

Some notes on the translation of “*Il faut défendre la société*”; “*Society Must Be Defended*”

1. The edition of the translation I refer to here is the first, American Picador edition of 2003. I do not know whether any of the mistakes indicated here have been picked up and corrected by other subsequent editions.
2. These notes are not the result of a systematic check of the translation and indicate only passages where, for one reason or another, I referred back to the French while reading the translation; there may be other mistakes or questionable translation choices.
3. The passages noted are of different kinds. Some are straightforwardly wrong (transpositions – ‘politics’ instead of ‘war’ and vice versa; ‘power’ instead of ‘truth’ and vice versa – and omission of words or expressions) and may very well be misprints or the effects of momentary inattention (all too easy, as I know to my cost, when, for example, translating two words which are repeated frequently and together). Others seem to me to be errors of translation. They also vary in their significance, some distorting the meaning significantly, or even inverting it, others being perhaps of minor significance. The French passage is given followed by the corresponding passage from the translation, and then my proposed translation. I am sure that in many cases my own proposals could be improved.

F. p. 22: ... susceptible de produire des discours de *vérité* qui sont ...

E. p. 24: ... capable of producing discourses of *power* that are ...

GB: capable of producing discourses of truth that are ...

F. p. 22: ... c’est le discours vrai qui, pour une part au moins, décide; il véhicule, il propulse lui-même des effets de *pouvoir*.

E. p. 25: ... it is the discourse of truth that decides, at least in part; it conveys and propels *truth*-effects ...

G.B.: ... it is true discourse that decides, at least in part; it conveys, it propels power-effects ...

F. 25: et de faire apparaître à la place de la souveraineté et de l’*obéissance*, le problème de la domination et de l’assujettissement.

E. 27: and to reveal the problem of domination and subjugation instead of sovereignty and *subjugation*

G.B.: and to reveal the problem of domination and subjection instead of sovereignty and obedience

F. 41: Je crois en effet ... que le principe selon lequel la *politique*, c’est la *guerre* continuée par d’autres moyens...

E. 48: I in fact think ... that the principle that *war* is a continuation of *politics* by other means...

G.B.: I in fact think ... that the principle that politics is a continuation of war by other means ...

F. 48: Dans un champ historique, qu'on ne peut même pas dire un champ relatif, car il n'est pas en relation avec aucun absolu, c'est un infini de l'histoire qui est en quelque sorte "irrelativisé", celui de l'éternelle dissolution dans des mécanismes et des événements qui sont ceux de la force, du pouvoir et de la guerre

E. 56: Within a historical field that cannot even be said to be a relative field, as it does not relate to any absolute, it is the indefiniteness of history that is in a sense being "irrelativized." It is the indefiniteness of its eternal, the eternal dissolution into the mechanisms and events known as force, power, and war.

G.B.: This is not an easy sentence to translate! How about, to be going on with:
In a historical field that cannot even be called a relative field, since it has no relationship with any absolute, what is as it were "irrelativized" is a boundlessness of history, its eternal dissolution in mechanisms and events of force, power, and war. (??)

F. 193: Et c'est ce double danger, de la guerre indéfinie comme fond de l'histoire et du rapport de domination comme élément *principliel de la politique* ...

E. 216: And it is this twofold threat – a war without end as the basis of history and the relationship of domination as the *explanatory* element *in history*...

G.B.: And it is this twofold danger, of endless war as the ground of history and of the relationship of domination as the constitutive [*?principliel*] element of politics ...

F. 196: Pour qu'une nation subsiste, pour que sa loi soit appliqué, pour que sa législature soit reconnue ... pour qu'elle subsiste et prospère comme condition *non plus* formelle de son existence juridique, mais *comme* condition historique de son existence *dans* l'histoire ...

E. 219: If a nation is to survive, if its law is to be applied and if its legislature is to be recognized ... if its survival and prosperity are to be *not only* a formal precondition for its juridical existence, but *also a* historical precondition for its existence *in history*...

G.B.: For a nation to survive, for its law to be applied, for its legislature to be recognized ... for it to survive and prosper not as the formal condition of its juridical existence, but as the historical condition of its existence *in history* ...

F. 196: en *ajoutant* à ces conditions juridico-formelles de la nation, des conditions *historico-fonctionnelles* ...

E. 219: by *introducing historical* conditions as juridico-formal preconditions

G.B.: by adding historico-functional conditions to these juridico-formal conditions ...

F. 199: un avenir que est *imminent*, qui est déjà présent dans le présent ..

E. 222: a future that is *immediate*, which is already present in the present ..

G.B.: an imminent future, which is already present in the present ...

