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Through a southern prism: translating Stuart Hall into Spanish

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ABSTRACT


Translation is an intellectual endeavour that requires engagement with authors and conceptual frameworks from different times and worlds. It is not a neutral or simple task of converting linguistic codes but a situated, partial, and interested process that goes beyond mere intellectual activity. In translating Stuart Hall into Spanish for a Latin American audience, specific challenges and interests arise, as detailed in this article. Three main challenges are discussed: preserving the contextuality and complexity of Hall's writings, resisting the temptation to simplify or academicize his work, and ensuring that translations facilitate meaningful cross-cultural exchanges. The article underscores the importance of understanding Hall's work as an intellectual and political project, deeply rooted in specific historical and cultural contexts, and argues for an approach to translation that remains faithful to these dimensions while making his ideas accessible and relevant to contemporary Latin American readers. Finally, the paper reflects on the political significance of translation, highlighting how ideas can transcend boundaries and enrich local debates. Hall's concepts, such as articulation, context, and conjuncture, are presented as valuable tools for understanding and intervening in the social and political realities of Latin America today. The article concludes by emphasizing the ongoing relevance of Hall's intellectual and political contributions and the need for translations that honour his legacy while engaging with the specific challenges and opportunities of our present moment.

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Introduction

Every reading of a text is basically a translation, not a transmission of the original truth from one moment to another. One must give them away freely [...] My own work – and everyone else's, too – must be surrounded to the flow of meaning that will continue to create and recreate something new from the old. Hall (1999, p. 239)

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Translation is an intellectual practice that involves engaging with authors or networks of concepts produced in times and worlds different from one's own. It is neither an innocent task nor a simple exercise of adapting one set of linguistic codes to another. Translation is a situated, partial, and interested endeavour that extends beyond the intellectual realm. However, the degree of rigour necessary to nurture a contextual understanding and sensitivity towards the author or a translated text determines the density and relevance of a translation. There are more or less plausible translations; as a translator, one can be more or less of a traitor: '*traduttore, traditore*'.

For me, translating Stuart Hall into Spanish (*Castellano*, which is a more precise and forceful classification of the dialect spoken in mainland Spain but is seldom used in English) for Latin America involves certain interests and poses specific challenges. I narrate this in the first person because, although these may be shared and are not simply 'personal decisions', other motivations and constraints undoubtedly converge among Hall's various translators.

In 2010, together with Víctor Vich and Catherine Walsh, we published a book in Spanish that compiled 26 of Hall's texts. This publication was the result of years of work and involved collaboration with colleagues and institutions in different countries across Latin America, such as Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico and Peru. Spanning more than six hundred pages, we included texts written by Hall at various points in his intellectual trajectory and on diverse themes.

The title of the book, *Sin garantías* (Without Guarantees), echoed an expression that encapsulated Hall's style of intellectual and political work. The subtitle, *Traectorias y problemáticas en estudios culturales* (Trajectories and Issues in Cultural Studies), indicated the immediate purpose of this publication: to highlight Hall's contributions to cultural studies at a time when postgraduate programmes in this field were being consolidated in some Latin American countries. The three editors were even directing two master's programmes – Víctor and myself – and a doctorate programme in Catherine's case.

In our teaching practice, we noted a language barrier, as many students could not read English easily. It was also difficult to access many original texts because they had been published in various places and times. With luck, the best libraries in Latin America had a few books or journals containing Hall's works. However, it was common not to find any of his texts in the catalogues of many universities, especially institutions in provincial areas and those operating under very precarious conditions.

Writing about Hall in Spanish is also largely an act of translation. Not only because the original textual quotes are translated, but because it involves a systematic exercise of presenting and contextualizing his categories, arguments, and intellectual practices. Among these writings, I would highlight

the book *Forcejeando con los ángeles: introducción interesada a Stuart Hall* (Wrestling with Angels: An Interested Introduction to Stuart Hall) (Lima: La Siniestra, 2022). It is also relevant to mention the collective book, which I edited, titled *Stuart Hall desde el Sur: legados y apropiaciones* (Stuart Hall from the South: Legacies and Appropriations) (Buenos Aires: CLACSO, 2014).

