



laetus in praesens

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20th November 2011 | Draft

Social Reminders from Psychosocial Remaining

Review of current usage and implications

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Introduction

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Annex 1 of *Reintegration of a Remained World: Cognitive recycling of objects of systemic neglect*
(which contains [Conclusion](#) and additional [References](#))

Prepared as an aid to reflection on a world of "remained people"
currently of concern to the "Indignant" and to the [Occupy movement](#)

Introduction

The economic practice of remaining commodities, offers a frame through which to consider the extent of analogous social practices and processes in a society characterized by progressive [commodification](#). A form of "remaining" is evident in various forms of institutionalized "discounting" or marginalization, especially those of a progressive nature. It could be said to be most evident in slavery, as institutionalized in the past, and as currently practiced in the case of sale into bonded labour or the sex trade. The degree of loss of humanity of those so remained invites the provocative interpretation that they are then effectively human "remains" -- having been "essentially" killed by social processes.

In exploring the more general psychosocial implications of the economic template of "remainder" and "remaining", it is interesting to note that although use of "remainder" is indeed more widely evident, the practice -- as a verb -- is not (in marked contrast with the economic case). Thus although the existence of "social remains" is recognized, the process of "social remaining" -- which might be said to engender them -- is not (at least in that form). This is also the case with respect to widespread use of "remainder" in relation to subtler cognitive issues and the dynamic through which any such remainder is engendered.

[Note: To facilitate reading of the quoted texts below, terms relating to " remainder " are placed in bold]

Social remaining and the socially remained

Those people variously marginalized in society have been considered "social remains". This is evident in the argument of Liam McNamara (*The Rise of the Social: Human Waste and the Gated Community, Reconstruction*, 2002, 2, 3):

The gated community is a relatively recent development, and in order to fully understand the social logic that operates behind such spaces we need to follow the steps that have lead to the institution of such restrictive spaces. In these exclusionary spaces new subjectivities emerge as the social and spatial overlap; these are rigid environments that exclude **social remains** and the corollary of this is the emergence of "deviancy" as a social problem.... But as every form of **social remainder** is processed by the social, it is the non-consumer in this new city that is marginalized since it may function as a fresh site of resistance to the consumer society. In contemporary living spaces, it is no longer a question of excluding "Otherness" but rather what is at stake is a postmodern conception of identity that the "flawed consumer" disrupts...

Sophie Gee (*Making Waste: leftovers and the eighteenth-century imagination*, 2010) discusses the arguments of a pamphlet by [Bernard Mandeville](#) (*An Enquiry into the Frequent Causes of Execution in Tyburn*, 1725):

He suggests,, that there is a kind of living waste, a body of leftover or **remaindered people** needing to be "disposed of". He obviously expects that such a supposition will be more readily accepted than the idea that when a person, any person, makes the transition from life to death, their body becomes waste.... Mandeville's text on the Tyburn gallows reveals that the notion of a class of "waste people" is, paradoxically, a more acceptable position than the idea that the corpse is a form of secular waste matter. (p. 124)

McNamara cites the contention of [Jean Baudrillard](#) that the social is itself a remainder (*In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities or, the End of the Social and Other Essays*, 1983):

The social is an alibi, an empty term concealing a loss of reciprocity, but no matter how hard the fundamentalists of the social strive, working in charities, local authorities or quangos, the masses will ultimately resist this acculturation process. The social has a liminal existence, located somewhere between the lost symbolic societies and our own, where it struggles on in simulation. The result is that in simulation the social is more prevalent than ever- Baudrillard says "litter piling up from the symbolic order as it blows around, it is the **social as remainder** which has assumed real force and which is soon to be universal. Here is a more subtle form of death" (Baudrillard, 1983, 72). If the social cannot be impressed upon all and is a failing strategy, then the social can and must emerge through the production and management of social "waste." This "new sentimental order" is a paroxysmic phase, symptomatic of the general crisis of mediocrity in Western culture. As a result, "other people's misery and humanitarian catastrophes have become our last stamping ground for adventurers" (Baudrillard, 1998, 15). This ideology forms the soft core of current "inclusive" thinking, whereby the emphasis is shifted from sovereignty to identity through the processing of social groups that are perceived in some way to be outside society. Baudrillard says:

Proportional to the reinforcement of social reason, it is the whole community which soon becomes residual and hence, by one more spiral, the social which piles up. When the **remainders** reach the dimensions of the whole of society, one has a perfect socialization. Everybody is completely excluded and taken in charge, completely disintegrated and socialized (Baudrillard 1983, 74).

The widespread attribution of "loser" as a pejorative qualifier might usefully be recognized as a form of **remaindering**. The sense in which inequality is "constructed" might also be understood as a form of remaindering (Susan Bickford, *Constructing Inequality: city spaces and the architecture of citizenship*, *Political Theory*, 28, . 3, 2000, pp. 355-76).

Spectre of being educationally "remaindered": With respect to the challenge of "Living in a Different World", Michael Strain (*Schools in a Learning Society: new purposes and modalities of learning in late modern society*, *Educational Management Administration Leadership*, 2000; 28; 281) cites Richard Sennett regarding the spectre of uselessness:

... many working people are experiencing a heightened sense of personal failure, believing themselves to be useless, peripheral, or over the hill at an early age. Fear of sudden vulnerability infects even those making their way in the new economy, reinforcing the sense that work is no secure framework for the self. The imagined corollary of uselessness is a dispensable self; someone without value (Something in the City: the spectre of uselessness and the search for a place in the world, *Times Literary Supplement*, September 1995).

Cynically it could be argued that education may well be provided for jobs relating to products for which there is every expectation that they will be remaindered in a process of planned obsolescence -- enabling those employed in their production to be laid off as no longer "fit for purpose". The increasing dependency on rapidly evolving technology also implies rapid adaptation to enable their use (banking, transport, internet, etc). The very development of the technology, whilst effectively "remaindering" that which it replaces, also "remainders" those unable to educate themselves to its use.

More generally the explosion of knowledge in a knowledge-based society might be understood as "remaindering" those who do not develop strategies for responding to its opportunities. The challenge is notably experienced by those in relatively specialized fields -- but unable to remain up-to-date. However it also applies to the nature of the know-how required for both survival and "thrival" in increasingly turbulent social conditions, as discussed separately (*Higher Education ∞ Meta-education ? Transforming cognitive enabling processes increasingly unfit for purpose*, 2011). For others there is also the concern that their education has somehow "left them behind" and been incomplete -- perhaps in relation to the archetypal ideal of the "well-rounded person".

