

Inequality, Loneliness, and Political Appearance: Picturing Radical Democracy with Hannah Arendt and Jacques Rancière

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Abstract

Radical democrats highlight dramatic moments of political action, which disrupt everyday habits of perception that sustain unequal social relations. In doing so, however, we sometimes neglect how social conditions—such as precarious employment, social dislocation, and everyday exposure to violence—undermine political agency or might be contested in uneventful ways. Despite their differences, two thinkers who have significantly influenced radical democratic theory (Hannah Arendt and Jacques Rancière) have been similarly criticized for contributing to such a socially weightless picture of politics. However, attending to how they are each preoccupied by the social conditions of inequality and loneliness enables us to recognize two distinct aspects of democratic politics—emancipation and civility. Cultivating an interpretive flexibility to shift between these aspects of politics might enable radical democrats to more clearly picture how struggles for appearance are limited and shaped by the social conditions within which they are enacted.

Keywords

Balibar, emancipation, civility, agonistic democracy, superfluousness

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To picture radical democracy with Hannah Arendt and Jacques Rancière is to highlight dramatic moments of political life in which subjects appear otherwise than the social identities ascribed to them. Radical democrats are drawn to mobilizations, such as Black Lives Matter, Idle No More, the Indignados, the Occupy Movement, the Arab Spring, the Sans Papiers, and the Aboriginal Tent Embassy, because they demonstrate the possibility of social transformation. Such eventful mobilizations are politically significant insofar as they interrupt our habits of perception by disclosing and, potentially, reconfiguring our common sense of the world. This picture is limiting, however, if the social conditions that provide the background for political action recede too far from view. For we might then become captive to a picture of politics that either obscures the agency of marginalized groups or exaggerates the agency of those who are socially isolated. For experiences such as intergenerational trauma, sustained poverty, precarious employment and housing, being treated with disrespect, and living in an atmosphere of violence are an everyday reality for members of those marginalized social groups that radical democrats often valorise.

Radical democrats have, indeed, been criticized for offering a rarefied view of political action due to our concern to delimit the specificity of politics. Lois McNay, for instance, rejects the idea of constructing a model of democracy based on an imputed essence of the political.¹ She advocates, instead, that democratic politics should be pictured in relation to negative experiences of social suffering. Yet Arendt and Rancière do reflect on the social conditions in which democratic politics is enacted. Similar to Aristotle, Arendt and Rancière each trace the specificity of politics by contrasting the political appearance of the citizen to the social condition of an emblematic noncitizen—the dominated slave (Rancière) and superfluous stateless person (Arendt). Moreover, for both thinkers, the extraordinary forms of social suffering to which these noncitizens are exposed is indicative of more ordinary social conditions experienced by citizens within nominally democratic societies—inequality within what Rancière characterizes as post-democratic social orders and loneliness within what Arendt calls mass society.

By examining the work of Arendt and Rancière alongside each other, I defend the view that the political significance of struggles for appearance inheres in their world-disclosing potential. Arendt and Rancière enable us to envisage how democratic politics is not only a matter of struggling to appear within an already delimited social context but is also a matter of constituting public spaces in relation to which we appear to others. However, delimiting the specificity of politics need not lead to a socially weightless picture of radical democracy. On the contrary, reflecting on how agonism takes shape in relation to the negative social conditions of inequality and

loneliness enables us to distinguish between two important aspects of radical democratic politics.

With Rancière we can picture democratic politics as an emancipatory struggle through which social inequality is made visible and contested. This involves politicizing a social order by contesting what counts as a political issue, who counts as a political subject, and how the political community as a whole is represented. As a matter of emancipation, democratic politics is oriented to *overcoming inequality* through counter-hegemonic mobilization. With Arendt, on the other hand, we can picture democratic politics as a civilizing struggle to constitute and preserve a world in common. Such a politics is not simply a matter of avoiding conflict by leaving deep disagreement out of the public sphere, as a liberal conception of civility suggests. Rather, it involves the institution of public spaces within which struggles for appearance across social differences are possible. Such spaces of appearance are constituted through the exchange of opinion among plural citizens and preserved through collective self-limitation. As a matter of civility, democratic politics is oriented to *overcoming loneliness* by experimenting in solidaristic action.²

I begin by outlining how both Arendt and Rancière have been similarly criticized for encouraging a socially weightless form of political thinking. Due to radical democrats' insistence on the specificity of the political, McNay argues, we tend to treat the social world as contingent, devoid of any significance of its own and, therefore, able to be reshaped in limitless ways. Consequently, a disjuncture emerges between the apparently heroic forms of political agency that we valorize and the everyday experiences of oppression and isolation, which make the possibility of such action seem remote for most people.³ To respond to this criticism, I proceed in the second section to discuss how Arendt and Rancière each formulate their understanding of the specificity of the politics in relation to the situation of an emblematic noncitizen—the stateless person and the slave. In the third and fourth sections, I demonstrate how Arendt and Rancière offer more insightful accounts of the social conditions that animate their conceptions of democratic politics than are often appreciated.

Far from leading us on a misguided search for the political, I contend, picturing radical democracy with Arendt and Rancière enables insightful interpretations of how exemplary moments of praxis disclose the political possibility of emancipation and civility within existing social conditions. Importantly, we need not mistake either of these emergent pictures as *models* of radical democracy any more than we need take agonism to be the *essence* of politics. Rather, picturing radical democracy as emancipation and civility draws our attention to how struggles for appearance are constrained and

shaped by the social conditions that they seek to transform. As such, it enables what Bert van den Brink calls aspectival flexibility, allowing for a productive aspect change when interpreting the significance of political struggles for appearance.⁴ Cultivating such aspectival flexibility might enable radical democrats to thematize the political significance of events and actions that disrupt established habits of perception while remaining attentive to the social conditions in relation to which democratic politics takes shape.

Picturing Radical Democracy

Radical democrats picture politics as agonistic. Hannah Arendt and Jacques Rancière have both contributed significantly to this picture of politics, according to which political subjects are constituted through democratic struggle. As Rancière acknowledges, he shares Arendt's understanding of politics as "a matter of appearance . . . of constituting a common stage or acting out common scenes rather than governing common interests."⁵ Arendt and Rancière both distinguish politics from other aspects of human interaction and tend to characterize the social context in relation to which struggles for appearance are enacted as unpolitical or even antipolitical to the extent that social relations are typically unreflexive and unequal. For both, democratic politics does not only involve the interaction of political agents within an already established institutional setting. More fundamentally, it entails the constitution of public space that delimits how subjects appear to each other. If the political is disclosed obliquely through such struggles for appearance, what is always also at stake in democratic struggle is the significance of the conflict itself—who it is between, where it takes place, what it is about, and why it matters for our life in common. Picturing radical democracy with Arendt and Rancière as a struggle for appearance thus reveals how our common sense of the world is constituted, disclosed, and contested through such conflict.