Both books were the result of my work translating Hall's writings while teaching semester courses and seminars in postgraduate programmes in various cities in Colombia, as well as in other Latin American countries such as Argentina, Mexico, and Peru. Drafts written on some concept or aspect of Hall's work, which supported each meeting, often facilitated conversations and questions from students that provided valuable feedback for clarifying those drafts. Translating in the context of teaching is a conversational process, involving a dialogical approach that moves in multiple directions and yields a wide variety of outcomes for both the students and the teacher.

This paper explores the translation of Stuart Hall's works into Spanish, emphasizing his intellectual and political style, and its significance for Latin American readers. The first section, 'Challenges', delves into the difficulties of translating Hall's nuanced and contextually rich texts, highlighting issues such as cultural reductionism and the need to preserve Hall's distinctive style of 'thinking without guarantees'. The second section, 'Scope', examines the broader implications of translating Hall's work by focusing on how his ideas can enrich local debates and provide relevant insights for contemporary Latin American realities. Finally, the paper concludes by reflecting on the importance of maintaining the integrity and critical edge of Hall's intellectual and political contributions in translation, underscoring their relevance for addressing the urgencies and challenges of our present moment.

Challenges

Until the late nineties, Stuart Hall was a relatively unknown author in most Latin American countries. In some countries, such as Colombia, a couple of his texts on identity were known and cited. In others, like Argentina, his contributions to the study of media and ideology were more prominent, such as his work on encoding-decoding in the field of communication studies.

When I began my Ph.D. at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2020, I had already read Hall as an interesting author, but just one among many in the growing literature on identity. His introduction to the book *Questions of Cultural Identity*, titled 'Who Needs "Identity"?' and his text 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora', resonated with many other authors of the nineties who were questioning essentialist conceptions of identity, politics, and culture.

However, it was the doctoral seminars of Lawrence Grossberg at Chapel Hill that provided me with a much more comprehensive understanding of

the theoretical and political implications of Hall's work. I remember reading and discussing PDF copies of typewritten, unpublished texts by Hall. His analysis of method in Marx or his particular appropriations of Gramsci were complemented by his critical approaches to identity politics, postcolonial theory, and the concept of diaspora, among others. With Larry, I was able to grasp Hall's scope for a pessimism of the intellect and an optimism of the will, which did not close off theory from political positioning but recognized its indispensable relevance for enhancing political imaginations and interventions.

His idea of theorization from the concrete, involving an ongoing 'wrestling with the angels' and serving as an inevitable detour on the way to addressing more significant issues, radically interrupted the dominant ideas about theory and knowledge production in conventional academic establishment, which was becoming increasingly influential in the Global South. Therefore, understanding Hall as much more than an author who provides relevant contributions to specific issues is what has driven my translation work. His significance lies not in what he said, but in how, from where, and why he said it.

We cannot forget that Hall never fit the mould of a conventional academic: '[...] I think of myself as an intellectual and a teacher. Not an academic. I'm critical of academia as an institutional space' (Hall 2013, p. 773). It is more accurate to understand him as an intellectual, inspired by what Gramsci considered an organic intellectual. The hundreds of publications he produced over more than fifty years were driven by his attempts to understand particular conjunctures of a social and political world he sought to transform. He conceived his writings as political interventions rather than a mere accumulation of academic knowledge or symbolic capital.

A radical conjuncturalism characterizes Hall's intellectual work. A conjuncturalist who accounts for the history of the present, which includes not only the now but also the past as it constitutes how we have become who we are: 'I am interested in the conjuncture. I am a sort of writer about the "history of the present," but also I think the past is understood in that way too' (Hall 2009, p. 664). This perspective meant that much of his publications during his lifetime were aimed at understanding specific contexts relevant for insightful political discussions and actions. Somehow, these publications are historical documents, part of the archive of intellectual and political disputes, intended to understand and intervene in the overdetermined worldliness that constitutes and defines our lived experiences.

It is also true that, particularly during the eighties and nineties, Hall wrote several chapters for books published by the Open University, some of which he also edited. These texts fit more easily into academic production, where certain issues or categories are pedagogically presented, often including literature reviews and extensive commentary on the most relevant authors and concepts.

We also must not overlook the singularity of Hall's intellectual and political working style, which he called the 'Caribbean prism'. In the closing lecture of a conference held in his honour in Jamaica in 2004, Hall stated that although he had resided in Britain since the fifties, his thinking had always been marked by a Caribbean formative prism (2007, p. 271). He defined this prism as an imprint on lived experience that enables a certain perspective on the types of relevant issues and ways to approach them. Rather than a simple reference to content, the prism involves a perspective, a stance regarding what is worth thinking about and how it is worth doing so. In this regard, Hall speaks of a 'politics of location' because '[...] all thought is shaped by where it comes from, that knowledge is always to some degree "positional"' (2007, p. 271).