Downsizing and unemployment as "remaindering": Introducing a new study, [Richard Sennett](#) (*The Culture of the New Capitalism: the culture of the new capitalism*, 2006) again uses his widely-cited phrase, the "spectre of uselessness":

A defining photograph of the Great Depression in the 1930s shows men clustered outside the gates of a shuttered factory, waiting for work, despite the evidence before their eyes. The image still disturbs because the spectre of uselessness has not ended - but its context has changed. Large numbers of people in North America, Europe and Japan want the kinds of work they

can't get. (*Out with the Old*, *The Guardian*, 11 February 2006)

Meritocrats are increasingly haunted by the prospect that their *Bildung* -- the combination of motivation, education, skills and training -- will become useless for the economy. This leads to a pervasive fear of being left behind. This fear has been described by [Barbara Ehrenreich](#) (*Fear of Falling: the inner life of the middle class*, 1989).

"Remaindering" the ageing and the elderly: The manner in which the elderly are treated, marginalized and "relegated" suggests the appropriateness of recognizing a form of remaindering. Whilst seldom "sold off", the manner in which they may be "disposed of" to hospices merits framing as being "remaindered".

Framed in economic terms, the experience of the consequences of ageing can be usefully understood as increasing the risk of being "remaindered" -- as effectively cited by many of pre- and post-pensionable age. In a globalizing economy, the "spectre of uselessness" is again evident in older workers trying to secure or maintain footholds in a labour market in which jobs they could do have either migrated to other parts of the world or have been destroyed in the wake of industry failure (Philip Taylor, Brad Jorgensen and Erin Watson, *Population aging in a globalizing labour market: implications for older workers*. In: *Proceedings of the Productive Aging Conference*, 2009).

Sexual "remaindering" and the sexually "remaindered": Use of "remainder" as a means of framing sexual marginalization is potentially appropriate in relation to the problematic treatment of women in many cultures and traditions -- notably their treatment as second class citizens. It is even more appropriate in the sense in which female children may be "sold off" to husbands, as concubines, or into sexual slavery.

Also evident is the manner in which homosexuals are treated. as with those of ill-defined gender in the conventional sense. The matter is highlighted in administrative regulations institutionalizing the distinction between male and female and neglecting any consideration of the remaining set of complex [transgender](#) possibilities -- thereby effectively "remaindering" those concerned. This is ironically evident in both the options within administrative survey forms and the provision of toilet facilities.

Culturally remaindered and cultural remaindering

A sense of having been culturally "remaindered" follows from the remarks above regarding an uncompleted education. Many feel themselves to be marginalized, or poorly considered, through being "uncultured" and "uncultivated". The sense is exacerbated in those of cultures which are themselves marginal and disappearing. This is especially evident in the case of the many [endangered and disappearing languages](#), effectively "remaindered" through the emergence of dominant languages in global society.

A process of "remaindering" may also be sensed in the case of disappearing arts and crafts marginalized by the emergence of new products. All these may be understood as vehicles for cultural identity, then effectively set aside as historical curiosities -- if remembered at all. This may lead to the cultivation of nostalgia for "lost cultures" -- as with appreciation of Camelot, Atlantis, and the like -- of which traces are held to remain. Some individuals, notably elders, may be held poignantly to embody a cultural remainder. A poignant quality -- is also to be found in the lost significance of "holy days" converted into "holidays", as discussed below (J. M. Baker, *Vacant Holidays: the theological remainder in Leopardi, Baudelaire, and Benjamin*, *MLN*, 2006, pp. 1190-1219).

[Jacques Derrida](#) offers a powerful perspective on the embodiment of culture in literature in relation to remainder, as noted by Joseph G. Kronick (*Derrida and the Future of Literature*, 1999):

As Derrida has explained in a number of essays, literature, in its conventional sense, is a recent invention tied to law, copyright, and other legal and societal institutions. In another sense, literature is the reserve or **remainder** that cannot be taken up or totalized within its institution. This is why literature is said to be exemplary of what happens each time there is some trace. As trace, literature remarks a relation to an outside, an absolute past or **remainder**, which, like a secret, cannot be re-presented in a present but holds in a reserve promise, a future that is to come... (p. 10)

This is why Derrida likes literature, or rather something about it; "this would be *in place of the secret*." There, in place of the secret, is the non-place which allows us to think of the other. It is where "what remains is nothing -- but the **remainder**, not even of literature." The **remainder** is what shelters the other, that which is never presentable. Literature is such a reserve. (p. 22)

For Donald Preziosi (*Brain of the Earth's Body: art, museums, and the phantasms of modernity*, 2003):

Ethically superior objects of desire are teleologically marked, their time-factored truth positioned in contradistinction to objects exterior (and this already anterior) to time's leading edge, which is the European present; the point of seeing and of speaking; the vitrine in which is re-collected the rest of what has thus become a *remaindered* world: Europe as the brain of the Earth's body. (p. 38)

Historically remaindered and historical remaindering

The sense of a historical "remainder" is clearly fundamental to many continuing conflicts, as for example: Israel-Palestine, crusades (Christianity-Islam), indigenous peoples (Spain/Portugal, Australian Aborigines), massacres (Holocaust, Turkey-Armenia, Rwanda, Cambodia), colour (USA, South Africa), and religious conflicts (Hindu-Muslim, Northern Ireland). The aftermath of colonialism offers the most striking example. Such a remainder may be even more evident in inter-family blood feuds across generations. Such remainders

reframe and condition relationships in a powerful way, as is the case with "legacy systems" constraining social and technical innovation.

Written history also constitutes a challenging form of remainder, as noted by Tani E. Barlow (*Degree Zero of History, Comparative Literature*, Fall 2001 53(4): 404-425)

Written histories always become historiography; all history is historiography. And yet beyond disciplinary debates -- empiricist vs. anti-empiricist, social vs. discursive -- or arguments about what is and is not history lies the excess or the **historical remainder**, the past. This is certainly where [Gayatri Chakravorty] Spivak's readings have led her. (p. 421)

In a discussion of the historical studies of Walter Benjamin, Ronald E. Day (*The Modern Invention of Information: Discourse, History, and Power*, 2008):

Benjamin notes the need for a materialist historiography to build its critique out of the "Abfall der Geschichte" (commonly translated as the "trash of history", but perhaps better translated in the noncolloquial context of Benjamin's phrase as "remainder" -- hence, the "historical remainder"). Benjamin uses this same term about the dadaists' critical use of language (p. 130)

The significance of historical remainder has been noted with respect to social transformation initiatives by Peter Starr (*Logics of Failed Revolt: French theory after May '68*, 1995):

