

Epilogue

I did not envisage an epilogue when writing this book. But when it was complete it dawned on me that there was a suggestive, *Finitude's Glorious Incompleteness: Structuring Cosmic Enlightenment*. This possible title relates to my push forward on a number of questions that mesh with the concluding sections of chapter 14. That should be pretty evident for anyone who has just finished even a first read of chapter 14, of this book. At all events, without much hesitation I changed the typescript title to that new title, and wrote a single page Foreword to recall the previous title - after all I had no intention of revising the book to change references to "The Standard Model" etc - and to intimate the meaning of the change. My good friend Sandy Drage, on reading the product, wisely remarked that I was losing both the initial meaning of the book and perhaps the audience to which it was directed. Thus, I was bounced into the epilogue idea, which fermented forward as you find below, but in a restrained fashion. I merely add a second section that fills out the perspective on "Incompleteness" in the simple fashion of a list of books that would open out that incompleteness for a new generation, and a third section that, providentially, was a sermon preached on the day I finished the book.

1. Finitude's Glorious Incompleteness: Structuring Cosmic Enlightenment: Foreword Become Afterword.

The oddity of the book having this Epilogue as well as Foreword, Preface and Introduction has to do with a late change of title. Comment on that change should help the reader share my struggle or at least get a sense of the long-term communal reaching that is at stake.

The original title was *Lonergan's Standard Model of Effective Global Inquiry*. That title obviously coloured and colours the context and the expression of my pointing throughout the book, and more is to be said about it both in the Preface and in the Introduction. But the question that emerges here, for me as I complete the book, for you as you might have read the book under its previous title, Whereto, ultimately, the pointing?

Ultimately? One might here be lifted into a million-year contemplation of individual and global loneliness for mating, indeed into a twist on the matter that would do justice to my old title, *Being and Loneliness*.¹ One might, if one were a student of Bernard Lonergan - my primary audience - search for clues in his various reflections on terminal values and destiny. And so on, through authors, through cultures.

But here you have a start to all that in the very short intimation of my present answer to the question of ultimacy. A present answer: an answer on a road taken decades ago in search of an eschatology, one that would break forward from the handicapped reachings of Aquinas. Yet one incompleteness theorem of Aquinas is central to my meaning and my title: the manner in which the Minding that is God eludes finite minding. Chapter one here attends to Goedel's early incompleteness theorem, but I pay no attention in this book to his later struggle with the continuum hypothesis to which he gave the formulation: "any infinite subset of the continuum has the power either of the set of integers or of the whole continuum."² Is this baffling hypothesis any help in our struggle to understand the "infinite surprize"³ that is human destiny, a fulfilling incompleteness?

I pose this odd question primarily to remind us of our humble need to embrace any cosmic twist that might add to our enlightenment about the human journey. Is it irrelevant? Is physics irrelevant to our reach for the invisible, or can we mesh physics into the role of the nativity "ut ad amorem invisibilium rapiamur"?⁴ Is that part of the seamless cosmic garment-skin of the Incarnate Word to be ignored in favour of gazing in descriptive entrapment at His feet slipping into an Ascension cloud?

¹The title of a lecture given in Cork University Ireland, the evening of the death of Richard Power, the novelist: I think immediately of his novel, *The Hungry Grass*, and the power symbolism of the conclusion. The lecture became the Epilogue of *Wealth of Self and Wealth of Nations*.

²Quoted in Hao Wang, *Reflections on Kurt Goedel*, MIT Press, 1988, 293.

³The last two words of the book *Wealth of Self and Wealth of Nations*.

⁴"That we may be swept up into the love of the invisible": part of the Preface of the Old Latin Mass of the Nativity.

Paul rightly writes that “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard” about ultimating. But might we not also claim the eye hath not seen nor ear heard nor mind meant yet, the cosmos that is the minding of the fourth or fifth millennium ahead? Might we not expect an eschatology and a philosophy of humanness that is not stuck in present myths of death, but edges into subtleties of posthumousness?

But such thinkings are remote. What is not remote is the sad incompleteness of what is called Lonerganism, so settled in old ways, dodging, without much subtlety, the challenge of Lonergan’s answer to Plato’s search for a viable political structure: a global dynamic of ongoing luminous incompleteness.