However, McNay takes issue with what she characterizes as the social weightlessness of this picture of radical democracy, which neglects the disempowering effects of prolonged social inequality and isolation.⁶ An Arendtian picture of democratic politics as a struggle to transcend oppressive social identities is attractive since it characterizes collective empowerment not in terms of a shared identity but as a practice of freedom.⁷ However, Arendt's depiction of agonistic politics, as enacted within a space of appearances that is autonomous from social concerns, makes it difficult to recognize much of what politics is about as political, including the conditions that frustrate political participation and that might become the object of politicization. Hence, it tends to obscure how dominated groups of people act politically in

ways that may either reproduce or transform social inequalities.⁸ While this criticism of Arendt's picture of politics is familiar, radical democrats have sometimes turned to Rancière to correct it. Rancière arguably radicalizes and gives purpose to agonism by showing that democratic politics does not consist primarily in a struggle for distinction among those who already participate in public life as equals but entails a struggle over who is qualified to participate as an equal in the first place.⁹ Instead of picturing radical democracy as a *space* for politics, we might thus picture it as a *process* through which social conditions are politicized. As such, it politics is agonistic insofar as it involves contesting who is entitled to participate and how, what issues are taken to be political, and where and when democratic politics can be practiced.¹⁰ Rather than a struggle *for distinction*, radical democracy then appears as a struggle *against domination*—a process of transforming those social conditions that sustain and reproduce inequality.¹¹

Yet Rancière has been similarly criticized for failing to attend to how democratic politics is shaped by the social conditions in which it is enacted.¹² While Rancière's depiction of democratic politics enables us to recognize how social conditions can become the object of political struggle, McNay thinks that he moves too quickly from the assumption of the equal intelligence of everyone to an assumption of their equal capacity to act and speak.¹³ Without a theory of power and, therefore, of the relation between oppression and oppositional agency, she contends, Rancière is unable to take the full measure of the social conditions that may facilitate or frustrate the kind of emancipatory politics that he valorizes. While McNay neglects how Rancière depicts social orders and emancipatory action as embodied,¹⁴ her criticism nonetheless highlights a tendency among some radical democrats who are inspired by Rancière. If the potential blind spot of an Arendtian picture of radical democracy is that it obscures the political agency of the oppressed,¹⁵ then the potential blind spot of a Rancièrian picture is that it exaggerates the political agency of the isolated.¹⁶

Rather than turn to Rancière to *replace* an Arendtian picture of radical democracy (as Jean-Philippe Deranty and Emmanuel Renault advocate) or to *amend and extend* it (as James Ingram proposes), we might instead consider how each thinker offers a distinct picture of radical democracy as agonistic. While neither picture can be considered complete, each affords an important perspective on the political significance of struggles for appearance in relation to the social conditions in which they are enacted. Borrowing a distinction from Etienne Balibar, these pictures can be characterized in terms of civility and emancipation.¹⁷ The distinctiveness of these pictures becomes clear when situated in relation to the social conditions that preoccupy each political thinker.¹⁸ Attending to Rancière's polemical engagement with

Arendt's notion of the "right to have rights" enables us to recognize how each takes a different social condition as the starting point for political reflection—domination and superfluity. The point of reconstructing and comparing their pictures of politics in this way is not only to demonstrate that Arendt and Rancière offer more insightful accounts of the social conditions that animate their conceptions of democratic politics than is often appreciated. More importantly, it is to cultivate an aspectual flexibility, which would enable radical democrats to better picture how agonistic politics is constrained, shaped, and animated by the social conditions within which it is enacted.

Inside/Outside Democratic Politics

Reflecting on the interwar refugee crisis in Europe, Hannah Arendt observes bitterly that the plight of stateless people is "not that they are oppressed but that nobody even wants to oppress them."¹⁹ Arendt characterizes the plight of stateless people as symptomatic of a novel social condition of superfluity, which she characterizes by distinguishing modern statelessness from ancient slavery. According to Arendt, slaves occupied a marginal place within the ancient societies that dominated them since citizens depended on slave labor to satisfy their economic needs. In contrast, stateless people are superfluous to modern societies since they lack even that liminal social status afforded to slaves. Arendt recognizes that the situation of the stateless person is similar to that of the slave insofar as both suffer from *obscurity*.²⁰ Without the political equality that citizenship establishes, both categories of people are deprived of the potential to distinguish themselves through public action, becoming invisible as persons.²¹ Yet to be made superfluous is also to suffer from public *exposure*—to become conspicuous *en masse* as part of an excess population that is rendered vulnerable to arbitrary state violence.²²

Writing more than fifty years later, Jacques Rancière dismisses Arendt's characterization of the plight of stateless people and rejects the idea that anyone is ever "beyond oppression."²³ Contrary to Arendt's claim that the plight of stateless people is symptomatic of a novel pathology of modern politics, Rancière asserts that domination is not only phenomenologically adequate but a normatively preferable concept with which to characterize their situation. In his view, the notion of superfluity obscures how members of socially disadvantaged groups might act politically. Since domination always involves treating someone according to their subordinate place within a social order, he insists, no one is ever outside politics. If laws made to repress stateless people rationalize their domination, then those laws also provide an opportunity for stateless people to contest their exclusion from citizenship. Consequently, he insists, no one is ever in a situation of

complete rightlessness. Indeed, even “the clandestine immigrants in the zones of transit of our countries or the populations in the camps of refugees” can potentially enact their equality.²⁴

With these brief polemical remarks, Rancière indicates how he and Arendt formulate their notions of politics in relation to two conceptually distinct but empirically overlapping social conditions. Arendt is preoccupied with superfluity as a limit condition within which politics is no longer possible at all. As characterized by Arendt, the plight of stateless people resembles a politically produced state of nature—a situation of worldlessness within which people are deprived of the possibility for meaningful action and exposed to arbitrary violence.²⁵ For Arendt, statelessness is symptomatic of widespread loneliness within modern mass society; it is the “experience of being abandoned by everything and everybody” due to bureaucratic and capitalistic processes that uproot and displace people, producing widespread unemployment and homelessness.²⁶ In contrast, Rancière is preoccupied with domination as the social condition in relation to which politics is always enacted. He takes Aristotle’s justification of slavery to exemplify the structural inequality that is inherent to any social order, dividing society between those deemed fit to rule and those fit only to obey. Since every social order presupposes a relation between dominators and dominated, he insists, its legitimation can become the object of political struggle.