Where the logics of specular doubling and recuperation most obviously part company with analyses such as these, I would suggest, is in their essential resistance to contextualization within a complex, historical account of the difficulties inherent in the process of institutionalizing a revolution (the difficulty, for instance, of reconciling the often contrary demands of individual autonomy and collective solidarity). In their most univocal formulations, the logics of failed revolt meticulously occult the incremental advance, that specifically **historical remainder** that makes a difference. That is to say, they are grounded in an essentialist tautology whereby failure is presumed to equal (and nothing else), whereby the social system that returns on the far side of a revolutionary episode is deemed the same as that against which revolution was brought... (p. 21)

This role of remainder is echoed by others:

- When the proletarian worker comes to power, a bourgeois revolution recurs because this mass worker, the slave ascendant, forever operates in an economy of scarcity: hoarding resources from the memory of being deprived. The problem of accumulation beings again. The structure is of actual scarcity, followed by perceived scarcity and hoarding that holds on as a **historical remainder**. Never fully overcome, this remainder becomes part of the historically sedimented fear through which bourgeois cultures function (Shannon Winnubst, *Reading Bataille now*, 2007, p. 48)
- What do commons and enclosures have to do with primitive accumulation? In describing the logical condition for the origin of capitalism, the separation of workers from the means of subsistence, Marx presented a clear historical example of this violent separation process which could be traced over four centuries in the British Parliamentary Acts of enclosure of common lands and the deadly attacks they legitimated.... The persistence of the commons was the **historical remainder** of a still incomplete "separation" of worker from the means of subsistence and hence a logical impediment to the totalization of the capitalist relation throughout Britain. It was also a historical prefiguration of another, non-commodified world where rational association and human solidarity would become the basis of social life. (George Caffentzis, *A Tale of Two Conferences: Globalization, the Crisis of Neoliberalism and Question of the Commons*, Center for Global Justice, 2001)

For Alan Tansman (*The Culture of Japanese Fascism*, 2009):

Where capital confronts its other, so to speak, representation becomes an irresolvable problem, since it faces the twin demands of capital's reason, on the one hand, and the claims of a prior culture of reference, on the other which, like a receding echo, retreats steadily into a **remaindered world** of irrationality and ghosts. But the ghosts of a forgotten world and discarded past tenaciously refused to remain still and returned as unscheduled revenants to destabilize the present by reminding it of what it had repressed. (p. 83)

Politically remaindered and political remaindering

Democratic systems are necessarily unable to assimilate some people and perspectives, then appropriately understood to be a "democratic remainder". For Diana H. Coole (*Merleau-Ponty and Modern Politics after Anti-humanism*, 2007):

Coextensive with the activity that ensures collective life and that defines the rationality that sustains us all, politics is normative differences and disagreement, conflict and strife. To be sure, politics is also the negotiation and compromise that heal divisions and achieve accord. Yet politics never can do so without a **political remainder** of dissonance bred by the ineliminable complexities of intersubjectivity and by political resolutions themselves. Negativity is this **political remainder** engendered by the politics... (p. xiv)

The phenomenon may be recognized as a "non-political remainder" as noted by Peter D. Thomas (*The Gramscian moment: philosophy,*

hegemony and Marxism, Brill, 2009):

Civil society is the *patria* of consent and hegemony, while the state is the locus of coercion and domination. This definition would seem to be in accord with accepted usage in the modern social sciences, or at least in those currents influenced by Weber's famous definition of the state as the holder of a monopoly of violence in a geographically delimited area; in the **"non-political" remainder** of any social formation, on the other hand, by far the most extensive of its component parts, there reign more pacific forms of negotiation and persuasion. (pp. 167-168)

The phenomenon may be associated with that more commonly recognized as the **democratic deficit** when ostensibly democratic organizations or institutions (particularly governments) are perceived to be falling short of fulfilling the principles of the parliamentary democracy in their practices or operation. It might also be asked as to when democratic minorities are effectively to be understood as "remainders".

The term has been used to describe the challenge for Russia, for example, as with the argument of Michael Wines (*What Putin's Rule Portends for Russia*, *The New York Times*, 2 January 2002):

Mr. Putin indicates in his writings that he believes Russia cannot become an advanced nation until it roots out Soviet traditions and bridges the divide that pits the communist third of the nation against the **democratic remainder**.

Rarer is the recognition of the sense in which the world has been politically "remaindered" as remarked by Chamberlain M. Staff (*Caribbean Migration: Globalized Identities*, 2002):

The idea of globalization is not, of course, new -- neither is migration. Both lie at the centre of modernity, were indeed midwives to its birth. But thinking about them is relatively recent. It is as if the post-modern world has permitted them to "come out", to declare an existence which hitherto dared not speak its name, although in various linguistic guises it has dominated the post Second World War debate. That war embroiling ever continent, left its legacy in the geopolitics of the Cold War which carved up most of the world into incompatible ideological spheres while the **remaindered globe** formed itself into peeress of non-alignment... (p. 1)

Strategic remaindering and remaindered strategies

There is little evidence of this usage although it follows from any process of political remaindering. It could be recognized in the:

- marginalization of alternatives, as is so widely and deliberately practiced (*Framing the Global Future by Ignoring Alternatives*, 2009; *Avoiding Dialogue with Alternative Worldviews at any Cost*, 2005).
- discarded / neglected options (*Disastrous Floods as Indicators of Systemic Risk Neglect: implications for authoritative response to future surprises*, 2011; *Anticipating Future Strategic Triple Whammies*, 2011; *Lipoproblems: Developing a Strategy Omitting a Key Problem*, 2009)
- questions that remain (*Engaging with Questions of Higher Order: cognitive vigilance required for higher degrees of twistedness*, 2004).

Of relevance is the sense in which many development programs, notably those inspired by United Nations resolutions, could be understood as a deliberate effort to improve the condition of the "remaindered". Community development programmes are similarly to be understood as an effort to respond to the conditions of the social "remainder", deprived of the advantages of society. It is in this sense that increasing social inequalities define the existence of those who are not "raised up" by economic development and political promises.

There is a case, especially in the terms of faith-based governance, for considering the framing of "others" (the "abnormal") as "extremists" and "terrorists", as effectively defining them as "remainders" through a process of "remaindering" (*Norms in the Global Struggle against Extremism: rooting for normalization vs. rooting out extremism?* 2005; *Us and Them: Relating to Challenging Others*, 2009).