2. Where to now?

2.1 Where?

For me, the “where?” is answered by beginning my final series, *Eldorede*. The third section of the first of these, *Eldorede 1*, “Re Form of Teachers of Selves”, gives some indication of the range of meanings of the series title.

For you of the next generation? Well, a list of missing books would seem useful in opening up future strivings. Or rather topics that stay with me as calling for at least a book each, or better, each meriting attention within a round of the Standard Model.

The list is nothing as glorious as that famous list Hilbert made a century ago of unsolved problems of mathematics and logic. Yet my odd presentation should not put you off taking them seriously enough as central nudges forward.

The oddity entertains me in that it duplications my old interest in GEMS of a quarter of a century ago.⁵ But now the list is GGEEMMSS. Let me add it immediately, then comment.

⁵GEMS was a topic in my “Features of Generalized Empirical Method and the Actual Context of Economics” in M.Lamb, (ed), *Creativity and Method*, Marquette University Press, Milwaukee, 1981, 543-71.

2.2 To?

Eight Needed Developments of Perspective⁶

Geometry
 Growth
 Enlightenment
 Eschatology
 Metaphysics
 Mysticism
 Spirit
 Speech

If you have read the book seriously enough the list could coincide with one of your own.

The need for a heuristics of real geometry has been a bent of mine even before I read Lonergan's work in the mid-fifties. I have commented on that in this book, and I would say that the *Method Journal* article of a few years ago gives a decent nudge forward.⁷

Growth? By that, of course, I mean adult growth, again a key topic of mine in the past decade. It is normatively a strange leaving of oneself behind exponentially in an accelerating embrace of the universe. The leaving behind, acceleratingly, of those younger, gives a massive twist to the problem of communications and the communal meanings of belief and faith.

Enlightenment was to have been a topic in some of the later Cantowers. It needs tender loving care, so that its genera, species and varieties do not clash but weave together a global

⁶I have been asked why there certain other topics are not on the list, e.g. economics, education. These are not problem areas in the same sense. Lonergan's reorientation of economics is available in published form. We simply need a break from the present established stupidities. Education? The core shift is quite simple: but where is the first non-random surge of redemption to come from that will save mind's molecules from headlessness and heartlessness?

⁷"Elevating *Insight*. Space-Time as Paradigm Problem", *Method Journal of Lonergan Studies*, 19 (2001), 203 - 229. See also note 2 of chapter 3 above.

reach within a foundational ferment.

Eschatology? That, I suspect, needs no further comment. We are in the zone of Filmac's Last Theorem!

Metaphysics: needs a systematic and concrete-intentional spelling out, lifting itself forward and "inward"⁸ in metagrams of symbolizations. The metagrams are to have functions that parallel the functions of metagrams .e.g. in chemistry, both at the introductory level and in advanced searchings. For beginners, metagrams are remote in meaning, discomforting in their suggestiveness; for the older and elder they are patterns of sensible embrace.

Mysticism? Both genuine and bogus mysticism bear witness, but there is a definite sense in which they have nothing to say, and it must be identified operationally. The inner words that speak forward history are the hard-won fruit of a kataphatic tradition that must slowly grow to be the heart of the third stage of meaning.

Spirit: recall the late notes in chapter 14, and those problem pages on **spiritual** of *Insight*. Add the context of growth, a disappearance of elder spirits into increasing divination. From the maturing third stage there is to emerge a startling and fresh perspective on faiths, revelations, humility, tolerance.

Speech, the last on my list, seems to me to be a key entry point to the future and to the present rescuing of both an overly verbal Lonerganism and a massively distorting global bent. A fresh focus on outer words is needed. I raised the question in the original Appendix A of *Phenomenology and Logic*.⁹ It is a matter of shifting Augustine's solitary self-revelation of inner

⁸From chapter 14 section 3 you will recall the third definition of generalized empirical method as relating to a deeper searching and manifestation of the subject. Add to that quite new strategies of linguistic feedback through symbolizations. Think even of something like Goedelian self-talking symbolized incompleteness!

⁹The original appendix is available in chapter 5 of *Lack in the Beingstalk*. The relevant section is section 3: "Elementary Grammatology".

word¹⁰ into a global community. *A Brief History of Tongue* was my stumbling beginning.¹¹ How are we to make globally present the gap between infinite exigent loneliness and its shabby articulations?