Like the analogy she draws between stateless persons and indigenous peoples encountered by European colonizers, Arendt’s distinction between the plight of the stateless person and that of the slave is jarring.²⁷ Just as she interprets the appearance of indigenous people from the perspective of the colonizers (as “‘natural’ human beings who lacked the specifically human character”),²⁸ so she depicts the slave from the perspective of the slave-holder (“to be a slave was after all to have a distinctive character, a place in the world”).²⁹ When considered from the perspective of those who have suffered slavery, one can only wonder how having a *subordinate place* in a slaveholding society could be considered any better than having *no place* in society at all.³⁰ Arendt’s claim about the novelty of superfluity relies on distinguishing statelessness from how slavery was understood in classical political thought rather than the actual conditions of modern slavery in the Americas.³¹ Consequently, she elides how the anti-Black racism that modern slavery presupposed was itself associated with the production of superfluous people.³² Moreover, to the extent that Arendt does remark on modern slavery in her later work, she disavows slave agency by treating slavery primarily as a social rather than a political institution.³³

While Arendt takes the stateless person to be emblematic of the condition of superfluity in modernity, however, it is important to recognize that

her discussion of statelessness comes at the end of her analysis of imperialism in which she traces how colonial violence rebounds on the populations of European nation-states.³⁴ In this context, modern slavery should be understood as part of the same processes that created a “new kind of human being” who, she says, could be “put into concentration camps by their foes and internment camps by their friends.”³⁵ Since Arendt remarks on the difference between superfluity and oppression in passing comments, I also draw on Giorgio Agamben, Balibar, Orlando Patterson, and Rancière to differentiate three interrelated dimensions of domination and superfluity.³⁶ Importantly, while domination and superfluity are analytically distinct, in practice these social conditions intersect and are racialized, as exemplified in modern slavery.³⁷ Indeed, given the pervasiveness and convergence of both social conditions in modernity, a blind spot emerges in the picture of politics each thinker affords insofar as they dismiss or downplay the significance of the negative social condition to which the other draws our attention.

First, while domination entails subjection to structural violence, superfluity entails exposure to extreme violence.³⁸ The difference between these forms of violence is not a matter of degree but of kind; whereas structural violence is instrumental, extreme violence has no utility. Systemically implemented and rationalized through the concept of property, structural violence is intended to produce the slave as a slave and to reproduce relations of domination between the slave-holding society and the enslaved population.³⁹ For instance, Rancière’s discussion of the Sythians’ practice of blinding those they enslaved in order to confine them to their tasks as slaves serves as a stark example of how social orders inscribe domination on the bodies of the dominated.⁴⁰ In contrast, extreme violence inverts the utility principle since it treats human beings not as “useful commodities” but rather transforms them into “disposable waste.”⁴¹ Indeed, according to Arendt, the specific evil of totalitarianism consisted not in treating some people “as a means to an end, which leaves their essence as human untouched and impinges only on their dignity,” but in “making them superfluous as human beings.”⁴² It is important to also recognize, however, that the totalitarian terror that was exemplified in the Nazi camps was preceded by the extreme violence of colonization and slave systems in the modern world, which subjected people to abuse, torture, and killing that was irreducible to the instrumental purpose of sustaining domination.⁴³

Second, while domination involves liminal incorporation within a social order, superfluity entails a relation of abandonment. While liminal incorporation invests domination with social meaning, abandonment divests the existence of the superfluous person of social significance.⁴⁴ Rancière

recognizes this liminal incorporation of the dominated when he observes, “it’s not enough for inequality to be respected; it wants to be believed and loved.”⁴⁵ In other words, every social institution demands that the dominated accept their subordinate place within society and recognize their dominators as superior. In contrast to the liminal incorporation of the dominated into the social order, however, the superfluous person is “forced outside the pale of the law” through their abandonment.⁴⁶ This does not mean that they have no status at all within the sociolegal order from which they are excluded.⁴⁷ Rather than being ascribed a *subordinate* status they are attributed an *exceptional* status so that they are exposed to extreme violence by virtue of being made into an “unrecognized anomaly” within the law.⁴⁸ As Arendt discusses, stateless persons found themselves at the mercy of the police, to which states delegated the problem of what to do with excess human beings.⁵⁰ In this situation of abandonment, no *one* (i.e., no particular other) dominates the superfluous person, but they are vulnerable to arbitrary violence from *any* one by virtue of their inclusive exclusion from a legal order.⁴⁹

Third, while domination is predicated on dishonor (being forced to live a life in service to another), superfluity entails abjection (being treated as if one’s life is not worth living at all). It is not enough for the masters to simply dominate their slaves; they also seek to demonstrate their supposed superiority by dishonoring the slave.⁵¹ Slavery thus institutes a division between a supposed superiority of the dominators over the dominated—“an *explication* in social act, a dramatization of inequality.”⁵² This is highlighted by Rancière in discussing Herodotus’s apologia of how the Sythians took up whips in order to demonstrate their supposed difference in nature to their slaves; since their slaves value life itself higher than their honor as warriors, they deserve to be slaves.⁵³ On Arendt’s account, the institution of ancient slavery was an “attempt to exclude labor from the conditions of man’s life.”⁵⁴ Yet the existence of stateless persons, who find themselves in an exceptional situation in relation to the polity, is deemed superfluous even to the maintenance and reproduction of life.⁵⁵ As such, the production of superfluous people is symptomatic of the elevation of life itself to the highest good in modernity. When life itself becomes the dominant value in politics, Arendt warns, totalitarian solutions remain a temptation to the problem of what to do with human beings, whose lives are deemed not worth living at all.⁵⁶ If awareness of the abjection suffered by stateless persons came to public consciousness in Europe in the inter-war period, however, it was preceded by the terror of slavery in the colonies and on the plantation system, which, as Achille Mbembe highlights, entailed a triple loss of home, bodily rights, and political status.⁵⁷

Despite the troubling way in which Arendt characterizes the condition of superfluity by contrasting modern statelessness to ancient slavery, she nonetheless draws attention to a recognizable social condition, which the concept of domination does not fully capture. Even so, in Rancière's view, superfluity is an inadequate starting point for political reflection since it leads to the representation of political alterity in terms of an "unsymbolisable figure of the other," who can only appear in terms of the "nakedness of their intolerable difference."⁵⁸ He rejects the characterization of superfluity as a condition of being "outside" politics. For, in his view, what is always at stake in politics is how the relation between the inside and the outside of a social order is represented.⁵⁹ As Danielle Allen similarly points out, dominated groups are politically invisible not because they are *outside* politics but because their agency is obscured *within* politics.⁶⁰ To characterize the social condition in which stateless people find themselves as one of superfluity is therefore to omit from our picture of politics what Rancière calls the partition of the perceptible—the constitutive division of the social order that both separates and relates unequal social groups.⁶¹ Yet to dismiss completely Arendt's insight about the unprecedented threat of superfluity in modernity, as Rancière seems to, is to omit from our picture of politics the fragility of political community. If Rancière takes the domination of the slave in the ancient world to be emblematic of the *inequality* of postdemocracy while Arendt takes the superfluity of the stateless person to be symptomatic of the *loneliness* of mass society, we should keep both social conditions in view in order to cultivate an aspectual flexibility when picturing radical democracy. In the next section, I show how Rancière pictures radical democratic politics as emancipation, according to which the significance of political appearance emerges in the context of social inequality. In the final section, I demonstrate how Arendt pictures radical democracy as civility, in which the significance of political appearance emerges in the context of widespread loneliness.