Moral and ethical remainder

Rosalind Hursthouse (*Fallacies and Moral Dilemmas, Argumentation*, 9, 1995, 4, pp. 617-632):

The continuing debate between utilitarians and deontologists often takes the form of disagreement over how particular moral dilemmas are to be resolved, but protagonists on both sides tend to overlook the possibility of resolving a **dilemma "with remainder"**, such as regret. The importance of "remainder" is also overlooked by critics of some "absolutist" ways of resolving or slipping between the horns of certain moral dilemmas. Moreover, deontologists, if not utilitarians, can be criticised for overlooking the possibility that, according to their theory, some dilemmas may be irresolvable. Virtue ethics, with its concentration on the agent, readily accommodates both mention of "remainder" and irresolvable dilemmas, and yields a specification of "tragic" dilemmas which the other two theories might like to take on.

Bernard Williams (*Moral Luck: philosophical papers, 1973-1980*, 1982):

In some cases the claims of the political reason are proximate enough, and enough of the moral kind, to enable one to say that

there is moral justification for that particular political act, a justification which has outweighed the moral reasons against it. Even so, that can still leave the **moral remainder**, the uncanceled moral disagreeableness... The possibility of such a remainder is not peculiar to political action, but there are features of politics which make it specially liable to produce it.

In the discussion of Williams' view with respect to moral dilemmas when there is a case for performing each of two incompatible actions, *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* notes:

Saying you ought to do both transgresses against the principle that ought implies can. One option is that you ought to do neither... But it has been argued against this by Williams, that there is properly a **psychological "remainder"** of guilt or the need to make reparation, suggesting that the neglected action was obligatory after all.

The problem of "**dirty hands**" is conventionally used to indicate the sully of moral standing in dealing with problematic situations. It is currently highly relevant to the situation of Western political leaders faced with violating the deepest constraints of morality (as with use of torture) in order to achieve great goods or avoid disasters for their communities. As discussed by C. A. J. Coady (*The Problem of Dirty Hands*, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2011):

... it is common to contrast balanced exceptionism or threshold deontology with utilitarianism and to establish dirty hands as a form of deontology (or intrinsicism) that yields to the utilitarianism of extremity. But there may be room for a utilitarian version of the threshold story, even possibly the dirty hands story.... The only sense in which it remains wrong is that weak sense... in which it would have been wrong but for the supreme emergency. For the utilitarian... there is no real **moral remainder**, though there may be some room for psychological discomfort.

The **moral remainder** and the remorse it generates signals the tribute that dirty hands pays to moral absolutism. While actually rejecting moral absolutes, the dirty hands theorist remains entranced by the significance they give to certain moral constraints. But how do we decide whether moral absolutism should be rejected? It is difficult in the nature of the case to see what could resolve a dispute between absolutists and non-absolutists.

Thomas Brudholm (*Resentment's Virtue: Jean Améry and the refusal to forgive*, 2008):

Since, introduced by Bernard Williams in 1973, the concept of "**moral remainder**" has gained widespread usage in moral philosophy. It has been used to refer to the unexpiated wrongs (the things not made right) themselves as well as to the emotional residues inherent in the responses to such wrongs -- regret, remorse, resentment, shame, guilt, and the like... That is, although the acknowledgment of the moral remainder might be expressed in the form of certain emotional residues (shame, regret, resentment, guilt, gratitude), in the context of responses to political mass violence certain political statements matter as much or more than the emotional issue.... What primarily matters is the moral significance that is tied to the acknowledgement of **moral remainders**. (pp. 60-61)

In commentary on the work of Bernard Williams (*Problems of the Self*, 1973), Todd Bernard Weber (*Analyzing Wrongness as "Sanctionworthiness"*) notes:

Forty years ago, when Bernard Williams wrote his classic discussion of moral conflict, "Ethical Consistency", the analysis of moral conflict and deliberation was carried on in terms of conflicting obligations or "oughts". An agent finds herself with two obligations, the performance of either of which excludes performance of the other, and chooses to act in accordance with one of them. What happens to "the ought not acted upon?" Williams famously asked. His answer, of course, was that the ought not acted upon lingers as a **moral remainder** of the conflict, and that the wrongness of not acting on the ought not acted upon can result in appropriate regret and even further obligations of apology or reparation.... If incompatible moral considerations appear in one's deliberation as conflicting oughts, then we must account for the ought not acted upon. Does it persist as a morally troublesome residue of the conflict, or does it disappear? Each answer has its problems -- **moral remainders** seem to imply inescapable guilt and blameworthiness, while disappearing defeated obligations cast doubt on whether there was a real moral conflict in the first place.

In a [review](#) of a study by Christopher W. Gowans (*Innocence Lost: an examination of inescapable moral wrongdoing*, 1994) James Lindemann Nelson notes

Gowans argues that the task of moral theory is to provide a coherent and illuminating explanation of our intuitively plausible judgments--among them, the moral distress we feel even in the face of careful deliberation and well-justified conclusions. Such feelings of distress, Gowans goes on to argue, do not require us to believe that the conclusion of sound moral deliberation could ever be flat-out inconsistent.... However, it might well turn out that of two incompatible courses of action, one is obligatory, and therefore must be done, while the action that then can't be done encapsulates a value -- a sort of "**moral remainder**" -- that is being violated. It is our awareness of that violation -- which Gowans sees no reason not to regard as being a kind of wrongdoing -- which gives rise to our feelings of distress.

Curiously it might be said that any faced with an obligation to make decisions with moral implications are likely to be "morally

remaindered" by the process.

Robert Meister (*After Evil: a politics of human rights*, 2010)

Badio's account of the political event as *ethically* transformative subtracts all historical content from the twentieth-century concept of revolution, including any reason for believing that it is likely to succeed. Fidelity to the event is revolution's **ethical remainder**, the abstract form of militancy for a truth that once set revolutionsaries apart. (p. 152)

Andrew Gibson (*Three Dialogues and Beckett's Tragic Ethics*, In: Marius Bunting, *Three Dialogues Revisited*, 2003):

I had better define what I mean by "tragic ethics". I am increasingly drawn to the thought of a term like this as denoting a kind of **ethical remainder** that may survive or be protected against the current busy recuperation of ethics, notably within neo-liberal and social democratic discourses. If one thing is certain about tragedy, it is that it involves a rigorous logic of intractable and insurmountable loss, a loss beyond repair and restitution. The premise of tragedy is the definitive loss of the good. (p. 50)

Philosophy and epistemology of remainder and incompleteness

There are numerous approaches to "conceptual integration", notably as profiled by the [Integrative Knowledge and Transdisciplinarity Project](#). It is of course significant that few of such frameworks or initiatives make great effort to respond to the others. The assumption may readily be made in each case that the others are either subsumed by the preferred approach or are effectively irrelevant -- a particular form of remaindering through relegation. Interdisciplinarity so articulated might well be understood as a pattern of perceived relevance -- simultaneously defining (even if only implicitly or unconsciously) a domain of irrelevance. The latter is appropriately to be recognized as a form of "conceptual remainder" or "epistemological remainder", involving a degree of "cognitive remainder" or "psychological remainder" -- likely to take the form of an "unconscious remainder". These are variously discussed below.

