

## Appendix I

### Glossary of Technical Terms

Nota bene

The following definitions aim less at establishing a systematic lexicon for Ranciere's work than at providing pragmatic indications to help orient the reader in a unique conceptual and terminological framework. For this reason, each definition is accompanied by references to key passages in Ranciere's corpus in order to encourage the reader to resituate these technical terms in the precise theoretical networks that endow them with specific meanings.

Since the majority of the terms defined are specific to Ranciere's most recent publications, most of the references are to the body of work he has produced since approximately 1990. However, some references are made to important conceptual developments in Ranciere's work that do not use the exact same technical vocabulary. A marked privilege was given to texts available in English, although references to certain key publications in French were indispensable. Complete bibliographical information will be found in Appendix 2. - Trans.

#### Abbreviations

AT	'The archaeomodern turn'
BP	<i>Aux Bords du politique</i> (1998 edition)
CM	<i>La Chair des mots</i>
CO	'The cause of the other'
D	<i>Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy</i>
DA	'Is there a Deleuzian aesthetics?'
DI	<i>Le Destin des images</i>
DME	'Democracy means equality'
DW	'Dissenting words'
FC	<i>La Fable cinématographique</i>

HAS	'History and the art system'
IE	<i>L'Inconscient esthétique</i>
IS	<i>The Ignorant Schoolmaster</i>
LA	<i>La Lefon d:Althusser</i>
LPA	'Literature, politics, aesthetics'
M	<i>Mallarme: La Politique de la sirene</i>
ML	'Le malentendu littéraire'
NH	<i>The Names of History</i>
PA	<i>The Politics of aesthetics</i>
PaA	'Politics and aesthetics'
PhP	<i>The Philosopher and His Poor</i>
PIS	'Politics, identification, and subjectivization'
PM	<i>La Parole muette</i>
S	'Le 11 septembre et apres'
SP	<i>On the Shores of Politics</i>
TTP	'Ten theses on politics'
WA	'What aesthetics can mean'

#### Aesthetic Regime of Art (*Le Regime esthétique de l'art*)

Although traces of this regime are already to be found in such authors as Vico and Cervantes, it has only come to play a dominant role in the last two centuries. The aesthetic regime abolishes the hierarchical distribution of the sensible characteristic of the representative regime of art, including the privilege of speech over visibility as well as the hierarchy of the arts, their subject matter, and their genres. By promoting the equality of represented subjects, the indifference of style with regard to content, and the immanence of meaning in things themselves, the aesthetic regime destroys the system of genres and isolates 'art' in the singular, which it identifies with the paradoxical unity of opposites: *logos* and *pathos*. However, the singularity of art enters into an interminable contradiction due to the fact that the aesthetic regime also calls into question the very distinction between art and other activities. Strictly speaking, the egalitarian regime of the sensible can only isolate art's specificity at the expense of losing it.

DI 21,88, 120-1, 125-53; FC 14-18; HAS; IE 25-32; LPA; PA 22-9, 43-4; PM 17-30,43-52,86-9; WA.

*Aesthetic Revolution (La Revolution esthhique)*

By calling into question the representative regime of art in the name of the aesthetic regime around the beginning of the nineteenth century, this 'silent revolution' transformed an organized set of relationships between the visible and the invisible, the perceptible and the imperceptible, knowledge and action, activity and passivity. The aesthetic revolution in the sensible order did not, however, lead to the death of the representative regime. On the contrary, it introduced an irresolvable contradiction between diverse elements of the representative and aesthetic regimes of art.

DI 84-5, 118-22, 135; HAS; IE 25-33; LPA; PA 26-8, 36-7; PaA 205-6; PM 5-30.

*Aesthetic Unconscious (L'nconscient esthhique)*

Coextensive with the aesthetic regime of art, the aesthetic unconscious is paradoxically polarized between the two extremes that characterize silent speech. On the one hand, meaning is inscribed like hieroglyphics on the body of things and waits to be deciphered. On the other hand, an unfathomable silence that no voice can adequately render acts as an insurmountable obstacle to signification and meaning. This contradictory conjunction between speech and silence, *logos* and pathos, is not equivalent to the Freudian unconscious or other later interpretations. It is, in fact, the historical terrain upon which competing conceptions of the unconscious have emerged.

IE 41-2, 70-1, 76-7; LPA 20.

*Aesthetics (L'Esthetique)*

In its restricted sense, aesthetics refers neither to art theory in general nor to the discipline that takes art as its object of study. Aesthetics is properly speaking a specific regime for identifying and thinking the arts that Ranciere names the aesthetic regime of art. In its broad sense, however, aesthetics refers to the distribution of the sensible that determines a mode of articulation between forms of action, production, perception, and thought. This general definition extends aesthetics beyond the strict realm of art to include the conceptual coordinates and modes of visibility operative in the political domain.

