

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

James Duffy

This special issue of tribute essays remembering and honoring Philip McShane (1932–2020) was the initiative of Banzelão Teixeira, SDB. In April 2021 Banzelão invited me to coordinate the project, which I happily agreed to do. I contacted a number of colleagues and former students of McShane and invited them to write essays recalling how he encouraged them to grow in their professional and personal lives. My second request was that they mention one or two of his works. Twenty-three individuals accepted the invitation and contributed the essays in this volume.

For many years, *Divyadaan* has been supportive of McShane's work. Besides publishing a number of his articles,¹ the editors of *Divyadaan* invited him twice to be guest editor—once in 2010 for a collection of essays titled, “Do You Want a Sane Global Economy,”² and again in 2017 for a half dozen essays “Celebrating the 60th Anniversary of the Publication of Bernard Lonergan's *Insight*.” A series of five McShane essays titled “Religious Faith Seeding the Positive Anthropocene Age” was published two years later. Finally, in 2020 “On the Stile of a Crucial Experiment,” one of McShane's last essays, was published posthumously.

The collection of essays in this volume is a *mélange* of reminiscences reflecting a myriad of interests, experiences, and encounters. The ages of contributors span a range of at least fifty years, while the topics range from the problem of objectivity in quantum mechanics to possible implications of the phrase “In Thought we live.” A number of authors recall how McShane invited them to patiently do exercises in the hope of solving basic problems and puzzles.³ It is significant that throughout the 24 tribute essays the introductory text *Wealth of Self and Wealth of Nations* is cited more than any other work.

¹ See page 4 below.

² The eight articles are available in the *Journal of Macrodynamical Analysis* 11 (2018), <https://journals.library.mun.ca/ojs/index.php/jmda/issue/view/134>. Ivo Coelho recounts in his tribute essay some details of McShane's intervention in a workshop titled “Towards a New Economic Order” in Nashik, India, September 9–11, 2010.

³ See, for example, the essays of M. Allerton, M. George, K. Melchin, and P. Lambert.

Some of the contributing authors take up the question, “What next?”⁴ The question was and still is near and dear to McShane, who advised listeners and readers time and again to “put spade to earth and move the first sod,” quoting Frederick Crowe.⁵ He applauded and encouraged the “strange street focus” of Greta Thunberg in his final book,⁶ and in his last months he insisted that those seriously concerned about survival need to cultivate an engineering poise, one that is foreign to most of the academic disciplines.⁷

Two of his lifelong concerns regarding what to do next are echoed in the letter on the preceding pages that he wrote to Robert Henman on June 27, 2020, four days before flying Home.⁸ Three weeks before writing that letter he had articulated the same two concerns in the Afterword to “The Ontological Structure of the Hermeneutic Circle.”⁹ The first concern is to acknowledge the need for a genetic method for studying life, whether it be the life of a chimp or a child. It is a hefty petition, one that pivots on patiently developing heuristics for studying the development of living things.¹⁰

⁴ See the essays of F. Galán, S. Gillis, B. Lovett, C. Moloney, C. Orji, and T. Quinn.

⁵ “When you have a mountain to move, and only a spade and a wheelbarrow to work with, you can either sit on your hands or you can put spade to earth and move the first sod.” *Theology of the Christian Word: A Study in History* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978) 149. McShane cites this passage in his comments on Crowe’s book in *The Everlasting Joy of Being Human* (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2013): 45–47.

⁶ “We need a talented sub-community to wrap and ‘rap’ round the core and *cor* meaning of **deliberation**, ‘at a rather crucial moment in the historical process.’ We need to wrap and rap around **deliberation** in the mood of Greta Thunberg rather than in that of Bernard Lonergan.” *Interpretation from A to Z*, 206–207. The inner citation is to Lonergan, *Phenomenology and Logic*, CWL 18, 300. The word *deliberation* is bolded in the original text.

⁷ See, for example, “D ~ Canons of Engineering” and “W ~ *Insight* Chapter 17 in a Geohistorical Engineering Context” in *Interpretation from A to Z*, pp. 19–26 and 151–159; and *Æconomics* 17, “Engineering as Dialectic,” available at <http://www.philipmcschane.org/ecconomics>.

⁸ In the short letter he cites *Randomness, Statistics and Emergence*, one of his earliest books, as well as *Interpretation from A to Z*, which was his last. He also cites *Insight* and *Method in Theology*.