Incompleteness: Insights into "completeness" are offered through the formalization of [logical completeness](#) and mathematical completeness. Kurt Gödel is best known for his two [incompleteness theorems](#) of mathematical logic:

- The [first incompleteness theorem](#) states that no consistent system of axioms whose theorems can be listed by an "effective procedure" is capable of proving all truths about the relations of the natural numbers. For any such system, there will always be statements about the natural numbers that are true, but that are unprovable within the system. It may be phrased as an all-encompassing axiomatic system can never be found that is able to prove all mathematical truths, but no falsehoods.
- The [second incompleteness theorem](#), a corollary of the first, shows that such a system cannot demonstrate its own consistency. It may be expressed as an indication that if an axiomatic system can be proven to be consistent from within itself, then it is inconsistent.

Cognitive remainder and conceptual remainder: [Haridas Chaudhuri](#), founder of the [California Institute of Integral Studies](#) makes the point that:

Reality divided by reason always leaves a remainder. After everything has been said about the universe, after the entire world has been transformed on the basis of scientific knowledge into a hierarchical structure of ever-widening systems, we are still invariably left with a profound sense of mystery.

The matter has been expressed otherwise by Stephen A. Erickson (*Human Presence: at the boundaries of meaning*, 1984):

A number of philosophers of science suggest that in the long run the subject matters of the sciences are metaphysically reducible -- though, to be sure, not without **conceptual remainder** -- to the subject matter of one, all-inclusive science. This science, it is most often suggested, is a terminologically, and thus substantively enriched, quantum mechanics. The subject matter of quantum mechanics thus becomes the object of metaphysics, though that term is carefully deleted from these discussions. (p. 9)

For Johannes Ehrat (*Power of Scandal: Semiotic and Pragmatic in Mass Media*, 2011):

Society is never dissolved completely as a scientific cognitive object; there remains an overhang of Secondness, a **non-cognitive 'remainder'** that is instinctive behaviour. When this is turned into a scientific object -- that is, in the sense of semiotic constructivity of a further interpretation -- it is still the same object, albeit no longer the same behaviour that we feel as "society" (ie as instinct) (p. 153)

Stephen H. Watson (*Tradition(s): refiguring community and virtue in classical German thought*, 1997):

The very term "Nature" -- which we now hear, beyond all "terminology" in the strict sense, as the *dissonance* of "nature" -- doubtless still requires explanation in a time that has seemingly determined the logic of explanation and completed its Romantic excursions. As a result, the semantics of this term, one which historically forced the *abandonment* of ontology for semantics itself, is complex. The dissonant **"conceptual" remainder** of Nature becomes divided again between what was once called the logic of denotation and the logic of connotation, the result providing a certain irreducible "degree zero" in the "object- language" of rational semiotics. The dissonance that results ... could not simply be reduced by appeal to the science, either physical or

exact. (p. 135)

Epistemological remainder: With respect to [John Stuart Mill](#), Allen Oakley argues that it was Mill's ultimate driving notion that the human sciences had just not yet achieved the epistemological zenith that awaited them in the future (Classical economic man: human agency and methodology in the political, Edward Elgar Publishing, 1994):

In the end, though, after the most exhausting inquiries into the psychology of human agents and the logic of science, [Mill] concluded that there would always be hanging over the human sciences, including political economy, an **epistemological remainder** unable to be uniquely and definitively linked to the evidence of observation. That is, there was a sense in which any legitimately applicable methodology of human science could only approximate the structural demands of the axiomatic-deductive ideal. (p. 144)

Reviewing a collection regarding the work of [Alain Badiou](#) edited by Matthew Wilkens (*The Philosophy of Alain Badiou*, Polygraph 17, 2005), Benjamin Noys (*Encountering Badiou*, Culture Machine, 2005), notes:

The problem that dominates this collection is the legitimacy, and success, of this removal of pathos through the 'austere formulas' of Badiou's philosophy. It occurs most violently around Badiou's work on the four 'sites' from which events/truths emerge: science, politics, love and art, especially the last three. In the collection there are those who follow, more or less critically, Badiou's own subtractive path. They find something powerful in the precision of Badiou's use of axiomatic thought to delimit and analyse events. Also, they uphold Badiou's affirmation of the inconsistency of the event 'without any trace of existential "pathos" or "**remainder**"' (Hallward, 23). In contrast, other contributors argue that this wager on the axiomatic illegitimately removes the problem of alterity too rapidly. This second approach involves a number of linked criticisms: that Badiou refuses to recognise the suppleness and power of the discourses of alterity; that his removal of alterity and pathos hampers or invalidates his understanding of events; or that despite his claims his work still remains haunted by an **ineradicable 'remainder'** of pathos. To describe this dispute we could speak, in the language of Maoism, of a 'two-line struggle'.

Grover Maxwell (*The Ontological Status of Theoretical Entities*, In: Scientific Explanation, Space, and Time, University of Minnesota Press, 1966)

That anyone today should seriously contend that the entities referred to by scientific theories are only convenient fictions, or that talk about such entities is **translatable without remainder** into talk about sense contents or everyday physical objects, or that such talk should be regarded as belonging to a mere calculating device and, thus, without cognitive content—such contentions strike me as so incongruous with the scientific and rational attitude and practice that I feel this paper should turn out to be a demolition of straw men. But the instrumentalist views of outstanding physicists such as Bohr and Heisenberg are too well known to be cited, and in a recent book of great competence, Professor Ernest Nagel concludes that "the opposition between [the realist and the instrumentalist] views [of theories] is a conflict over preferred modes of speech" and "the question as to which of them is the 'correct position' has only terminological interest."! The phoenix, it seems, will not be laid to rest.

In this excerpt from the InteLex online version of John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* (Chapter II), Mill summarizes the arguments for freedom of expression:

We have now recognised the necessity to the mental well-being of mankind (on which all their other well-being depends) of freedom of opinion, and freedom of the expression of opinion, on four distinct grounds; which we will now briefly recapitulate. First, if any opinion is compelled to silence, that opinion may, for aught we can certainly know, be true. To deny this is to assume our own infallibility. Secondly, though the silenced opinion be an error, it may, and very commonly does, contain a portion of truth; and since the general or prevailing opinion on any subject is rarely or never the whole truth, it is only by the collision of adverse opinions that the **remainder of the truth** has any chance of being supplied.