F. 206: un monisme au niveau de la nation, *et au profit de la noblesse*, et puis un dualisme ...

E. 230: a monism at the level of the nation, and with a dualism at the level of domination

G.B.: a monism at the level of the nation, and to the advantage of the nobility, and then a dualism at the level of domination

F. 213: un des phénomènes fondamentaux du XIX^e siècle a été, est ce qu'on pourrait appeler *la prise en compte de la vie par le pouvoir*: si vous voulez, *une prise de pouvoir sur l'homme en tant qu'être vivant, une sorte d'étatisation* du biologique ...

E. 239-240: one of the basic phenomena of the nineteenth century was what might be called *power's hold over life*. What I mean is *the acquisition of power* over man insofar as man is a living being, that the biological *came under State control* ...

G.B.: one of the basic phenomena of the nineteenth century was what might be called power taking life into account: if you like, power's hold on man insofar as man is a living being, a sort of State control of the biological ...

F. 214: ... un autre droit nouveau, qui ne va pas effacer le premier, mais va le pénétrer, *le traverser, le modifier*, et va être un droit, *ou plutôt un pouvoir* exactement inverse.

E. 241: ... a new right which does not erase the old right but which does penetrate it, permeate it. This is the right, or rather precisely the opposite right.

G.B.: another new right, which will not erase the old right, but which will penetrate it, run through it, modify it, and which will be an exactly opposite right, or rather power

F. 217: de centralisation de l'*information*

E. 244: *centralize power*

G.B.: *centralize information*

F. 220: *prendre en compte la vie*

E. 246: *taking control of life*

G.B.: *taking life into account*

F. 221: maintenant que le pouvoir est de moins en moins le droit de faire mourir, et de plus en plus le droit d'intervenir pour faire vivre, *et sur la manière de vivre, et sur le "comment" de la vie* à partir du moment donc où le pouvoir intervient surtout à ce niveau-là pour majorer la vie, pour en contrôler les accidents, les aléas ... Ce sur quoi le pouvoir a prise ce n'est pas la mort, c'est la mortalité. Et dans cette mesure-là, il est bien normal que la mort, maintenant, *retombe du côté du privé* ... l'individu ... se replie ... *sur sa part la plus privée*.

E. 248: Now that power is decreasingly the power of the right to take life, and increasingly the right to intervene to make live, or once power begins to intervene mainly at this level in order to improve life *by eliminating* accidents, the random element

Power has no control over death, but it can control mortality. And to that extent it is only natural that death should now *be privatized* ...

G.B.: Now that power is decreasingly the right to take life, and increasingly the right to intervene to promote life, and to intervene on the way of living, on the "how" of life, so once power begins to intervene above all at this level in order to improve life, to control its accidents, its random aspects ... What power has a hold on is not death, it is mortality. And to that extent, it is only natural that death now falls into the private realm ...

F. 222: une technologie disciplinaire que se distingue d'une technologie *assurancielle* ou régularisatrice

E. 249: a disciplinary as distinct from a *reassuring* or regulatory technology
G.B.: a disciplinary as distinct from an insurance-type or regulatory technology

F.222: où les corps sont *replacés dans* les processus biologiques d'ensemble

E.249: in which bodies are *replaced by* general biological processes

G.D.: in which bodies are situated within overall biological processes

F. 222: vous avez ensuite ... une seconde accommodation, *sur les phénomènes globaux*, sur les phénomènes de population ...

E. 250: And then ... you have a second adjustment; the mechanisms are adjusted to phenomena of population ...

G.B.: you have then ... a second adaptation, to overall phenomena, to phenomena of population ...

F. 223, footnote*: "*assuranciers*"

E. 250, footnote*: "*assuring*" [see above F222/E249 *assuranciel/reassuring*]

G.B.: insurance-type

F. 230: *Si la criminalité a été pensée en termes de racisme, c'est également à partir du moment où il fallait rendre possible, dans un mécanisme de bio-pouvoir, la mise à mort d'un criminel ou sa mise à l'écart. Même chose pour la folie, même chose pour les anomalies diverses.*

E. 258: *Once the mechanism of biocriminal was called upon to make it possible to execute or banish criminals, criminality was conceptualized in racist terms. The same applies to madness, and the same applies to various anomalies.*

G.B.: If criminality was thought about in terms of racism, this too was at the point when a mechanism of bio-power had to make it possible for the criminal to be put to death or out of the way. The same applies to madness, and the same applies to the various abnormalities.

F. 233: [le socialisme, donc,] ne peut pas manquer de *réaffecter*, de réinvestir ces mêmes mécanismes de pouvoir ...

E. 261: [socialism therefore] inevitably *reaffected or* reinvested the very power-mechanisms ..

G.B.: [socialism, therefore] cannot fail to reallocate, to reinvest these same mechanisms of power ...

Graham Burchell, 2014

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