Emancipation, Inequality, and Postdemocracy

For Rancière, democratic politics turns precisely on demonstrating how a partition of the perceptible organizes our common sense of the world. Rancière takes Aristotle's justification of slavery as exemplary of such a partition of the perceptible since it institutes a division between those who are competent to participate in politics and those who are not. The domination of the slave is natural, in Aristotle's view, due to her imputed liminal status (between animal and human) as a being able to participate in *logos* only to the extent that she can comprehend when it is exercised by others but who is incapable of exercising it for herself.⁶² Rancière concludes from his critical

engagement with Aristotle that speech is never simply speech but always also an “account made of this speech,” which presupposes a distinction between what counts as proper speech and what appears as *aneu logos* (uncountable or absurd).⁶³ As an articulation of the partition of the perceptible, the depiction of the slave as a being deprived of *logos* does not, then, simply reflect the prejudices of the dominant but “strictly expresses the sensory order that organizes their domination, which is the domination itself.”⁶⁴ Yet Aristotle’s apology for slavery also tacitly recognizes that the domination of slaves is contingent insofar it requires offering reasons for their unequal social condition. Indeed, in an apparent allusion to Hegel’s master-slave dialectic, Rancière remarks, “if the qadi makes his slaves obey him, the white man his blacks, it is because he is neither superior nor inferior to them in intelligence.”⁶⁵ Importantly, then, the distinction between *logos* and *alogia* conditions and possibly generates an emancipatory politics since it enables ideological reversal. For it is by virtue of the “dividing line” that separates the “private world of noise” from the “public world of *logos*” that the order of domination can be symbolized.⁶⁶

If slavery is emblematic of domination, however, Rancière does not look to the political struggles of enslaved people as exemplary subjects of emancipation. Indeed, the one example of politics in which Rancière does discuss slave resistance ends in failure. Since they rely solely on military confrontation, the Sythian slaves are unable to contest the partition of the perceptible that justifies their domination.⁶⁷ In taking up arms against their former masters, they demonstrate the courage that they are supposed to lack due to their slavish natures. Yet the Sythians are empowered by the structural violence of the social order and therefore able to force their former slaves back into their subordinate place by taking up their whips against them. As Ayten Gündoğdu observes, if we are not to attribute the surrender of the slaves to their political incapacity, then we should interpret the story as indicating how social conditions may “thwart attempts at political subjectivation.”⁶⁸

Rancière, however, is primarily concerned not with slave agency in the ancient world but with the possibility of an emancipatory politics within modern social orders, which he characterizes as postdemocratic. Such police orders do not base their legitimacy on an imputed inequality but a consensus between governors and governed. Rancière nevertheless takes Aristotle’s justification of ancient slavery to exemplify the partition of the perceptible that underpins *every* social order, including postdemocracies.⁶⁹ In contrast to the Sythian slaves who are kept in their place as slaves through structural violence, Rancière shows how it is the improper and negative freedom of citizens (as not enslaved) that enables them to become political subjects. The exemplary political subjects of ancient politics (*demos*) and modern politics

(proletariat) are thus always between identities, “between the condition of citizen and the condition of non-citizenship.”⁷⁰ Rancière therefore characterizes emancipation not as a simple progression from excluded noncitizen to included citizen but an ongoing contestation of an inevitable inequality between governors and governed that structures any citizenship regime.

For Rancière, democratic politics is neither a form of government nor a way of life but “the institution of politics itself” through a process of subjectivation.⁷¹ This involves both a disidentification from one’s role within a social order and a heterological identification with the name of the collective. As a process of emancipation, democratic politics always involves the “setting up of a part that has no part”—participating in politics (part-taking) in the name of a group that is not qualified to do so (has no part).⁷² This paradoxical characterization of the political subject is predicated on the insight that the dominated already have an invisible part within a social order that is sustained by their acquiescence in having no part in politics. The demand of the no-part to take part in politics, then, is not simply a demand to be included within the existing political order. Rather their part-taking both makes visible the partition of the perceptible and demonstrates the possibility of reconfiguring that order.

In ancient politics, the exemplary subject of democratic politics was the *demos*—“the indistinct mass of men of no position” who identify their name with that of the community itself.⁷³ The abolition of debt-slavery makes possible the appearance of the people on the political scene as the part that has no part, which interrupts the “natural order of domination.”⁷⁴ The appearance of the people, as both the part that has no part (the poor) and the whole (citizenry) opens up a public space of dispute. This takes the form of class struggle, which is not the simple opposition of already existing classes but a process of declassification.⁷⁵ Democratic politics is enacted when the poor (“these speaking bodies that are no more value than slaves”) participate in politics by virtue of their improper freedom (the simple fact of not being enslaved) according to which they make the outrageous claim to represent the people as a *whole*.⁷⁶

In contrast to classical democracy, which seeks its legitimacy in the polemical figure of the people, the modern state “evacuates politics” by appealing to a virtual consensus of the population for its legitimacy.⁷⁷ Such a postdemocratic police order may seem a long way from the ancient world in which slaves, the poor, and plebs were presumed to be incapable of rational speech.⁷⁸ Yet Rancière also invokes Aristotle’s justification of slavery, in this context, precisely to show how *even* a police order that aims at consensus is always predicated on a partition of the perceptible. This is apparent in the two different meanings of what it is to understand—to understand a problem and

to understand an order. Postdemocratic police orders rely on the first sense of understanding for their legitimacy, taking for granted that in democratic communication we implicitly recognize the equality of the other by presupposing their equal competence to understand a problem. Yet Rancière insists that this first sense of understanding inevitably also presupposes a division between those who are more or less competent to speak.⁷⁹ Rancière thus draws attention to how linguistic interaction inevitably presupposes a division of competence between speakers—between those who understand problems and those who need only to understand orders.