⁹ See footnote 1 on page iii above.

¹⁰ See the essays of J. Benton, J. Duffy, B. Lovett, D. Mayer, and B. Purcell.

The second concern in the letter is a petition to embrace a “knotting” procedure that invites collaborators to humbly, autobiographically identify our horizons, expand upon what results from our views, encounter one another, and ask “some basic questions, first, about others, but eventually, even about ourselves.”¹¹ Such self-exposure might sound uncouth, while interpersonal encounter in a third and “final objectification of horizon”¹² might sound a bit delicate.¹³ McShane’s position, stated imaginatively and bluntly in “On the Stile of a Crucial Experiment,” is that this “technique of discomforting intersubjectivity is capable of ‘providing a statistically effective form for the next cycle of human action.’”¹⁴ As is evident in his handwritten letter to Henman, McShane thought Lonergan formally solved a problem that neither Thomas Kuhn nor Max Planck solved.¹⁵

Special thanks to Terrance Quinn, Patrick Brown, and Sandy Gillis, who helped copyedit the tribute essays. The list of frequently cited works of McShane and Lonergan provides full references for works cited in footnotes throughout the 24 essays.

¹¹ *Method in Theology*, CWL 14, 238. Lonergan is writing about “an objectification of subjectivity in the style of the crucial experiment.” CWL 14, 237.

¹² CWL 14, 235.

¹³ After the text cited in the previous note, the editors refer the reader to a comment Lonergan made at the Institute on *Method in Theology*, Dublin, 1971: “It [dialectic] aims at being something methodical, but methodical in a very, very delicate area, namely, that of value judgments.” CWL 14, 221, footnote 2.

¹⁴ McShane, “On the Stile of a Crucial Experiment,” *Divyadaan* 31/3 (2020) 343–44. The inner citation is to Lonergan, “Essay in Fundamental Sociology,” in *Archival Material: Early Papers on History*, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan vol. 25, eds. Robert M. Doran and John D. Dadosky (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019) 9. McShane begins the essay with two fantasies: a 30-second shootout at the O.K. Corral and a man singing to his deceased bride, Mary, while sitting on a stile not far from a church during the days of famine in Ireland.

¹⁵ The problem was to discover the formal dynamic of a procedure that would be more effective than simply waiting for mistaken ideas to be replaced by better ones (Kuhn) or for the current generation of professors to retire (Planck). See also my references to Kuhn and Planck in “Situating the Pioneers,” Editor’s Preface, *Journal of Macrodynamical Analysis* 13 (2020) 13–14.

MCSHANE'S *DIVYADAAN* ARTICLES

- “The Reform of Classroom Performance,” *Divyadaan* **13/2** (2002): 279–309.
- “The Wonder of Water: The Legacy of Lonergan,” *Divyadaan* **15/3**, (2004): 457–75.
- “How Might I Become a Better Teacher?” *Divyadaan* **16/3**, (2005): 359–82.
- “What Do You Want?” *Divyadaan* **18/1** (2007): 1–28.
- “Do You Want a Sane Global Economy?” *Divyadaan* **21/1** (2010): 19–36.
- “The Meaning of Credit,” *Divyadaan* **21/2** (2010): 163–182.
- “Edging Towards a Later Global Stage,” *Divyadaan* **21/2** (2010): 233–244.
- “The Global Economy and My Little Corner,” *Divyadaan* **21/2** (2010): 245–256.
- “*Insight* and the Trivialization of History,” *Divyadaan* **28/1** (2017): 105–132.
- “Introduction: Collective Futurology,” *Divyadaan* **28/2** (2017): 189–202.
- “*Insight* and the Interior Lighthouse,” *Divyadaan* **28/2** (2017): 277–298.
- “The Coming Convergence of World Responsiveness,” *Divyadaan* **30/1** (2019): 18–36.
- “Steps Towards Effectively Converging Religions,” *Divyadaan* **30/1** (2019): 37–56.
- “Converging Religions to Effective Historical Intervention,” *Divyadaan* **30/1** (2019): 57–76.
- “Converging Religions to Being InTo Love With Jesus EtC.,” *Divyadaan* **30/1** (2019): 77–96.
- “Finding an Effective Economist: A Central Theological Challenge,” *Divyadaan* **30/1** (2019): 97–128.
- “On the Stile of a Crucial Experiment,” *Divyadaan* **31/3** (2020): 327–344.