[Maurice Mandelbaum](#) (Societal Facts, *Philosophy*, Issues 283-286, 1998):

... my thesis that societal facts are irreducible to psychological facts may be reformulated as holding that sociological concepts cannot be translated into psychological **concepts without remainder**. What is signified by the stipulation "without remainder" must now be made clear.

It would seem to be the case that all statements in the sociological language, S, are translatable into statements concerning the behaviour of specific individuals, and thus would be translatable into the language P. However, it is by no means certain that such translations could be effected without using other concepts which appear in the sociological language.... It is without respect to incomplete translations of this type that I speak of translations which cannot be effected "without remainder". (p. 310)

Metaphor and remainder: The cognitive challenge may be approached through analogy and metaphor, as variously argued:

- Let us now focus upon the use of analogy as a tool of discovery. In logical discourse analogy is described as a species of thinking, involving the formulation of a general correspondence between two conceptual structures in which there is always a

degree of **conceptual remainder** (Lisa M. Dolling and Arthur F. Gianelli, *The Tests of Time: readings in the development of physical theory*, 2003, pp. xxxvii)

- If we could translate a metaphor into a literal prose paraphrase without any **cognitive remainder**, we could then say that we have understood a metaphor through a conceptual or secondly order of processing. If, however, we cannot translate a metaphor into a literal prose paraphrase without a residue that cannot be conceptually understood, and we still understand something by that metaphor, then we can say that a metaphor is intelligible on a preconceptual level. If we are willing to grant that a metaphor can be understood although it cannot be translated completely into a prose equivalent, then we are saying that a metaphor can be cognized by a primary cognitive process. What we are saying here is not terribly different from what we were saying earlier in terms of the understanding of a myth. (Robert E. Allinson, *Chuang-tzu for Spiritual Transformation: an analysis of the inner chapters*, 1989, pp. 35-36) [criticized by Kim-chong Chong, *Zhuangzi and the Nature of Metaphor, Philosophy East and West*, 56, 3, 2006, pp. 370-391]

Aesthetic remainder: Charles Harrison (*An Introduction to Art*, 2009):

But in whatever direction one may lean, absolute clarity is neither to be found nor expected. The sense of an **aesthetic remainder** is just that -- a sense or intuition; it is in the nature of intuitions, as of the kinds of experience categorised as religious, that they tend to evade logical explanations. We should certainly not confuse knowing about a given religion with sharing its beliefs. In the case of the sculptured bodhisattva, however, as of other religious objects regarded as works of art, might it be that the intuition of an **aesthetic remainder** will serve as the stimulus to an appropriate kind of empathy; an enlarging of sympathetic understanding; a means for the unbeliever to recover a kind of value with which the object was imbued in the process of its creation, *as though* one shared the relevant beliefs? (p. 187)

Nicolae Babuts (*Memory, Metaphors, and Meaning: reading literary texts*, 2009):

The cognitive view opposes both the formalist desire to reduce literature to its rhetorical dimension and the widespread practices of seeing texts through political prisms and of offering ready-made formulas for interpretation. When [Christopher] Lane says that an "**aesthetic remainder** surfaces that is not reducible to the social" one can only applaud, and I have no doubt that Elaine Scarry would be the first to do so. But the aesthetic is far from being reducible to the rhetorical. It is constituted not only by the use of words but also and just as significantly by the dynamic patterns that have the assignment not to copy but to discover correspondences and strategically approximate the syntax of the real. (pp. xv-xvi)

Stephen H. Watson (*Tradition(s): refiguring community and virtue in classical German thought*, 1997):

Contested in these very antinomies, disfigured in the chiasm between the visible and the invisible, the problem of the ordinary and the everyday would force itself to prominence time and again in twentieth-century thought. Again and again, however, the disequilibrium of the everyday lifeworld would be theoretically appropriated by subsumption or reduction... In both respects it would indeed involve "the logos as ontic", to use Charles Taylor's gloss on Heidegger's considerations on its "**aesthetic remainder**" -- or perhaps even more pointedly, Lyotard's on Barnett Newman's "the sublime as now". (p. 73)

Christopher S. Wood (*Paul de Man and Art History, Flash Art International*, 28, 1995, 183, pp. 87-90):

The symbol, like the mimetic image, is in principle saturated with meaning, without a remainder... Modern historical scholarship of art has not notably succeeded in fitting the refractory and persuasive remainder into its simple explanatory models. Indeed, the social history of art... has often gone so far as to relativize the remainder out of existence... The temptation to reduce is powerful: an **aesthetic remainder** severed from any epistemological burdens is highly vulnerable to ideological manipulation.... And there is a secondary temptation: the work of art trimmed of its remainder is a more trustworthy historical document.

In a review of Michael P. Steinberg's *Listening to Reason: Culture, Subjectivity, and Nineteenth-Century Music* (2004), Richard Leppert (*Knowledge, Self, and the Aurality of the Immaterial, Beethoven Forum*, Fall 2005, 12, 2, pp. 176-194):

Steinberg convincingly, indeed often brilliantly, makes the case for music's relation to the reality of which it is a part, the history beyond the history of music. But he does this in a way that does not acknowledge what Adorno, in his *Aesthetic Theory*, named **art's "remainder,"** incorporating not least its "enigmaticalness," its *rätselhaft* character: that which discourse (including academic discourse) cannot not totally come to own through its own explanations. Put differently, what makes art the domain of aesthetics, which is to say, what gives art the right to its name, is its engagement with history, which at the same time reaches beyond history -- at best toward some semblance of hope and Utopia (here Adorno speaks), but which in any event makes art more than a mirror reflecting what lies outside its parameters.... In the end, and to be fair, his project doesn't so much need to address directly the **aesthetic "remainder"** as it needs perhaps to be more explicitly open about that which he's set aside.