The exemplary subject of modern democratic politics is the worker or proletarian whose political identity Rancière contrasts to the common representation of the refugee in terms of the ethical figure of the “other” reduced to “bare life.”⁸⁰ While workers are already recognized as speaking beings within postdemocratic orders, the social order presupposes that there is no connection between their capacity to speak and the function that they perform as workers.⁸¹ To contest their inequality, therefore, workers must make visible the inegalitarian partition of the perceptible that a postdemocratic police order both presupposes and effaces. In this context, Rancière discusses how nineteenth-century Parisian workers engaged in an emancipatory politics by producing political manifestos. On the one hand, the workers demonstrate their inequality by making explicit the speaking position of the employers. They object to the employers’ characterization of their strike as a *revolt* since it “shows that their masters are not talking about those they employ as speaking beings . . . but as noisy animals or *slaves* capable only of understanding orders.”⁸² They affirm their right to strike by highlighting how the bosses deny this right through the tone of their letter. On the other hand, the manifestos demonstrate the communicative competence of the workers by stating “here are our arguments . . . anyone can recognize them.”⁸³ By producing the manifestos the workers presuppose that they have an equal competence to the bosses—that they are, in fact, not only capable of comprehending *logos* (*aesthesis*) but of exercising it for themselves (*hexis*). In speaking collectively they act inappropriately to the role assigned to them as workers. They politicize the workplace by making it a public place in which they seek to exchange reasons with the employers rather than comply with directives. They thereby turn the double specificity of the political dialogue back onto the employers by claiming that, precisely because they are capable of understanding an order, they are capable of understanding a problem. But the problem they identify is the unequal relationship between employer and employee, which they seek to politicize.

Rancière’s conception of democratic action thus enables him to thematize the process of politicization through which unequal social conditions become

the objects of political transformation. While the axiom of the equality of anyone with everyone is a formal and abstract presupposition, its political shape emerges through the abolition of substantive and concrete modes of domination that the social order reproduces.⁸⁴ The case of the Parisian tailors' strike indicates how, for Rancière, an emancipatory politics remains possible so long as there is a representable barrier between the governors and the governed. However, as McNay argues, by insisting that political action is predicated on the axiom of equality Rancière sometimes seems to take for granted the capacity of socially marginalized subjects to speak and act in their own interest. As such, he underestimates how objective inequalities can become embodied and naturalized as subjective dispositions, which make it difficult for those who are subject to social injustices to articulate these as politically significant.⁸⁵

To grasp how social conditions shape democratic politics we should attend to Rancière's notion of police.⁸⁶ By contrasting the failure of the Sythian slave revolt to the successful secession of the Roman plebs, for instance, Ayten Gündoğdu draws attention to how political subjectivation is "an uncertain process that is continuously shaped, constrained and at times frustrated" by social orders that reinforce inequality.⁸⁷ To develop this point, she further highlights the similarity between Rancière's analysis of the failure of the Sythian slave revolt and the 2005 *banlieue* revolt in France. In both cases, an attempt at disidentification is thwarted due a resort to military confrontation and their failure to construct a common scene through logical revolt. Yet, if the social condition that prevents the Sythian slaves from transforming their equality in war into political freedom is domination (structural violence, liminal incorporation, and dishonor), the social condition that the *banlieue* revolt draws attention to more closely resembles superfluity (extreme violence, abandonment, and abjection). Indeed, Gündoğdu highlights the high levels of unemployment, effective confinement, and exposure to arbitrary violence among the *banlieue* residents, "which effectively strip them of the rights and protections associated with citizenship."⁸⁸ As Emmanuel Renault recognizes, the concept of domination is inadequate to describe social conditions such as that experienced in the slum or *banlieue* in which, rather than being overexploited, "the population seems instead to be left to itself."⁸⁹ This suggests that Rancière's difficulty in acknowledging the political significance of the *banlieue* revolts follows from his refusal to recognize superfluity as a limit condition of democratic politics.⁹⁰ While his picture of politics highlights how an inegalitarian partition of the perceptible is a necessary condition for politics, it also obscures how democratic politics might be concerned with instituting spaces within which solidaristic action is possible at all. Picturing radical

democracy, with Arendt, in terms of civility provides a promising perspective from which to apprehend this blind spot.

Civility, Loneliness, and Mass Society

Rancière rightly highlights how Hannah Arendt's picture of democratic politics tends to obscure the agency of dominated groups in their struggles for appearance. Like many other radical democrats, he argues that Arendt evacuates from politics precisely what an emancipatory politics takes as its object—domination and its abolition. Indeed, to the extent that she reflects on emancipation at all, Arendt treats it essentially as a prepolitical concern. In order to enjoy the freedom of acting among one's equals, Arendt claims, one must first be liberated both from the necessities of life and from domination by others. While she understands the struggle for emancipation only as a means to overcome domination, she regards the freedom actualized through political participation as an end in itself.⁹¹ While she views fraternity (which "appears historically among persecuted peoples and enslaved groups") as important for sustaining humanity in dark times, it is no substitute for friendship (the properly political bond based on an exchange of opinion between equals).⁹² Arendt thus seems to devalue the "humanity of the insulted and injured" compared to that realized by those who share a "passion for distinction."⁹³

Yet Arendt is primarily preoccupied not by the challenge of emancipation but civility—that is, how the public realm can be constituted in order to arrest those social processes that lead to people being made superfluous. As Christian Rostbøll notes, superfluity itself can be understood as a situation of "extreme loneliness" in the sense that stateless people are entirely *unwelcome* within society.⁹⁴ Indeed, Arendt takes this extreme loneliness of the stateless person *outwith* the polity to be *symptomatic* of a more widespread loneliness *within* mass society.⁹⁵ Loneliness, Arendt says, is a more radical experience than isolation. Isolation comes about when people are excluded from the political realm and it leads to impotence insofar as they are deprived of the possibility of acting in concert. However, loneliness permeates private as well as public life and is experienced as having no place in world at all.⁹⁶ The loneliness of mass society is thus characterized by the threat of "becoming inhuman in a society where everybody seems to be superfluous and is so perceived by their fellow men."⁹⁷ Loneliness makes totalitarianism possible, since it leads to a loss of trust both in one's own self (and thus the capacity for thought) and confidence in the world (and thus the capacity for experience).⁹⁸

Consequently, Arendt is concerned with the problem of instituting and preserving a public sphere, which establishes relations between people to overcome loneliness.⁹⁹ To picture such a democratic politics she looks to the experience of revolutionary workers' councils as an unprecedented institution that "owed its existence to nothing but the organizational impulses of the people themselves."¹⁰⁰ The novel sense in which Arendt takes the councils to be democratic becomes clearer when we recognize them in terms of the institution of civility. Balibar associates civility with Arendt's notion of the "right to have rights," which he describes as a "critical transformation of the demand for emancipation." Civility entails the "collective affirmation that human existence has a 'public' dimension: the point where the institution is born."¹⁰¹ Civility thus refers to a politics that creates a space for politics by excluding extremes of violence that are an ever-present possibility of politics.¹⁰² On the one hand, politics risks imposing a single, unambiguous identity on individuals (conformity or "being absolutely one"). On the other hand, it risks social atomization in which individuals float freely between all roles (loneliness or "being *no one*"). The proper function of political institutions is therefore "to reduce . . . the multiplicity, complexity and conflictuality of identifications and sense of belonging."¹⁰³ While society is not possible without institutions, institutions are the product of the instituting power of action. Civility therefore becomes democratic when it is not imposed from above by strong government but produced from below through the institution of public space. We can therefore recognize how the councils exemplify a democratic politics of civility insofar as they are insurgent, solidaristic, and self-limiting.