For contemporary Spanish-speaking readers in Latin American countries, Hall's translations present a series of challenges inherent to the specificities of his texts. A primary challenge is to preserve the contextuality and complexity in which his conceptualizations and writings were originally produced. At the same time, it is crucial to remember that translation involves an intervention into different contexts of appropriation and interpretation, where diverse horizons of theoretical and political imagination come into play.

For instance, when translating conceptualizations and texts written in the sixties and seventies – when grappling with Marxist theory was central to much of Hall's theoretical vocabulary – one cannot overlook the political landscape of that era. It was a time marked by various political struggles, fuelled by the great utopias that inspired revolutionary and anti-colonial movements within the framework of the Cold War. Generations born in Latin America from the nineties onward are quite unfamiliar with much of this, which recalling Williams (1977), implies specific 'structures of feeling' from the sixties and seventies that operated in England where Hall was writing.

Therefore, when translating publications from those decades that address discussions on base/superstructure, subcultures, encoding/decoding, or ideology, it is crucial to consider both the original context of writing and intervention and the current context of reading and appropriation (from the southern prism of Latin American national formations). To achieve this, the translation should be accompanied by footnotes that establish the historical, political, and conceptual connections that were evident to Hall's original readers. More importantly, a well-crafted introduction should be included in the book or the editorial of the journal where the translation appears, providing the necessary background and context for contemporary readers.

This practice of dual contextualization is crucial for enhancing the transpositions of meaning and for making an impact within the reading and appropriation frameworks of the Spanish-speaking South, which exists on the periphery of the dominant academic establishment. By considering two

worlds of meaning and intervention, as envisioned by certain theoretical paradigms in ethnography, this approach becomes a substantial part of the task of translating Hall.

Some texts demand an obvious effort of contextualization, while others resonate more closely with the issues and sensibilities of contemporary Latin American readers. Much of the work from the eighties, nineties, and the first decade of the 2000s addresses issues like diaspora, identity, multiculturalism, neoliberalism, and the postcolonial. These topics are more familiar to contemporary readers in Spanish-speaking Latin America than the earlier texts, which primarily focused on grappling with Marxist theory and its nuances.

This apparent familiarity does not negate the indispensability of dual contextualization; in many cases, it can be quite deceptive, similar to false cognates. For instance, when Hall writes about multiculturalism, he does so from the perspective of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth, contexts deeply intertwined with imperialism and political disputes over national identity. In contrast, for many readers in the Andean countries of Latin America, such as Bolivia and Ecuador, the strong demographic and political presence of indigenous peoples, who have promoted intercultural projects from the grassroots, forms the most immediate framework for interpreting and appropriating Hall's arguments on multiculturalism.

When Hall argues that ethnicity should be understood as a marking of place of origin, which includes the more conventional white English, translating this concept also requires dual contextualization. In many Latin American countries, for example, there has been a shift towards multiculturalism in which only indigenous peoples and, in some cases, Afro-descendants possess a series of rights and are recognized as political subjects precisely because they uniquely embody ethnicity-in-difference.

A second challenge in translating Hall for a Spanish-speaking Latin American audience is preserving the dimension and scope of his intellectual and political working style, particularly his emphasis on 'thinking without guarantees', which means acknowledging that outcomes are never certain and that various factors influence events in unpredictable ways. The relationship between contingency and determination, within the framework of a notion of complex and contradictory totality united in difference, is a central theme that permeates Stuart Hall's work from beginning to end. Hall was deeply invested in exploring how unpredictable events (contingency) and structured forces (determination) interact to shape social and cultural realities. He argued that while certain structures and forces exert a significant influence on events and outcomes, there is always an element of unpredictability and openness to change. This perspective acknowledges that societies are composed of diverse and often conflicting elements that are constantly in flux, yet somehow form a cohesive whole. Hall's commitment to this idea is

evident in his use of concepts such as ‘articulation’, which describes the way different elements are connected and influence each other, and ‘conjuncture’, which refers to specific historical moments when various social and political forces converge. By emphasizing that there is no single, predetermined path for social development, Hall’s work underscores the importance of understanding the complexity and often contradictory nature of social and cultural life.

