

An Introduction to Jean-Yves Lacoste. By Joeri Schrijvers. Farnham, Surrey/ Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2012. Pages, 205. Cloth, \$99.95. ISBN: 978-1-4094-4158-8.

In this comprehensive treatment of the (to-date) little-English-translated work of Jean-Yves Lacoste (b. 1951), Joeri Schrijvers, a post-doctoral research professor at KU Leuven, tracks the constants and significant shifts in the French philosopher-theologian's writings over the past three decades. That Lacoste's first decade of scholarly articles appeared almost exclusively in *Communio* and *Revue Thomiste* is indicative of the conservative theological sources and conversations that contributed to his phenomenological project, one that to this day, Schrijvers reports, is "for the most part an ongoing conversation with Heidegger" (37). For Lacoste, "liturgical experience" is fundamentally "a transgression of being-in-the-world" that, nonetheless, *as experience* "must align itself in one way or another to the ontological structures of human being" (57).

Heidegger has provided to Lacoste conceptual categories with which to elucidate the phenomena of Christian existence disclosed through liturgical activity, especially the Eucharist. Schrijvers summarizes Lacoste's mid-career argument as follows: "Liturgical experience first and foremost issues from the free consent of the individual to the demands of the Absolute which, in its turn, proposes itself to (rather than imposing itself upon) the individual. Liturgical experience names the very moment in which the believer freely decides to answer God's proposition through a free exposal to the Absolute. This exposal entails an ontic act, most commonly understood as *prayer*" (59). Whereas Heidegger, Lacoste argues, incorrectly identifies death with "accomplishment," thereby limiting the scope of human knowledge and affectivity to *Dasein*, liturgical experience manifests the fragmentary character of all human engagements, marking life as an ongoing series of commencements, ever-new beginnings in the earthly project of engaging a world.

Further contrast from Heidegger lies in Lacoste's evolving dissatisfaction with the former's level of abstraction (hence the eventual, gradual turn to Husserl), with Lacoste locating the confrontation with death not in the subject's self-reflection but, rather, in the corporeal death of the other. The other's death asserts humanity's common incompleteness, giving rise to ethics, as well as a cognizance "that signification and meaning are never at our disposal and certainly do not result solely from a decision" (48). It is the "non-experience" within liturgy that provides a "place" (more accurately, a "non-place") to be confused neither with any

“transcendental given” (65) nor with the enthusiasms of religious experience nor with other (Heideggerian) *divertissements* (116). “Non-experience, which criticizes both the confusion between God and the sacred and an all too impatient desire for God, is that non-place in which only affirmation of the knowledge of faith remains” (80).

Schrijvers’s rehearsal and analysis of Lacoste’s still-developing project should appeal to those liturgical scholars—most likely theologians—searching for still more adequate methods for understanding sacraments and sacramentality. Lacoste, Schrijvers explains, elucidates how the singular, historical (which is to say, non-transcendental) knowledge of the crucified and risen Christ conveyed in liturgy comprises a “sacramental phenomenon” at the disjunctive boundary of perception and affection, “a mode of appearing that appeals almost solely to affection” (126). Lacoste has moved from a narrow location of non-experience in the “parousiacal moment” of the liturgical act’s non-experience to an expanding view of liturgy as “the non-experience surrounded by and embedded in multiple moments of presence, peace and, perhaps, experience in [Lacoste’s] later work” (157). Along the way of Schrijvers’s diachronic account of the development and change in Lacoste’s thought, the reader encounters multiple terms resonant with the sacramental-liturgical theology that so fruitfully emerged from the late 1950s through the end of the past century (although de Lubac is the only theologian Schrijvers mentions early on): absence, presence, fragments/moments, eschatological provisory, interruption, *kairos*, gift, Spirit, anticipation, token, remembrance, etc. Those given to phenomenological exploration of such widely held tenets of the discipline should find studying this carefully presented, if demanding, work worth the effort.

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The Sacrament of the Eucharist. By John D. Laurance, SJ. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2012. Pages, 203. Paper, \$24.95. ISBN: 978-0-8146-2518-7.

John D. Laurance, editor for the *Lex Orandi* series on the seven sacraments, has provided a well-written and readable presentation on the sacrament of the Eucharist. As indicated in the introduction, the goal of the book is to investigate “how the *lex orandi* of a typical Sunday celebration of the Eucharist manifests the professed faith of the church, her *lex credendi*.” The text is divided into two sections. The first three chapters present the author’s theological understandings that best enable entering into a celebration of the Eucharist and “for understanding the faith of the



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