Arendt valorizes the councils insofar as they institute an *insurgent* political space within which ordinary people could exchange opinions. Arendt construes these spaces as "oases in the desert" of modern society, which is otherwise characterized by isolation and conformism.¹⁰⁴ In contrast to the loneliness of mass society, the councils (like the polis), institute public spaces within which the extraordinary experience of freedom might become an everyday practice.¹⁰⁵ The councils were democratic since they were the "only tangible place" in which ordinary citizens could enjoy freedom by sharing in public power.¹⁰⁶ The purpose of democratic politics, as such, is to institute such spaces of appearance, which "do not always exist" but come into being "wherever men are together in the manner of speech and action."¹⁰⁷ In contrast to the weird irreality that pervades modern mass society, such spaces of appearance make possible the disclosure of the common world, the significance of events for our life in common. As Arendt observes, the significance of "being seen and heard by others" depends on "the fact that everybody sees and hears from a different perspective" and the "reality of the world is guaranteed by the presence of others."¹⁰⁸ Since she takes plurality to be the ontological condition for

politics, Arendt considers that the more perspectives that are brought to bear in the public sphere, the more intense our sense of sharing that world in common will become. Conversely, with the loss of each perspective, the dimmer will be our common sense of the world.

While downplaying and denying their proletarian nature, Arendt claims that the councils are composed of self-selected elites: “those who cared and those who took the initiative . . . were the political elite of the people brought into the open by the revolution.”¹⁰⁹ Since she associates an authentic democratic politics with the *bios politikos*, Rancière claims that Arendt treats politics as “a way of life proper to those who are destined to it.”¹¹⁰ Yet Arendt is no elitist in the sense that she wants to protect a privileged few against the incapable many. For she rejects the inevitability of the division of the polity between governors and governed, which Rancière accepts as inherent to any social order in a manner akin to Michels’s “iron law of oligarchy.”¹¹¹ Rather she emphasizes that political action should be undertaken with the proper attitude of care for the world. Indeed, the value of the councils, in her view, is that they help to break up mass society by providing prefigurative spaces for plurality and exchange of opinion among equals at the grassroots level.¹¹² As Jeffrey Isaac says, by participating in these spaces, “those who revolt against the conformity of modern society constitute themselves, through their action, as citizens of an elementary republic.”¹¹³ Moreover, by embodying democratic ideals, they demonstrate the potential of every member to participate in public life.

As *solidaristic* associations, the councils are a bulwark against the dangers of mass society, which Arendt associates with majority rule, anti-institutional bias, and hostility to a plurality of opinions.¹¹⁴ Fundamentally, the problem with mass society, based on the values of labor and consumption, is that it involves a way of being together that is antipolitical. It mistakes shared suffering for oneness, involving a form of unity based on an identity of needs rather than a plurality of opinions.¹¹⁵ The problem with this way of being together is not only that the reduction of plurality leads to a loss of common sense of the world. It is also that the form of togetherness is based on the sameness of lonely individuals, which opens the way for totalitarian practices. In contrast, the forms of solidarity that the councils exemplify are pluralistic. As James Muldoon intimates, we can better understand why Arendt denies the class-based character of the councils, replacing the “politics of class struggle with one of democratic republicanism” if we recognize her concern for civility.¹¹⁶ Indeed, he highlights how some of Arendt’s earliest reflections on the council system as an alternative form of government are developed when she advocates a federal council system in Palestine. She suggests that Arab and Jewish communities could co-operate in community

councils, “which would mean that the Jewish-Arab conflict would be resolved at the lowest and most promising level of proximity and neighbourliness.”¹¹⁷ Rather than a polarizing process that politicizes contingent social identities, democratic politics is pictured here as a plurality-disclosing engagement in the context of a divided society.

Arendt similarly discusses friendship (in contrast to fraternity) as a properly political form of solidarity when reflecting on humanity in dark times and the possibility of political solidarity between Jews and Germans. Here she insists that the essence of friendship consists in an incessant discourse about the world that lies between them. Solidarity emerges through this discourse: “we humanize what is going on in the world and in ourselves only by speaking of it, and in the course of speaking of it we learn to be human.”¹¹⁸ Through speech, the participant in council democracy shares her opinion (*doxa*), which is unique to the perspective that she brings to bear on the public realm but not reducible to her social situation. The meaningfulness of an opinion depends upon it being one’s own, an articulation of the way the world *dokei mei* (or “seems to me”).¹¹⁹ In contrast to the loneliness of mass society, the participant in the councils thus appears not according to the identity ascribed to her by society but distinguishes herself through action.¹²⁰ As solidaristic associations, then, the councils foster political agency by confirming the agents’ uniqueness, protecting them from internalizing a sense of their own superfluity. Indeed, the development of a sense of political efficacy in such civic associations is an essential condition for being able to participate in an emancipatory politics.¹²¹

Finally, an outstanding feature of the emergence of the councils within the Hungarian Revolution, Arendt says, was that they were *self-limiting*. Instead of the looting and violence associated with mob rule, the participants followed their own devices in the absence of government imposed from above.¹²² As Benjamin Popp-Madsen emphasizes, Arendt thus characterizes the councils as “organs of order as much as organs of action.”¹²³ Yet this ordering function of the councils is fundamentally different to that which she associates with the hierarchically organized party system.¹²⁴ For it is predicated on the principle of *isonomia* (the absence of rule) rather than a relation of rule by representatives on behalf of the represented.¹²⁵ Consequently, the principle of self-limitation is fundamentally different from that of self-mastery (or popular sovereignty).¹²⁶ For, according to Arendt, the principle of sovereignty seeks to escape politics altogether by “presuming that men can lawfully and politically live together only when some are entitled to command and the others forced to obey.”¹²⁷ In contrast, the councils exemplify the self-limiting power that Arendt associates with the faculties of promising and forgiving in her phenomenology of action.

Importantly, these are predicated on the recognition of the condition of non-sovereign freedom and an acknowledgment that the predicaments of unpredictability and irreversibility that politics gives rise to can only be limited by action itself.

Radical Democratic Politics and Aspectival Flexibility

Radical democrats invite us to picture politics as agonistic. In doing so they highlight how transformative political action requires the constitution of a space for politics within which political appearance is possible. Just as the identity of the agent is disclosed through a struggle for appearance, so the public space within which agents encounter each other must be instituted through political interaction. However, radical democrats risk either obscuring or overestimating the political agency of members of socially disadvantaged groups when they picture struggles for appearance in abstraction from the social conditions within which they are enacted. Political appearance is not achieved *ex nihilo* but rather emerges from struggles within and against social conditions that may facilitate or frustrate political action.