D 57-9; DA; IE 12-14; LPA 9-12; M 53; PA 10, 13; WA.

*Archi-Politics (L'Archi-politique)*

The prototype of archi-politics, one of the three major types of political philosophy, is to be found in Plato's attempt to establish a community based on the integral manifestation of its *logos* in material form. The activities of individual citizens are regulated in relation to their role in the organization of the communal body in such a way that everyone has a designated place and an assigned role. The democratic configuration of politics is thereby replaced by the police order of a living *nomos* that saturates the entire community and precludes any breaks in the social edifice.

D 61-93; DW; PhP; TTP.

*Community of Equals (La Communaute des egaux)*

A community of equals is not a goal to be attained but rather a presupposition that is in constant need of verification, a presupposition that can never in fact lead to the establishment of an egalitarian social formation since the logic of inequality is inherent in the social bond. A community of equals is therefore a precarious community that implements equality in intermittent acts of emancipation.

HAS; IS 71-3; SP 63-92.

*Consensus (Le Consensus)*

Prior to being a platform for rational debate, consensus is a specific regime of the sensible, a particular way of positing rights as a community's *arche*. More specifically, consensus is the presupposition according to which every part of a population, along with all of its specific problems, can be incorporated into a political order and taken into account. By abolishing dissensus and placing a ban on political subjectivization, consensus reduces politics to the police.

BP 137-8; D 95-140; DW 117-26; 5; TTP.

*Democracy (La Democratie)*

Neither a form of government nor a style of social life, democracy is properly speaking an act of political subjectivization that disturbs the police order by polemically calling into question the aesthetic coordinates of perception, thought, and action. Democracy is thus falsely identified when it is associated with the consensual self-regulation of

the multitude or with the reign of a sovereign collectivity based on subordinating the particular to the universal. It is, in fact, less a state of being than an act of contention that implements various forms of dissensus. It can be said to exist only when those who have no title to power, the *dimos*, intervene as the dividing force that disrupts the *ochlos*. If a community can be referred to as democratic, it is only insofar as it is a 'community of sharing' (*communaute du partage*) in which membership in a common world - not to be confused with a communitarian social formation - is expressed in adversarial terms and coalition only occurs in conflict.

BP 7-15; CM 126-7; 061-5, 95-121; OME; OW 123-6; LPA; ML; NH 88-103; PA 14-15, 53-8; PM 81-9; SP20-3,31-6,39-107; TTP.

#### Demos (*Le Dimos*)

Ranciere uses this Greek term - meaning 'the commons', 'plebeians', or 'citizens' - interchangeably with 'the people' to refer to those who have no share in the communal distribution of the sensible. The *demos* is thus simultaneously the name of a community and the title signifying the division of a community due to a wrong. It is the unique power of assembling and dividing that exceeds all of the arrangements made by legislators; it is the force of communal division that contravenes the *ochlos*' obsession with unification.

CM 126-7; O 61-2; OME 31-2; OW 123-6; PIS; SP 31-6; TTP.

#### Disagreement (*La Mesentente*)

Prior to linguistic or cultural misunderstanding, Ranciere isolates a fundamental discord that results from conflicts over the distribution of the sensible. Whereas *la meconnaissance* (lack of comprehension) and *le malentendu* (misunderstanding) produce obstacles to litigation that are - at least in theory - surmountable, *la mesentente* is a conflict over what is meant by 'to speak' and 'to understand' as well as over the horizons of perception that distinguish the audible from the inaudible, the comprehensible from the incomprehensible, the visible from the invisible. A case of disagreement arises when the perennial persistence of a wrong enters into conflict with the established police order and resists the forms of juridical litigation that are imposed on it.

O vii-xiii, 43-60; OME 35; OW 113-16; ML.

#### Dispute (*Le Litige*)

A *political* dispute concerns the very existence of politics as distinct from the police. Unlike *juridical* disputes, which take place within the police order, *le litige politique* brings politics proper into existence by introducing a veritable dissensus that splits in two the shared world of the community.

BP 128-47; TTP.

#### Dissensus (*Le Dissensus*)

A dissensus is not a quarrel over personal interests or opinions. It is a political process that resists juridical litigation and creates a fissure in the sensible order by confronting the established framework of perception, thought, and action with the 'inadmissible', i.e. a political subject.

BP 128-47; DW 123-6; TTP.