2.3 Now?

Obviously I have more to say, since I intend to venture on with an *Eldorede* series. But it will not be a series that moves in the context of this book or these larger issues. It will be more a plain, plane, speaking that seeks to get the show on the roll.¹² It will, I hope, be a collaborative effort. Are you interested?

Now? As it happens, winding this book to a close in the third week of November 2006, I find myself this Sunday morning preaching in a strange church of the United Church of Canada, a down-town church that is a genuine sanctuary, whose benches are steadily occupied by the street people and the drug-trapped. What better way to end than with today's sermon? It is the same call to communal creativity for the central congregation of that caring church, of any church. The central congregation are not used to thinking towards understanding, no more than the global community. What is needed is a massive shift of operable fantasy regarding these dying structures, be they temples, synagogues, mosques, churches.

“Thoroughly understand what it is to understand”?¹³ No: understand minimally that any

¹⁰See Lonergan, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, 6-9.

¹¹The key zones that need attention are the fundamental insight of language, illustrated by the reflection on Helen Keller in chapter one. Chapter 4 brings in the context of symbolization for the key general word-object symbolization of W2. But it is the first elementary topic that is disgracefully absent in present linguistics and psychology, and not too often attended to in Lonergan studies!.

¹²The final chapter of *Pastkeynes Pastmodern Economics. A Fresh Pragmatism*, can be considered as a contextualizing plain-speaking set of strategies.

¹³The beginning of the slogan in *Insight* (xxviii[25]) by which Lonergan seems to identify the book. A better identification of the book would seem to me to be his comment at the Florida Conference of 1970, when he was dealing with questions regarding affectivity. “there is in

little fresh understanding involves humble puttering personal and communal thinking. The message of the book coincides, in utter remoteness, with the message of the sermon.

**Sermon for Sunday November 19, on the Anthem, *In The Garden* by Charles Austin Miles
Searching for a New Song**

I suppose that we could relate our topic to the Scripture readings that we have just heard. For one thing we are talking about a new song, as Psalm 33 does. We sang an old song, an old favorite perhaps, certainly in the churches of Nova Scotia where my wife Sally served until recently. “Can we make that old song new to us?” is a first question and it is worth pausing over.

I like to tell the story of Herbert von Karajan, one of the great conductors of the twentieth century. It is about a summer he spent recordings Beethoven’s nine symphonies. After a heavy summer of work on them he went to Salzburg to conduct the second and third symphonies. A friend said to him: “Herbert, wont you find that boring?” Von Karajan’s reply: “never: for me they are new symphonies!” Can we make the old song new to ourselves?

The person who wrote today’s anthem in 1912 was not bored into doing so. The author of *In The Garden*, Charles Austin Miles (1868-1946), was a pharmacist who gave up his trade to become an editor and a hymn-writer. He came to write it by being surprised by the joy of the Resurrection, the Garden-happening between Jesus and Mary. His mood twines round a plain melody with simple words. Yet it can be heart-stretching, a new symphony, in so far as we are listening. But listening: isn’t that the difficulty? That marvelous strange woman, Mary Ann Evans, who went by the name of Georg Eliot, has a wonderful sentence in the middle of her book *Middlemarch*: “If we had a keen vision and feeling of all ordinary human life, it would be like

Insight a footnote to the effect that we’re not attempting to solve anything about such a thing as personal relations. I was dealing in *Insight* with the intellectual side - a study of human understanding - in which I did my study of understanding and got human intelligence in there, not just a sausage machine turning out abstract concepts” (“An Interview with Fr.Lonergan” edited by P.McShane, *A Second Collection*, edited by William Ryan and Bernard Tyrrell, Darton Longman and Todd, 1974, 221-2.)

hearing the grass grow and the squirrel's hear beat, and we should die of that roar which is the other side of silence. As it is, the quickest of us walk about well-wadded with stupidity”
(Middlemarch, Norton, N.Y. 1977, p. 135).