To highlight Hall’s intellectual and political work style for Spanish-speaking readers in Latin America, it is necessary to go beyond translating a single text on a particular theme. An atomistic and fragmented approach is not the best strategy to convey Hall’s comprehensive working style. Instead, it is more effective to translate various writings of his and publish them together, enabling a more holistic view of how Hall approached different conceptual issues and problems.

In my view, translating Hall’s work for today’s Latin American readers is an extremely important task due to Hall’s unique intellectual and political working style. Hall was known for challenging oversimplified viewpoints that reduce the complexity of the world. These reductionist and deterministic viewpoints, which flatten the richness of our experiences, are still very relevant to critique today, perhaps even more so than during Hall’s own time.

Firstly, when we talk about reductionism, we’re not referring to economism, which Hall critiqued heavily and which has now become less prominent. Nor are we discussing the dominant Marxist paradigm that Hall questioned, especially in its more rigid and simplistic forms known as ‘vulgar materialism’. Nowadays, these forms of Marxism are rarely seen. However, within the academic world and some political movements in Latin America, we still encounter reductionist and deterministic approaches. These approaches often treat theory as something fixed and unchangeable. They oversimplify the ideas of authors, idealize or moralize social subjects and processes, and create rigid associations between social positions and certain ways of thinking, representing, and understanding the world.

Today, one of the most prevalent forms of reductionism and determinism is culturalism. This viewpoint explains everything through fixed and essentialized ideas about culture and cultural differences. Culturalism is a widespread and often unexamined simplification that Hall’s work helps to challenge in today’s Latin American societies. In many ways, culturalism has taken the place of economism, while Hall’s insights disrupt reductionism. He warns us about the dangers of analytical and political blind spots that create a false sense of certainty. By engaging with Hall’s work, we can better navigate the complexities of our social and cultural landscapes, ensuring that our theories and practices remain relevant and grounded in the lived experiences and realities of Latin America.

To give another example, decoloniality, a very powerful framework that emerged in the early 2000s, particularly in certain academic and activist spheres, has been stripped of its initial complexity and strength, and has become vulnerable to reductionism, at risk of thinking with guarantees. Authors or theories considered Eurocentric are often entirely dismissed. By the same token, there is a tendency to glorify, without critical examination, authors and ideas perceived as non-Western, as if they possess an innate moral purity and superiority. The essentializing of decolonial discourses has disrupted the connection to concrete realities and particular conjunctures.

Finally, the normative idealization of certain subalternized subjects, which are morally closed in a game of necessary correspondences with certain political positions and epistemic insights, is a tendency often found in different types of studies and many strategies of struggle articulated on behalf of these subjects.

This idealization manifests in several ways. Firstly, there is a tendency to assign to these subaltern subjects an unquestionable moral purity and authenticity, as if their marginalized position automatically grants them a privileged perspective and an incontestable truth. This view, though well-intentioned, simplifies and homogenizes the diversity of experiences and perspectives within subaltern groups, ignoring the complexities and internal contradictions.

Secondly, this normative idealization often implies a necessary and direct connection between a subaltern social position and certain political stances. For example, it is expected that subaltern subjects adopt radical or revolutionary positions, and any deviation from these expectations is seen as a betrayal of their 'real interests'. This approach reduces the agency of subaltern subjects, limiting their ability to autonomously navigate and negotiate their own identities and political positions.

Furthermore, this phenomenon is also linked to certain epistemic knowledges that are considered inherently tied to subalternity. It is assumed that subaltern subjects possess a type of special and exclusive knowledge that is inaccessible to those outside their group. While it is true that experiences of marginality can generate unique and valuable forms of knowledge, this assumption can lead to an exotification and fetishization of subaltern knowledge, turning it into an object for academic consumption. Therefore, this idealization tends to oversimplify and romanticize these subjects, projecting onto them a purity and moral superiority that overlooks their complex and diverse realities, which inscribes the analysis in a thought with guarantees, in an impoverished reductionism.

Hence, the relevance of translating Hall into Spanish for Latin America lies in capturing his intellectual and political working style, which involved contextually understanding the articulation of subjects precisely because of the unnecessary correspondences of how subjects are politically and

culturally positioned. This approach lends itself to a more transparent and complex understanding of the world.