#### Distribution of the Sensible (*Le Partage du sensible*)

Occasionally translated as the 'partition of the sensible', *le partage du sensible* refers to the implicit law governing the sensible order that parcels out places and forms of participation in a common world by first establishing the modes of perception within which these are inscribed. The distribution of the sensible thus produces a system of self-evident facts of perception based on the set horizons and modalities of what is visible and audible as well as what can be said, thought, made, or done. Strictly speaking, 'distribution' therefore refers both to forms of inclusion and to forms of exclusion. The 'sensible', of course, does not refer to what shows good sense or judgement but to what is *aistheton* or capable of being apprehended by the senses.

In the realm of aesthetics, Ranciere has analysed three different *partages du sensible*: the ethical regime of images, the representative regime of art, and the aesthetic regime of art. In the political domain, he has studied the relationship between the police, a totalizing account of the population, and politics, the disturbance of the police distribution of the sensible by the subjectivization of those who have no part in it.

O 57-60, 124-5; HAS; PA 12-13, 42-5; TTP; WA.

Emancipation (*L'Emancipation*)

Neither the teleological end of a political project nor a state of social liberation, the process of emancipation consists in the polemical verification of equality. Since this verification is necessarily intermittent and precarious, the logic of emancipation is in fact a heterology, i.e. the introduction of a 'proper-improper' that challenges the police order. AT; D 82-3; IS 101-39; PIS; SP 45-52.

Equality (*L'Egalite'*)

Although it is the only universal axiom of politics, equality nonetheless remains undetermined in its content and lacks an *a priori* foundation. It is, strictly speaking, the presupposition discernible in the polemical reconfigurations of the police distribution of the sensible. In other words, Ranciere's conception of equality must not be confused with the arithmetical distribution of rights and representation. The essence of equality is not to be found in an equitable unification of interests but in the acts of subjectivization that undo the supposedly natural order of the sensible. By treating a wrong, political subjects transform the aesthetic coordinates of the community in order to implement the only universal in politics: we are all equal.

BP 141-2; eM 194-5; D 31-5; DME; DW; IS 45-73; LPA; PA 51-8; PIS; SP 31-6, 80-91; TTP.

Ethical Regime of Images (*Le Regime ethique des images*)

Although the ethical regime predates the representative and aesthetic regimes of art, it has by no means disappeared in modern times. Its paradigmatic formulation was provided by Plato, who established a rigorous distribution of images - not to be confused with 'art' - in relationship to the ethos of the community. By arranging images according to their origin (the model copied) and their end or purpose (the uses they are put to and the effects they produce), the ethical regime separates artistic simulacra from the true arts, i.e. imitations modelled on the 'truth' whose final aim is to educate the citizenry in accordance with the distribution of occupations in the community.

DI 127-8; PA 20-1,42-3; PhP; PM 81-5.

Literarity (*La Litterarite'*)

Literarity is not a term used to qualify the eternal essence of literature or a purely subjective category that is arbitrarily applied to various works of art based on individual sensibilities. It is a unique logic of the sensible, which might be referred to as the democratic regime of the 'orphan letter', where writing freely circulates without a legitimating system and thereby undermines the sensible coordinates of the representative regime of art. Literarity is thus at one and the same time literature's condition of possibility and the paradoxical limit at which literature as such is no longer discernible from any other form of discourse.

CM 115-36; DW 115; LPA; NH 52; PA 39-40; PM 5-14, 81-9, 96.

Literature (*La Littfrature*)

As a specific form of artistic production distinct from *les belles-lettres*, literature emerged around the beginning of the nineteenth century and was coextensive with the aesthetic revolution that brought into existence the aesthetic regime of art. However, literature is much more than a simple mode of artistic production; it is a system of possibilities that abandons the framework of recognition and assessment as well as the codes and hierarchies of the representative regime of art. By positing the indifference of form with regard to Content and replacing the mimetic principle of fiction with the expressive power of language, literature rejects the poetics of *mimesis* at the expense of entering into its own interminable contradiction between two forms of writing: the 'orphan letter' of democratic literarity and the glorious incarnation of truth in the word made flesh.

BP 128-47; CM 14, 114-36, 179-203; LPA; M 103-8; NH 42-60, 99-103; PA 32-4, 36-40, 56-9; PM 5-14, 89, 141-54, 166-76.

Meta-Politics (*La Mha-politique*)

Meta-politics, one of the three principal forms of political philosophy, emerges out of Marx's critique of the distance separating the dubious pretences of rights and representation from the hard truth of social reality. It thereby oscillates between two extremes: the condemnation of the ideological illusions of para-politics and the appeal to a

communal incarnation of social truth that is strictly homologous with **archi-politics**.