Transcendental cognitive remainder: Bruno Bosteels (*Radical Antiphilosophy. Filozofski vestnik* 29, 2, 2008, pp.155-187):

There then seems to be a dimension of reality, or perhaps it would be better to say a dimension of the real, that forever remains beyond the scope of language or conceptual knowledge and, as such, resists symbolization absolutely. Thus arises the notion, common to all antiphilosophers, of an essential leftover or remainder, which breaks with the coextensiveness of language and the world:

This idea of the "remainder" can be found in every antiphilosophy, which builds very subtle networks of relations only so as to track down the incompleteness in them, and to expose the remainder to its seizing in the act. This is precisely where antiphilosophy destitutes philosophy: by showing that which its poor theoretical pretension has missed, and which is nothing less, in the end, than the real. Thus for Nietzsche, life is that which appears as a remainder of every protocol of evaluation. Just as for Pascal Grace is entirely subtracted from the order of reasons, for Rousseau, the voice of conscience from the preachings of the Enlightenment, for Kierkegaard existence from the Hegelian synthesis. And for Lacan, we know that the philosopher neither can nor wants to know anything of enjoyment and the Thing to which it is yoked.... Have we ever seen more detestable people, in their explicit declarations about women, than Pascal (did he ever observe one, other than his sister?), Rousseau (Emile's Sophie!), Kierkegaard (the neurosis of marriage!), Nietzsche (let's not even go there) or Wittgenstein (with the half-frankness of a half-homosexuality)? Supposing that from the point of view of desire the **real remainder of philosophical theories** must be sought after on the side of the feminine, the fate reserved for this remainder is certainly more enviable when one is called Plato, Descartes or Hegel. To the point where we could make of the relationship to women a distinctive criterion: the more flagrant the misogyny, the more we are in the vicinity of antiphilosophy [Badiou, "*Silence, solipsisme, sainteté*,"]

Simon Skempton (*The Transcendental Remainder*. In: *Alienation After Derrida*, 2010):

The main theme of Derrida's study of Hegel, *Glas* [1974] is the "remainder", which is that which cannot be assimilated into the system. He wishes to pay attention to that which cannot be domesticated by any system of thought, and to demonstrate that Hegel's all-inclusive totality depends on exclusion. The system understands itself as an all-inclusive totality from which nothing is excluded; all non-rational non-systemic singularities, alterities and diversities are regarded as negativity, and thus co-opted as moments in the system and its self-reproduction, Derrida contends that not only is there an **unassimilated remainder** that is unconsciously repressed and excluded by the system, but also that this of the remainder is necessary for the system's very constitution. Derrida writes:

Isn't there always an element excluded from the system that assures the system's space of possibility? The transcendental has always been, strictly, a transcategorical, what could be received, formed, terminated in none of the categories intrinsic to the system. The system's vomit

The exclusion of the remainder is the transcendental condition of possibility of the system. (p. 75-76) The remainder undermines and confirms the system at the same time (p. 79)

Theological remainder: "lost presence of the absent origin"

The extensive preoccupation with a "theological remainder" is either surprising or to be expected. It is to be expected given the widespread cultivation and promotion of faith-based governance. For example the US House of Representatives recently voted in favour of a Congressional resolution reaffirming "In God We Trust" as the national motto, supporting its placement on public buildings, public schools, and other government institutions. ("*In God We Trust*" *Resolution Passes House, Ignores Nonbelievers*, *Humanist Network News*, November 2011). This parallels the affirmation of the Will of Allah in Islamic cultures. The attitude echoes use of *Gott Mit Uns* (meaning *God with us*) as commonly associated with the German military from the German Empire to the end of the Third Reich. In each case any sense that traces of God should be a remainder are of concern.

In a secular society, with a mindset reinforced by those such as [Richard Dawkins](#) (*The God Delusion*, 2006), concern regarding any dangerous "theological remainder" is natural. However, in his discussion of the theological as a marginal category, J. M. Baker argues:

A familiar image for the place of theology in modern culture is that of Walter Benjamin's angel in the ninth of the "Theses on the Philosophy of History." The angel, powerless either to stay in the present or retreat into the past, is blown into the future by an irresistible wind. The figure of the angel is usually interpreted as a modern allegory for history, yet in that interpretation the theological level of the angel's meaning -- a level whose presence is due as much to the allegorical nature of the figure as it is due to its angelic nature -- is largely lost. At best the theological survives as a default: it is what hovers there in reserve when every other category of explanation or sense fails. This is precisely the place theology occupies in the first of the theses where it makes an ironic appearance as a hunchback dwarf ("*buckliger Zwerg*"). (*Vacant Holidays: the theological remainder in Leopardi, Baudelaire, and Benjamin*, *MLN*, 2006, pp. 1190-1219)

Baker offers a poignant perspective on "vacant holidays" as theological remainders -- emptied of their holy significance:

This essay treats a segment of modern culture that appears as a motif in the writings of Leopardi, Baudelaire, and Benjamin: the

vacant holiday, a space on the calendar once reserved for days of ritual recollection but a space that has since lost its ceremonial function and declined into leisure time, or mere idle time. This motif will be interpreted here as the index to a certain cultural nostalgia, a loaded term given the fact that in Leopardi, Baudelaire, and Benjamin, nostalgia points to a deep connection between historical perception, temporality of experience, and theological remembrance. More than that, though, it rests on a presupposition that theological categories do not cease to be illuminating or valid in contexts where religious rites have been pushed to the margins and ceased to claim the imagination. So my intention here is not simply to take up a contrarian viewpoint but rather to probe a real if elusive cultural and historical complex. (*Vacant Holidays: the theological remainder in Leopardi, Baudelaire, and Benjamin*, MLN, 2006, pp. 1190-1219)

Of value with respect to the role of faith-based politics is the question of Paul Fletcher and Arthur Bradley (*The Politics to Come: power, modernity and the messianic*, 2010):

Why has the possibility of a messianic Politics to Come reasserted itself *now*? Is it a "turn" or a "return"? Is it a monstrous anachronism, postmodern kitsch or the logical outworking of modernity's own theological origins? To what extent might it be the basis of a new political theology -- or the sign of an irreducible **theological remainder** within the political? (p. 10)

The sense of theological remainder is understood as especially significant with respect to processes of reconciliation. Thus John W. De Gruchy (*Reconciliation: restoring justice*, 2003) -- cites Joseph Liechty and Cecilia Clegg (*Moving Beyond Sectarianism: religion, conflict and reconciliation in Northern Ireland*, 2001) to the effect that a true understanding of reconciliation has to be "built on the interlocking dynamics of forgiveness, repentance, truth, and justice, understood in part as religiously-rooted virtues, but also as basic dynamics (even when unnamed or unrecognized) of human interaction, including public life and politics". Put differently, De Gruchy notes, reconciliation is both:

... the **theological remainder** of politics, the leap that comes when realism confronts total conflict... and the **political remainder** of theology, a form of action that endows hope with content (Erik Doxtader, Reconciliation in a State of Emergency: the middle voice of 2 Corinthians, *Journal for the Study of Religion*, 14, 1, 2001, pp. 48-49).