If sustained inequality frustrates action by depriving some people of material resources and demeaning their competence, Rancière shows how social inequality also conditions the possibility of an emancipatory politics insofar as a partition of the perceptible can become the object of politicization. In doing so, however, he risks exaggerating the political agency of those experiencing loneliness. In turning to Arendt's picture of democratic politics as a matter of civility, we can recognize how loneliness frustrates action by depriving people of a sense of possibility of collective action across social differences. However, loneliness might also condition democratic politics as individuals from diverse social backgrounds are drawn to institute political spaces in which they can interact as equals. Yet, as Rancière emphasizes, accentuating care for the world as the appropriate political attitude and friendship as the proper political bond also risks obscuring the political agency of those who experience social inequality.

The challenge for radical democrats, therefore, is to cultivate an aspectival flexibility, which enables us to apprehend both aspects of democratic politics in relation to the social conditions in which it is enacted. As Bert van den Brink discusses, good political theory invites a productive aspect change by inviting us to picture politics in a different light. However, it goes wrong when it suggests that we have depicted the essence of politics. For we then become captive to the picture (or "way of viewing") that a theory affords.¹²⁸ For precisely that reason, radical democrats should (and for the most part do)

forgo any pretense to offer a model of democracy based on an imputed essence of politics. We need pictures of politics in order to make sense of experience. However, to avoid being held captive to just one picture we need be able to *compare* the pictures on which our judgments are based in order to take an experimental and practical approach to making sense of the adequacy of our interpretations of political phenomena. Picturing radical democracy with Rancière and Arendt enables us to do precisely that.

Given the pervasiveness and intersection of inequality and loneliness in modern societies, we should picture radical democracy as emancipation *and* civility. When pictured with Rancière as a struggle for *emancipation*, democratic politics is premised on negating arbitrary forms of domination. Political struggle arises when subordinated groups demonstrate their right to participate in politics as equals and, in so doing, act in the name of the whole political community. When pictured as a struggle for *civility*, in contrast, democratic politics is concerned with constituting and preserving a space for politics. Since it is predicated on a recognition of the fragility of political community, civility aims to contain extreme violence and is concerned with instituting and cultivating forms of political identity predicated on plurality. While the former picture highlights how political appearance denaturalizes an inegalitarian social order, the latter picture highlights how political appearance discloses the fragility of the social bond.

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Notes

1. Lois McNay, *The Misguided Search for the Political* (Cambridge: Polity, 2014).
2. As discussed further below, I borrow this distinction between emancipation and civility from Etienne Balibar. See Etienne Balibar, “Three Concepts of Politics,” in *Politics and the Other Scene* (London: Verso, 2002).
3. McNay, *Misguided Search*, 11, 14–15.
4. Bert van den Brink, “Pictures of Politics: Deliberative and Other Aspects of Politics,” *ARSP: Archives of Philosophy of Law and Social Philosophy* 98, no. 3 (2012), 396–410 at 397.
5. Jacques Rancière, “Politics and Aesthetics an Interview,” *Angelaki* 8, no. 2 (August 2003): 191–211 at 201.
6. McNay, *Misguided Search*, 52.
7. Bonnie Honig, “Towards an Agonistic Feminism: Hannah Arendt and the Politics of Identity,” in *Feminists Theorize the Political*, eds. Judith Butler and Joan Scott (London: Routledge, 1992); Marieke Borren, “Feminism as Revolutionary Practice: From Justice and the Politics of Recognition to Freedom,” *Hypatia* 28, no. 1 (February 2013): 197–214.
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9. James Ingram, “The Subject of the Politics of Recognition: Hannah Arendt and Jacques Rancière,” in *Socialité et reconnaissance: Grammaires de l’humain*, Christophe Laudou, Robin Celikates, David Lauer & Georg W. Bertram eds., (Paris: Editions L’Harmattan, 2007), 229–45 at 239.
10. Jacques Rancière, *Hatred of Democracy*, trans. Steve Corcoran (London: Verso, 2009), 55–56.
11. Deranty and Renault, “Democratic Agon,” 44.
12. Paul Apostolidis, “The Lessons of Jornaleros: Emancipatory Education, Migrant Artists, and the Aims of Critical Theory,” *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 49, no. 4 (2016): 368–91.
13. McNay, *Misguided Search*, 163.
14. Laura Quintana, “Jacques Rancière and the Emancipation of Bodies,” *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 45, no. 2 (2019): 212–38.
15. Danielle Allen, “Invisible Citizens: Political Exclusion and Domination in Arendt and Ellison,” *Nomos* 46 (2005): 28–76.
16. Ayten Gündoğdu, “Disagreeing with Rancière: Speech, Violence and the Ambiguous Subjects of Politics,” *Polity* 49, no. 2 (March 2017): 188–219.
17. Balibar, “Three Concepts.” While Balibar explicitly characterizes Rancière as a theorist of emancipation, he only hints at how Arendt might fruitfully be interpreted as a theorist of civility.

18. For both, this requires situating their later, more philosophical work in which they engage more directly with classical political thought (especially *Disagreement* and *The Human Condition*) in relation to their earlier, more historical writings in which they are each preoccupied with different forms of social suffering (*The Nights of Labour* and *The Origins of Totalitarianism*). See Margaret Canovan, *Hannah Arendt: A Reinterpretation of Her Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Ayten Gündoğdu, *Rightlessness in an Age of Rights: Hannah Arendt and the Contemporary Struggle of Migrants* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Jason Frank, “Logical Revolts: Jacques Rancière and Political Subjectivization,” *Political Theory* 43, no. 2 (2015): 249–61; Darlene Demandante, *The Political Subject and Its Experiences: An Alternative Reading of Rancière on Political Subjectivity* (doctoral thesis, Macquarie University, Sydney, 2019).
19. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Schocken Books, 2004), 375.
20. Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990), 70–71.
21. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), n41, p.50.
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24. *Ibid.*, 305.
25. Arendt, *Origins*, 381.
26. *Ibid.*, 589, 612–13.
27. See Jimmy Casas Klausen, “Hannah Arendt’s Antiprimitivism,” *Political Theory* 38, no. 3 (2010): 394–423.
28. Arendt, *Origins*, 251.
29. *Ibid.*, 377.
30. Kathryn T. Gines, *Hannah Arendt and the Negro Question* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), 71.
31. Robert Bernasconi, “The Double Face of the Political and the Social: Hannah Arendt and America’s Racial Divisions,” *Research in Phenomenology* 26, no. 1 (Jan 1996), 3–24 at 4.
32. Achille Mbembe, “Necropolitics,” *Public Culture* 15, no. 1 (2003): 11–40 at 21.
33. Neil Roberts, *Freedom as Marronage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 36.
34. See Manu Samnotra, “‘Poor in World’: Hannah Arendt’s Critique of Imperialism,” *Contemporary Political Theory* 18, no. 4 (2019): 562–82. For an important analysis of the limits of Arendt’s conception of imperialism as “expansion” in contrast to settler colonialism as “transplantation,” see David Myer Temin, “‘Nothing Much Had Happened’: Settler Colonialism in Hannah Arendt,” *European Journal of Political Theory*, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474885119893077> (forthcoming).