BP 90-1; D 61-93; DW 117-20; LA; PhP.

### **Ochlos** (*L'Okhlos*)

Ranciere uses this Greek term meaning 'a throng of people' or 'the multitude' to refer to a community obsessed with its own unification, at the expense of excluding the *demos*.

SP 31-6.

### **Para-Politics** (*La Para-politique*)

One of the three kinds of **political philosophy**, para-politics is the result of Aristotle's attempt to square the circle by integrating the egalitarian anarchy of the **demos** into the constitutional order of the **police**. This mimetic transformation of the **demos** into one of the parties of political litigation, as natural as it may seem to modern theories of sovereignty and the para-political tradition of social contract theory, masks the fact that the **equality** of the *demos* can never be adequately accounted for within the **police order**.

D 61-93; DW; PhP.

### **Partition of the Sensible** (*Le Partage du sensible*)

see **Distribution of the Sensible**

### **People** (*Le Peuple*)

This term is not used as a social, economic, political, or ontological category referring to an identifiable group or a pre-constituted collectivity. The 'people' are the **political subjects of democracy** that supplement the **police** account of the population and displace the established categories of identification. They are the unaccounted for within the **police order**, the **political subjects** that disclose a **wrong** and demand a redistribution of the sensible order.

CM 126-7; D 22-3, 61-2; PIS; SP 31-6; TTP.

### **Poetics of Knowledge** (*La Poétique du savoir*)

The study of the literary procedures by which a particular form of knowledge establishes itself as a scientific discourse (as was the **cas**"

in the nineteenth century, with sociology, history, and political science).

DW 115-16; NH 8-9, 23, 98-9.

### **Police or Police Order** (*La Police or L'Ordre policier*)

As the general law that determines the distribution of parts and roles in a community as well as its forms of exclusion, the **police** is first and foremost an organization of 'bodies' based on a communal **distribution of the sensible**, i.e. a system of coordinates defining modes of being, doing, making, and communicating that establishes the borders between the visible and the invisible, the audible and the inaudible, the sayable and the unsayable. This term should not be confused with *fa bassepolice* or the low-level police force that the word commonly refers to in both French and English. *La bassepolice* is only one particular instantiation of an overall **distribution of the sensible** that purports to provide a totalizing account of the population by assigning everyone a title and a role within the social edifice. The essence of the police, therefore, is not repression but rather a certain **distribution of the sensible** that precludes the emergence of **politics**. This being the case, there are nonetheless better and worse forms of police, depending on the extent to which the established order remains open to breaches in its 'natural' logic.

BP 7-15; CO; D 21-42, 61-5; DW; ML 40-1; PIS; S 40-1; TTP.

### **The Political** (*Le Politique*)

Although Ranciere does not maintain a strict terminological distinction between **politics** (*la politique*) and the political (*le politique*), he often distinguishes the latter as the meeting ground between **politics** and the **police**. In this sense, the political is the terrain upon which the verification of **equality** confronts the established order of identification and classification.

BP 7-15; PIS.

### **Political Dispute** (*Le Litige politique*)

see **Dispute**

### **Political Philosophy** (*La Philosophie politique*)

Ranciere has outlined three forms of political philosophy that establish a proper mode of political activity and thereby dissolve, in various

ways, the conflict between politics and the police: archi-politics, para-politics, and meta-politics.  
D vii-xiii, 61-93; DW 117-20; TTP.

Political Subject (*Le Sujet politique*)

A political subject is neither a political lobby nor an individual who seeks adequate representation for his or her interests and ideas. It is an empty operator that produces cases of political dispute by challenging the established framework of identification and classification. Through the process of subjectivization, political subjects bring politics proper into existence and confront the police order with the heterology of emancipation. However, the manifestation of politics only occurs via specific acts of implementation, and political subjects forever remain precarious figures that hesitate at the borders of silence maintained by the police.  
D 35-42, 58-9, 126-7; DME 31-3; DW 115-16; NH 88-95 (democratic subject); PIS; TTP.

Politics (*La Politique*)

If politics has no proper place or predefined subjects for Ranciere, this does not mean that everything is political. In its strict sense, politics only exists in intermittent acts of implementation that lack any overall principle or law, and whose only common characteristic is an empty operator: dissensus. The essence of politics thus resides in acts of subjectivization that separate society from itself by challenging the 'natural order of bodies' in the name of equality and polemically reconfiguring the distribution of the sensible. Politics is an anarchical process of emancipation that opposes the logic of disagreement to the logic of the police.  
BP 7-15; D vii-xiii, 21-42, 61-5, 123; DME; DW; PaA; PIS; S 40-1; TTP.