This might be said to follow from the insight offered by Charles T. Mathewes (*Understanding Religious Ethics*,):

...popular and theological attention to the sufferings of Christ on the cross was a way to account for evil, especially by more mystical thinkers in Christianity.... The sufferings of Christ seem to function as a **theological remainder** in this tradition -- just as in some mathematical problems, schoolchildren are allowed to use "remainders" in learning division of whole numbers. (p. 247)

Many of the following comments seemingly follow from the deconstructive analysis provided by Jacques Derrida. Thus for a theologian such as Fergus Kerr (*Re-reading Aquinas in Derrida's Wake* In: Don Cupitt, Gavin Hyman, *New Directions in Philosophical Theology*, 2004 (p. 90-2):

The science of social anthropology... is motivated by infatuation with the myth of the "lost presence of the absent origin". However all this may be for social scientists and others, it is bound to make a theologian think. One might think, for example, that smoking out the **theological remainder** in many disparate areas of thought and sensibility might be worth a lifetime's labour.... what is one to do, in the wake of delighting in Derrida's work, with his programmatic exposure... of the temptation to entertain hopes of unmediated communion with the full presence of the absolute origin?

An insight of profound implications is offered by Hugh Rayment-Pickard (*Impossible God: Derrida's theology*, 2003):

Derrida argues against the possibility of pure negation or absolute theological non-phenomenality, claiming that negative theology harbours a presupposed super-theology and that the death of God is never fully accomplished because it leaves behind a **theological remainder**, at the very least an evacuated theological space. So the theme of death does not necessarily demonstrate the end of theology, but cross-hatches a possible theological site between negative and positive theology and between the death and the life of God: the space of an impossible God who inspires religious faith, love and an ethic of radical openness to 'the other' (p. 158)

Matthew Charles Rowlinson (*Real Money and Romanticism*, 2010) provides a remarkable discussion (pp. 105-108) of the argument of Elaine Scarry (*The Body in Pain: the making and unmaking of the world*, 1987) as providing a clue to Marx's representation of value as a theological remainder. For Scarry, artifacts necessarily represent the process by which they come into existence, with religious scriptures themselves being a made object. Artifacts must in her sense be responsible because failed objects are discarded.

Scarry argues that scripture treats the topic of making above all by showing how God makes things. One of the things God makes, as she shows, are laws limiting what human beings can make and under what circumstances. Her reading, however, also treats the god of the scriptures as their major instance of a made object; she habitually refs to God as "primary Artifact"... A god who is shown to be an artifact is already what Scarry calls a "failed god". Scarry's reading, at once reparative and demystifying,

gives us an artifact responsible to its maker. But this artifact is also in a certain sense a **theological remainder**. The useful artifact that fulfills its responsibilities depends on the failed one -- is in fact the same artifact under a dialectical reversal. What, if any, trace does this artifact retain of its other forms of appearance as the author of a law that would have prohibited its own making and as a remainder of this author's cult?

The nature of theological remainder is linked back to modern reflection on risk by John H. Evans (*A Sociological Account of the Growth of Principlism*, *The Hastings Center Report*, September 2000):

Does the translation of claims about "playing God" into a commensurable metric of risk-benefit analysis in fact result in discarding information? According to theologian Allen Verhey, although the commission deserves credit for trying to make sense of the phrase, "the phrase does not so much state a principle as invoke a perspective on the world." [A. Verhey, "Playing God and Invoking a Perspective," *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy*, 1995] It is not so much an argument to be dissected, as a way of referring to a series of arguments and method of decision making typically used by theologians -- a "fundamental perspective" (p. 356). Summarizing these "fundamental perspectives" as "risks and benefits" surely leaves what others have called a **"theological remainder"**; [M. J. Hanson, "Lessons from a Religious Objection to Genetic Patenting," 1999,) put differently, it results in information lost in the striving for a commensurable decision making metric.

Challenge of the "remaindered" and "remaindering" for religions

In a period of in which the continuing role of faith-based governance, and the conflicts it engenders, is becoming ever more evident, the manner in which religions envisaged remaindering and the remaindered becomes increasingly relevant -- especially in the case of a degree of preoccupation with the logic of "end times" scenarios and their imminence (*Future Challenge of Faith-based Governance*, 2003; *Spontaneous Initiation of Armageddon -- a heartfelt response to systemic negligence*, 2004).

Religion and the remaindered: Irrespective of the above concerns with a "theological remainder", it could be said that religions have explicit procedures for:

- appropriate ceremonial handling of human "remains", but especially (in some cases) the remains of those considered "holy", as with **sacred relics**
- engaging with the socially "remaindered", as is evident in traditional, proactive approaches to the deprived and impoverished
- engaging with "sinners" as moral or ethical "remainders" -- having effectively "remaindered" themselves by their own behaviour, but for whom salvation is still possible
- engaging in a complex process of "remaindering" through the condemnation of intractable "sinners"
- framing "unbelievers" as effectively "remainders" (for all eternity) through their failure to respond to spiritual insights and the injunctions of religion

To these processes might be added the sense in which religions ensure that people will become social remainders by ensuring a level of procreation which society cannot sustain in terms of food resources and land, or other necessities and facilities -- such as housing, employment, education and health (*Begetting: challenges and responsibilities of overpopulation*, 2007; *Institutionalized Shunning of Overpopulation Challenge: incommunicability of fundamentally inconvenient truth*, 2008; *Root Irresponsibility for Major World Problems: the unexamined role of Abrahamic faiths in sustaining unrestrained population growth*, 2007). In this sense religions may be a prime factor in social remaindering.

Religion and the "left behind": Most evident, however, is the manner in which religions may provide for their own faithful to be "raised up" to "heaven" through a salvatory process -- with the "unbelievers", the remainder, variously "left behind". The interpretation may extend to a process of "resurrection" from the "remains" of the dead. The challenge of those who remain has been the focus of a series of best-selling novels by **Tim LaHaye** and **Jerry B. Jenkins**, (*Left Behind*, 1995-2007) framed in terms of the Christian **dispensationalist** view of the **end times** scenarios.

Ultimate spiritual remainder? The **Mahayana** traditions of Buddhism offer an intriguing insight into understanding of "remainder" through a subtle doctrinal distinction from the views contained in the **early Buddhist schools** concerning the issues of **Nirvaṇa** With Remainder and **Nirvaṇa Without Remainder**. Some of the early schools considered that Nirvaṇa Without Remainder always follows Nirvaṇa With Remainder and that Nirvaṇa Without Remainder is final. The Mahayana traditions consider that Nirvaṇa Without Remainder is always followed by Nirvaṇa With Remainder.

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