My first point is that if we are to somehow rise to a new song, something genuinely shared with the next generation, we have to listen keenly to the old. But what is it to listen keenly? Can we reach towards sharing the mood of Charles Austin as he read about the resurrection garden? That reaching is ourselves at our best, and that best is brought out by the Spirit given from the Resurrection Garden, the Spirit that seeks to shake out our wadding, uncotton our ears that we may cotton on to ourselves as listeners to God's cosmic Speaking. I seem here to be making a big leap. But deep down, what are we? : we are listeners. We are listeners to life, attentive for joy and the carrying of joy from past to future. That is what those people I mentioned are in their best efforts: Herbert von Karajan in his conducting, George Eliot in her writing, Charles Austin Miles in his hymn-making.

But the best efforts take energy, a going beyond stale listening, to the creative listening that Marcel Proust wrote about in *Remembrance of Times Past*. How are we to listen creatively to our old hymns? That is a question, perhaps the question, of our times, that demands a communally creative answer. “He walked with me and he talked with me”. Let us recall a favorite story about that, an event of the same day as the Garden scene, told only by Luke, the story of the seven-mile walk with Jesus, a walk with Him and a talk with Him, on the road to Emmaus. We could read it now, with fresh listening, but I wish only to have us pause over a single verse in the King James version. “Stay with us Lord, for ‘tis towards evening and the day is now far spent. And he tarried with them”. You probably are familiar with other translations, more modern translations. For me they don't quite have the same effect, have the same meaning. It is just not the same to read “it is getting late” “night is coming on”, or such. And how can one replace *tarry*? And so we are back with that word of the chorus of Miles' Hymn: “And the joy we share as we tarry there, none other has ever known”.

Mile's hymn is like the King James version, and they both raise the same question. How can we turn the old song, the old translation, forward, to talk it into the future? Nor am I going to suggest an answer, for the answer has to come from our communal listening, a fresh listening to get at the heart of the message that the next generation needs to hear and cherish.

But for present young people the word *tarry* may only mean sticky black stuff. What then of the joy we have to share? Can we lift the message forward to them in their own cool talk? This week's Time Magazine, dated tomorrow the 20th if you are looking for it, has an article in it about a new flourishing of Catholic convent life. What is lifting these young women forward to walk with him and talk with him?

We have to listen more keenly, stretching out like von Karajan,, to the joy we share, to reach the heart of the matter and the message. We must open up to the muse within us, the muse that is the Spirit's lifting of our wonder. And now I must appear totally uncool by going back to a muse of Old Europe, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, whose poem "Son of the Muses" was put to music by Franz Schubert. I quote to you the third verse in translation:

"I sing it in the wide world, / along the length and breadth of the ice - / that makes the winter blossom! / But these blooms vanish too, / and new joys are to be found / on the tilled uplands "

The heart of the message of joy can bloom in the springtime of tilled teenaged furrows, or in the autumn of elderhood awaiting the new dawn of stingless-death. That new dawn, of course, is another story, a story of the fact of the resurrection garden in which we live and move and have our being, and of the claim that eternity is an endless expansion of Surprising Joy. But today's pause is over identifying what in the message is ever-new to us, what is to be translated and remain ever-new in the generations to come. So, again I lean on Goethe. His next verse reads:

"For as soon as I see / young people by the lime-tree / I stir their blood. / Dull fellows preen themselves, / Gawky girls turn, / to my tune."

Does this translate the German or Goethe's mood of the creative blood-warming of youth? Is "to my tune" the same as "nach meiner Melodie"? The best that a translator can do is his or her best, but even without German you may note that "tune" just is not "melody", and that *nach* Englished into "according to" brings in the heart. So, we heard, in the Anthem, "The melody that he gave to me, within my heart is ringing". How do we translate that ringing melody for gawky girls? We are back with the question of shaking off the wadding of familiarity, and pushing for a new listening.

So I end, properly, by quoting my wife. Sally likes to tell the story of a quiet Sunday in a crowded Church. A teenager, shabbily dressed, backpacks into the Church, rambles up the aisle, and plops down on the floor at the front. An elderly Church lady rises from the back, comes up the Church waving her cane. The congregation and the gaping minister wait. The elderly lady plops down at the front with the teenager. Later she explained that she didn't want the young girl sitting on her own.

We are not alone. We live in God's world with the strange tones and tunes of teenagers. We must find, in our old ways, new cool surprising moves towards tarrying with them in mutual joy.