35. Hannah Arendt, "We Refugees," in *The Jewish Writings*, ed. J. Kohn and R. Feldman (New York: Schocken Books, 2007), 265.
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39. Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 3, 32; cf. Arendt, *Human Condition*, 72, 81.
40. Rancière, *Disagreement*, 12, 30.
41. Balibar, *Violence and Civility*, 61, 135; Arendt, *Origins*, 573–74.
42. Hannah Arendt, *Hannah Arendt and Karl Jaspers, Correspondence 1932-1969*, ed. Lotte Kohler and Hans Sander (New York: Harcourt, 1992), 166. See Richard Berstein, "Reflections on Radical Evil: Arendt and Kant," *Soundings* 85, no. 1/2 (Spring/Summer 2002): 17–30 at 19.
43. Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 21.
44. Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 45; see also 38, 60–63.
45. Jacques Rancière, *The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 105.
46. Arendt, *Origins*, 363; cf. Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. D. Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 28.
47. Rostbøll, "Statelessness, Domination, and Unfreedom," 26–27.
48. Arendt, *Origins*, 363–64.
49. Rostbøll, "Statelessness, Domination, and Unfreedom," 22. See Arendt, *Origins*, 384n54, 251.
50. Arendt, *Origins*, 365–66.
51. Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 78.
52. Rancière, *Ignorant Schoolmaster*, 105.
53. Rancière, *Disagreement*, 12.
54. Arendt, *Human Condition*, 84.
55. Arendt, *Origins*, 380–81; Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 126–35; Gündoğdu, *Rightlessness*, 139–45.
56. Arendt, *Origins*, 592.
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60. Allen, "Invisible Citizens," 51, 55.

61. Rancière, *Disagreement*, 115–16.
62. *Ibid.*, 17.
63. *Ibid.*, 22–23, 43.
64. *Ibid.*, 24.
65. Rancière, *Ignorant Schoolmaster*, 88. See Jean-Philippe Deranty, “Jacques Rancière’s Contribution to the Ethics of Recognition,” *Political Theory* 31, no. 1 (Feb. 2003): 136–56 at 150–51.
66. Rancière, *Disagreement*, 115–16. See Davide Panagia, “The Improper Event: On Jacques Rancière’s Mannerism,” *Citizenship Studies* 13, no. 3 (2009): 297–308.
67. *Ibid.*, 13.
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69. Rancière, *Disagreement*, 43.
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71. *Ibid.*, 101.
72. *Ibid.*, 14.
73. *Ibid.*, 9.
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75. *Ibid.*, 58, 18.
76. *Ibid.*, 7–11, 123.
77. *Ibid.*, 100.
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79. Rancière, *Disagreement*, 45.
80. *Ibid.*, 118.
81. *Ibid.*, 51.
82. *Ibid.*, 54 (my emphasis).
83. *Ibid.*, 52.
84. Deranty and Renault, “Democratic Agon,” 52.
85. McNay, *Misguided Search*, 163, 29, 37.
86. Samuel Chambers, *The Lessons of Rancière* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).
87. Gündoğdu, “Disagreeing with Rancière,” 201.
88. *Ibid.*, 212.
89. Emmanuel Renault, *Social Suffering: Sociology, Psychology, Politics*, trans. Maude Dews (London & New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017), 85.
90. Balibar, “Three Concepts,” 24; cf. Balibar, *Violence and Civility*, 16, 57; James Ingram, “Democracy and Its Conditions: Étienne Balibar and the Contribution of Marxism to Radical Democracy,” in *Thinking Radical Democracy: The Return to Politics in Postwar France*, ed. Martin Breugh, Paul Mazzocchi, Rachel Magnusson, and Devin Penner (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 210–33 at 225.
91. Hannah Arendt, “What is Freedom?” in *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought* (Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1993), 148; see also Arendt, *On Revolution*, 29, 142.

92. Hannah Arendt, "On Humanity in Dark Times: Thoughts on Lessing," in *Men in Dark Times* (New York: Harcourt, 1968), 13, 16.
93. *Ibid.*, 16; Arendt, *On Revolution*, 69–70; see Gines, *Hannah Arendt and the Negro Question*, chap. 7; Jacques Rancière, "Ten Theses on Politics," in *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*, trans. S. Corcoran (London: Continuum, 2010), 28; Allen, "Invisible Citizens," 54.
94. Rostbøll, "Statelessness, Domination, and Unfreedom," 28.
95. Arendt, *Origins*, 353; Hannah Arendt, "On the Nature of Totalitarianism: An Essay in Understanding," in *Essays in Understanding 1930–1954: Formation, Exile and Totalitarianism*, ed. J. Kohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1994), 358. See Jennifer Gaffney, "Another Origin of Totalitarianism: Arendt on the Loneliness of Liberal Citizens," *Journal of the British Association for Phenomenology* 47, no. 1 (2016), 1–17; Sarah Drews Lucas, "Loneliness and Appearance: Toward a Concept of Ontological Agency," *European Journal of Philosophy*, 27, no. 3 (2019): 709–722.
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97. Arendt, "On the Nature of Totalitarianism," 358.
98. Arendt, *Origins*, 614.
99. Arendt, *Human Condition*, 236–37.
100. *Ibid.*, 216; Arendt, *On Revolution*, 257; Hannah Arendt, "Totalitarian Imperialism: Reflections on the Hungarian Revolution," *The Journal of Politics* 20, no. 1 (February 1958): 5–43 at 28.
101. Balibar, *Violence and Civility*, 145–47.
102. Balibar, "Three Concepts of Politics," 30.
103. *Ibid.*, 29.
104. Arendt, *On Revolution*, 275. See Jeffrey C. Isaac, "Oases in the Desert: Hannah Arendt on Democratic Politics," *American Political Science Review* 88, no. 1 (March 1994): 156–68 at 158.
105. Arendt, *Human Condition*, 197; see Andreas Kalyvas, *Democracy and the Politics of the Extraordinary: Max Weber, Carl Schmitt, and Hannah Arendt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 255.
106. Arendt, *On Revolution*, 255.
107. Arendt, *Human Condition*, 199.
108. *Ibid.*, 57, 199.
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