A third challenge, closely linked to the previous two, is to resist the temptation to academicize Hall. When translating Hall's works into Spanish within the Latin American context, it is crucial not to lose sight of his role as an intellectual, his critiques of academia, and his commitment to long-term collective and collaborative work. A translation of Hall that contributes to subsuming him into just another label or classification within the academic establishment – a label that is taken up or set aside according to the demands of publishing a paper or obtaining a degree – is an affront to his intellectual and political working style.

In recent decades, the academic establishment in some Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America has been colonized by a dense network of bureaucracies. These bureaucracies' anxieties over productivity indicators established in the global north have led to an increasing number of papers and books being published, the standardization of academic curriculums and careers often with little or no relevance to transforming the terms and content in which the world is contested.

The saturation of clichés and the proliferation of commonplaces, in a perverse convergence with the productivist demands of academic bureaucracies eager to make themselves visible in 'quality' indicators, have shaped the working patterns of contemporary academic institutions. A consequence of these contemporary working patterns which have undermined the potential of academic institutions to provide a space for the development of theoretical and political imaginaries.

Scope

Translating texts into different languages involves both the potential for loss and gain. Stuart Hall's work, deeply rooted in specific historical and cultural contexts, exemplifies these complexities. When translating Hall's texts, the nuanced interplay of his intellectual interventions, historical context, and the Caribbean prism through which he viewed the world ought to be rethought and reconfigured to make contemporary critical interventions in specific contexts. Hall's writings were interventions in specific political and academic contexts, particularly in Britain, influenced by his Jamaican roots and his life in England ('A life between two islands'). This positionality, crucial for understanding his arguments, risks being overlooked when translated into another language without careful contextualization.

In my experience as a translator of Hall, both as a teacher and editor, it has been crucial to ground his work in the locations and contexts within which he was working and thinking. This approach, whether in a publication or a course, allows for the identification of recurring threads that run through

his diverse contributions, while also highlighting the unique nuances and interventions present in each of his writings.

It allows Hall's ideas and style of thinking to be integrated into different socio-political contexts, potentially enriching local debates and providing relevant perspectives on pressing issues. The significance of translation work lies in its capacity for cross-fertilizing ideas. For example, Hall's perspectives can inform and be informed by Latin American realities, fostering more relevant conversations, which allow for better ways of understanding and engaging with our political realities.

Hall's translating relevance for students and readers in Latin America is also related to the cultural studies field. Hence, in the postgraduate cultural studies programmes in which I participated in the design of or where I was invited as a lecturer, the reading and discussion of Hall's texts aimed to offer an integrated perspective of his contributions while also challenging what it means to produce a cultural studies relevant to the Latin American context.

It wasn't so much that Hall spoke about Latin America, nor that his thematic concerns were necessarily and directly ours. But, the importance of translating Hall so that his work can be read and studied in courses and postgraduate programmes in cultural studies in Colombia and other countries in the region, such as Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Peru, and Puerto Rico (with whom we formed a network through CLACSO), lies in challenging certain currents within the emerging institutionalized field of cultural studies. These currents tend to reproduce an academicist vision, where high theory has become an end in itself. For these currents, the political dimension of cultural studies is often limited to writing, from their ivory towers, about power and resistance from clichéd perspectives, from a thinking with guarantees.

The challenge, therefore, is to ensure that translations do not merely transpose words but also convey entire worlds, preserving somehow the historical richness and theoretical nuances of the original text. This requires translators to be not only linguistically adept but also deeply familiar with both the source and target contexts. They must understand the historical, cultural, and political dimensions that shape the text, ensuring that Hall's interventions retain their intended impact and resonance. Effective translation involves a balance of commitment to the original work and adequacy to the contexts of translation, facilitating a meaningful exchange of ideas that honours the complexity and relevance of Hall's thought.

Ideas, by their very nature, have the potential to form linkages across differences. Stuart Hall's intellectual legacy vividly demonstrates this potential. His concept of the 'Caribbean prism' highlights how lived experiences and historical backgrounds shape one's understanding of the world. This prism, while unique to Hall's experience, resonates with many across different contexts, illustrating how diverse perspectives can enrich and deepen our understanding of our conjunctures and historical present.

