the more run-down parts of the city, the extensive poverty and unemployment of the black majority were in constant evidence. Hall (2017, p. 55)

The word 'multicoloured' is surely not an analytical category. For us, it is more of an everyday linguistic description that also has an essentialist flavour. Therefore, we decided to speak about different skin colours:

Aber ich wohnte in einer lebendigen kolonialen Metropole mit einem *Kaleidoskop* von Klassen und *Hautfarben*, wo sich die sozialen und räumlichen Grenzlinien überschritten und das sorgsam konstruierte Gefälle verwischten. In den

schäbigeren Vierteln der Stadt war die extreme Armut und die Arbeitslosigkeit der Schwarzen Mehrheit ständig präsent. Hall 2020, p. 69)

Our 'conceptual work' analysed each passage in the text within its context. Therefore, instead of a static standardization, there are also meaningful deviations from once found solutions. Language is not a neutral tool, but a battleground for the hegemony of meanings, their conceptualizations and their effects. In *Familiar Stranger*, Hall interweaves biographical experiences, political practices, cultural contexts and theoretical approaches to show the social effects of colonialism to this day. The question of how to translate sensitive terms in the context of racism and colonialism is also dependent on the character of the text. The question of how to translate sensitive terms in the context of racism and colonialism is also dependent on the character of the text. The everyday scene retold by Hall, in which the 'Black Brothers' ironically referred to themselves as 'niggers', shows that one can be caught in a dilemma when translating. This raises the question of whether it is responsible to reproduce the term as a display of violence and dehumanization in translation. We could not agree on whether it could or should be interpreted as a linguistic self-designation, i.e. a form of expression of collective recognition of those actually insulted, or as a deliberated racist provocation. However, in this case we decided to translate the term literally because its meaning is equally derogative in German as it is in English. Stuart Hall decided to use it to illuminate everyday strategies of overcoming racism or, in other cases of being insulted by them.

The reviews of the German edition of *Familiar Stranger* were a linguistic-political aftermath. Almost all the reviews that responded to our preface appreciated our language policy considerations and supported the plea for more context-sensitive translations. Likewise, most reviewers of *Familiar Stranger* deliberately avoid translating Hall's race-context into German racial terms in their review (e.g. Arend 2020, p. 22, Kastner 2020, p. 15, Riechelmann 2020, p. 35). But there was also a sharp critique accusing us of making the term 'Rasse' unavailable for critical theorizing in Germany (Haug 2021, pp. 171–172).

concluding remarks

These contrasting critiques of our translation raise several questions that Stuart Hall has addressed throughout his life: how to translate concepts and ideas into another context without reproducing power relations, how to avoid the ways in which language reproduces oppression without policing the usage of language (as in versions of political correctness), how to translate 'the cultural' across different socio-political contexts while simultaneously adapting it to the new context *and* keeping its original meaning.

The latter is what Benjamin called a transparent translation that does not cover the original text but keeps it visible. We will not claim that our translation has answered all these questions satisfactorily but we aimed to address them.

We have shown that Hall's use of the terms 'race' and 'colour' in *Familiar Stranger* is not limited to a recognized canon of theory but represents its countless everyday cultural meanings. This also reveals the limitations of the theoretical concepts. Stuart Hall has a method for this. In *Cultural Studies and its Theoretical Legacies* (1992), he emphasizes

the crucial importance of language and of the linguistic metaphor to *any* study of culture; the expansion of the notion of text and textuality, both as a source of meaning, and as that which escapes and postpones meaning; the recognition of the heterogeneity, of the multiplicity, of meanings, of the struggle to close arbitrarily the infinite semiosis beyond meaning; the acknowledgment of textuality and cultural power, of representation itself, as a site of power and regulation; of the symbolic as a source of identity. (p. 283)

Hall's explorations in *Familiar Stranger* thrive on the constant decentration of the understanding of race and colour: they cannot be reduced to 'one' term but are situated in many ways. We tried to reproduce the heterogeneity of meanings due to different contexts by using different translations for the same concept depending on its respective context in the original that is without abstracting from the concrete actors and different levels of action. However, by choosing not to translate 'race' literally as 'Rasse', have we inadvertently engaged in political correctness, as Frigga Haug (2021) has accused us? We think that, on the contrary, we have opened a space in which the multifaceted meanings of cultural studies concepts and ideas can be articulated in Germany in ways that challenge the reproduction of power relations *and* the danger of policing the usage of language.

In Germany, a party (AfD) defined by the Constitutional Court (which cannot be blamed of being left-wing) as 'right extremist' in the states, in which it just became the strongest (Thuringia) and the second strongest (Saxony) party has been gaining ground some time ago. The normalization of the term 'Rasse' would imply the normalization of the connotations that come with this term in the German context. A central aim of the AfD is just this, the normalization of German fascism as just a short and insignificant period of German history. Therefore, avoiding the term 'Rasse' is more than avoiding a discriminatory term, it is challenging a political culture that normalizes German fascism.

As Hall put it succinctly:

[...] philosophically, it has always been impossible in the theoretical field of cultural studies – whether it is conceived either in terms of texts and contexts, of intertextuality, or of the historical formations in which cultural practices are

lodged – to get anything like an adequate theoretical account of culture s relations and its effects. p. 284)

Hall asks us to endure this tension in the spirit of critical cultural studies to recognize all textual practices, even if we cannot cover all issues through a critical textuality. Thus, our translation is also to be understood as a contribution to a critical reflection of translation work – as well as an invitation to further develop it critically.

Disclosure statement

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