Post-Democracy (*La Post-democratie*)

The paradoxical identification of democracy with a consensual practice that suppresses political subjectivization.  
D 95-140; SP 31-6.

Regimes of Art (*Les Regimes de l'art*)

In broad terms, a regime of art is a mode of articulation between three things: ways of doing and making, their corresponding forms of visibility, and ways of conceptualizing both the former and the latter. Ranciere has provided detailed accounts of the ethical regime of images, the representative regime of art, and the aesthetic regime of art. In his most recent work, he has introduced the term *regime d'imagtite* ('image regime' or 'imaging regime') to refer to the specific mode of articulation between the visible and the sayable within a given regime of art.  
DI 9-39; WA 16-17.

Representative Regime of Art (*Le Regime representatif de l'art*)

Also referred to as the 'poetic regime of art', the representative regime emerged out of Aristotle's critique of Plato and established a series of axioms that were eventually codified in the Classical Age. The representative regime liberated the arts from the moral, religious, and social criteria of the ethical regime of images and separated the fine arts, qua imitations, from other techniques and modes of production. By defining the essence of *poiesis* as the fictional imitation of actions and isolating a specific domain for fiction, the representative regime did not, however, establish a simple regime of resemblance. Rather than reproducing reality, works within the representative regime obey a series of axioms that define the arts' proper forms: the hierarchy of genres and subject matter, the principle of appropriateness that adapts forms of expression and action to the subjects represented and to the proper genre, the ideal of speech as act that privileges language over the visible imagery that supplements it.  
CM 180-1; DI 20-1, 56, 85-8, 120, 125-53; FC 14-18; HAS; IE 21-5, 49-50; LPA; PA 21-2, 35-6, 43; PM 17-30, 43-52; WA.

Sensible, The (*Le Sensible*)

see Distribution of the Sensible

Silent Speech (*La Parole muette*)

As one of the central features of the aesthetic regime of art, silent speech is the contradictory conjunction between two elements of

this regime. On the one hand, meaning is taken to be immanent in things themselves and, thus, everything - from a building's facade to a woman's face - takes on a voice of its own. On the other hand, however, the mute things of the world only begin to speak if someone deciphers their latent meaning and speaks for them (otherwise they remain completely silent). This contradiction has given birth to at least two major forms of silent speech: the latent meaning beneath the hieroglyphic surface of written signs and the brute presence or *punctum* that remains a deaf and silent obstacle to all forms of signification.

O1 21-2; IE 42; PM.

#### Subject

see Political Subject

#### Subjectivization (*La Subjectivation*)

Alternately translated as 'subjectification' or 'subjectivation', *la subjectivation* is the process by which a political subject extracts itself from the dominant categories of identification and classification. By treating a wrong and attempting to implement equality, political subjectivization creates a common locus of dispute over those who have no part in the established order. However, the very act of identifying these political subjects necessarily has recourse to misnomers, i.e. names that inadequately refer to the anonymous multitude that has no title in the police order. The logic of subjectivization is therefore based on the impossible identification of political subjects, that is to say subjects who remain unidentifiable in the given field of experience and necessitate 'inaudible' modes of enunciation such as: 'We are all German Jews!'

O 35-42, 58-9, 126-7; DME 31-3; OW 115-16; PIS; TTP.

#### Writing (*L'écriture*)

Writing is not simply a sequence of typographic signs whose printed form is distinct from oral communication. It is a specific distribution of the sensible that replaces the representative regime's ideal of living speech with a paradoxical form of expression that undermines the legitimate order of discourse. In one respect, writing is the silent speech of democratic literarity whose 'orphan letter' freely circulates

and speaks to anyone and everyone precisely because it has no living *logos* to direct it. At the same time, however, writing lends itself to the attempt to establish an 'embodied discourse' as the incarnation of the truth of a community. Writing is consequently caught in a continual conflict between democratic literarity and the desire to establish a true writing of the word made flesh.

eM 115-36; IE 33-42; NH 56-60; PA 52-60; PaA 203-5; PM 14, 71-2, 81-100.

#### Wrong (*Le Tort*)

A wrong is a specific form of equality that establishes the 'only universal' of politics as a polemical point of struggle by relating the manifestation of political subjects to the police order. Unlike juridical litigation, a wrong does not, therefore, occur between determined parties and cannot be resolved by juridical procedures. A wrong can only be treated by modes of political subjectivization that reconfigure the field of experience.

O3-6, 13, 21-42, 61-3, 78-80, 138-9; PIS.