Hall's work on encoding/decoding, hegemony, diaspora, identity, and representation, initially situated within the context of British societies and experiences, has found significant relevance for Latin American national formations. These ideas create connections across differences by providing frameworks through which various groups can analyze their own cultural and political landscapes. Translating Hall's work requires preserving the theoretical integrity and political power of his ideas while ensuring their relevance to new contexts. This adaptation does not entail altering the core concepts but contextualizing them in ways that resonate with different socio-political realities. In this way, ideas can transcend their original contexts and form meaningful connections across diverse experiences and struggles.

Stuart Hall's intellectual contributions have transcended spatial and temporal boundaries, becoming relevant in various places and across different historical periods. To transcend these boundaries, ideas must be flexible yet robust enough to be able to articulate meaning to different places and times without losing their relevance. Hall's concepts of articulation, context, and conjuncture are particularly effective in this regard – concepts which are useful for thinking about the social world in a relational way, giving methodological priority to examining the connections between practices and meanings that constitute the problematics we seek to understand and intervene in at a given moment. They offer us a strategy to avoid staying in abstractions and generalizations, instead focusing on intellectual work aimed at understanding, in their complex singularity, the nodal aspects that condense the tensions of a specific moment. This is particularly relevant from a Latin American perspective, as it guides an intellectual approach that seeks to understand our experiences and realities in a more adequate and situated manner, providing essential input to enhance and refine our political interventions.

The movement of ideas across and between boundaries holds profound political significance. Hall's emphasis on 'thinking without guarantees' underscores the importance of maintaining a critical, open-ended approach to theory and practice. This approach is especially crucial in contemporary Latin American countries, where various forms of reductionism and determinism often dominate political and academic discourse.

For example, cultural reductionism is widespread in the academic establishment and various sectors of organizations and social movements. This reductionism manifests, on the one hand, by giving culture an absolute 'explanatory' role by default in a wide variety of aspects of the social world. On the other hand, this cultural reductionism assumes an essentialist, homogenizing, and idealized notion of culture and cultural difference. In both cases, determinism is reproduced: everything is determined by culture, or culture is seen as an inescapable destiny. By introducing Hall's ideas into these debates, translations can disrupt reductionist and determinist

narratives and foster more nuanced understandings of social world and political issues.

Translating Stuart Hall's work involves navigating the complexities of linguistic, historical, and political differences while preserving the critical kernel of his ideas. This process highlights both the potential losses and gains in translation, the ability of ideas to form connections across differences, their capacity to transcend spatial and temporal boundaries, and the profound political significance of their movement across and between boundaries. Through careful and contextualized translation, Hall's contributions and his distinctive style of intellectual and political work can continue to inspire and inform understandings and struggles from a Latin American perspective.

Conclusions

Stuart Hall once wrote, 'the heart has its reasons' (2003, p. 234). Translating him has its reasons as well. Through a southern prism of Latin American national formations, Hall remains an author from whom we still have much to learn. His concepts and his invitation to engage in 'thinking without guarantees' as an intellectual and political project offer a pertinent tool. This effort aims to organically connect intellectual labour with situated political interventions, rather than accumulating ornamental knowledge that ultimately serves only to advance uninspired academic careers.

Through a southern prism, it is crucial in translating Hall not to lose his distinctive intellectual and political working style. His invitation to think without guarantees rejects the certainties of pre-established reductionisms and determinisms, as well as the stabilizations derived from epistemic violence introduced in the name of moral or political idealizations. Hall challenges both epistemic totalitarianism (reductionisms and determinisms) and epistemic relativism (the idea that all perspectives are equally valid; not every understanding of the world is equally suited for its transformation). Translating Hall for Latin American Spanish speakers, therefore, must not confine his legacy to the ivory tower of the academic establishment, nor diminish his strength in problematizing conventional political practices.

His intellectual working style is an inspiration for a generation challenged to transform the dominant theoretical and political imagination of our present. There are no epistemic or political guarantees derived from noble positions or good intentions. There are no shortcuts in intellectual labour. Simplistic approaches only help the privileged sleep well at night, silencing their guilty consciences by projecting their frustrations and inner turmoil onto idealized others.

Understanding Hall as much more than an author who offers relevant contributions to specific issues is what has driven my translation work. Providing

insights into his style of intellectual and political work has always been far more relevant in my translation efforts for Spanish-speaking Latin America today. For me, this is where Hall's significance for our here and now lies, for our urgencies and challenges, for our potentials and struggles, which are not those of the last century nor those of a colonial subject whose life unfolded on two islands, not without tension, not without escapes, not without limitations.

Disclosure statement

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