

BIBLIOTHECA  
EPHEMERIDUM THEOLOGICARUM LOVANIENSIIUM

EDITED BY THE BOARD OF  
EPHEMERIDES THEOLOGICAE LOVANIENSES

J.-M. Auwers, E. Brito, L. De Fleurquin, J. Famerée, É. Gaziaux, J. Haers,  
L. Kenis, M. Lamberigts, G. Van Belle, J. Verheyden

EXECUTIVE EDITORS

J.-M. Auwers, E. Brito, J. Famerée, L. Kenis,  
G. Van Belle, J. Verheyden

EDITORIAL STAFF

R. Corstjens – P. Van Overbeke



UNIVERSITÉ CATHOLIQUE DE LOUVAIN  
LOUVAIN-LA-NEUVE

KATHOLIEKE UNIVERSITEIT LEUVEN  
LEUVEN



LEUVEN  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

UITGEVERIJ PEETERS  
LEUVEN - PARIS - DUDLEY, MA

2005

A-2.-879

BIBLIOTHECA EPHEMERIDUM THEOLOGICARUM LOVANIENSIIUM

CLXXXVIII

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE AND  
CONTEMPORARY THEOLOGICAL  
EPISTEMOLOGY

EDITED BY

L. BOEVE – Y. DE MAESENEER – S. VAN DEN BOSSCHE

Annua Nuntia Lovaniensia, entitled: *Encountering Transcendence: Contributions to a Theology of Christian Religious Experience*<sup>3</sup>.

At this juncture, it is most fitting that we thank the many colleagues and scholars who contributed to and participated in the LEST IV-encounter, generously sharing with us their expertise and friendship. We owe special thanks to our colleagues in the Research Department of Systematic Theology, professors Peter De Mey, Jacques Haers and Terrence Merrigan, all members of the LEST steering committee, and their associates and doctoral students. We especially want to express our gratitude to all of the research associates, present and past, involved in the *Research Group Theology in a Postmodern Context*: Johan Ardui, Julia Baudzej, Annekatrinen Depoorter, Frederiek Depoortere, dr. Hans Geybels, Tom Jacobs, Joeri Schrijvers, en Lea Verstricht. A special word of thanks we also direct to dr. Christophe Brabant, who very punctually assisted in the administrative organisation of the conference. We also thank Michael Funk Deckard, Rita Corstjens and Martijn Steegen for their invaluable help in preparing the manuscript and the index. Finally, we would like to thank the Faculty of Theology, K.U.Leuven, the Fund for Scientific Research – Flanders (F.W.O.-V.) and the Research Fund of the K.U.Leuven, for their financial support for the organisation of LEST IV and the publication of its proceedings.

On November 2, 2005, at the occasion of the opening of the fifth International LEST Conference entitled *Godhead Here in Hiding: Incarnation and the History of Human Suffering*, chaired by our colleague Terrence Merrigan, the proceedings of LEST IV is being presented to the academic, theological and philosophical community. In less than ten years, LEST has gained a great deal of recognition in systematic theological circles and has become a biannual meeting place for many theologians from all over the world. It is both with gratitude and satisfaction that we look back at this accomplishment, and at the same time prepared to continue the joint efforts of our department, together with many others, for a new series of LEST conferences.

Lieven BOEVE  
Yves DE MAESENEER  
Stijn VAN DEN BOSSCHE

3. L. BOEVE – H. GEYBELS – S. VAN DEN BOSSCHE, *Encountering Transcendence. Contributions to a Theology of Christian Religious Experience* (Annua Nuntia Lovaniensia, 53), Leuven, Peeters Press, 2005.

## CONTENTS

PREFACE .....	VII
INTRODUCTION .....	1

## MAIN PAPERS

L. BOEVE (Leuven)	
Theology and the Interruption of Experience .....	11
R. SCHAEFFLER (Bochum)	
Die religiöse Überlieferungsgemeinschaft als Schule der Erfahrung .....	41
M. DUMAS (Sherbrooke)	
Une réponse à Richard Schaeffler .....	53
S. VAN DEN BOSSCHE (Utrecht/Leuven)	
From the Other's Point of View: The Challenge of Jean-Luc Marion's Phenomenology to Theology .....	61
A.J. GODZIEBA (Villanova, PA)	
Response to Stijn Van den Bossche: As Much Contingency, as Much Incarnation .....	83
S. ROBERT (Paris/Lyon)	
L'expérience, chemin de connaissance de Dieu .....	91
P. VERDEYEN (Antwerpen)	
Une réponse à Sylvie Robert .....	107
G.M. JANTZEN (Manchester)	
Eros and the Abyss: Reading Medieval Mystics in Post/Moderernity .....	111
G.M. BOODOO (New Orleans, LA)	
Abyss and Dislocation: Metaphysics and Context: A Response to Grace Jantzen .....	133
S. PAINADATH (Kalady)	
Diversity of Religions, Unity in Spirituality .....	141
D.A. MADIGAN (Roma)	
A Response to Sebastian Painadath .....	153
L.P. HEMMING (London)	
Are We Still in Time to Know God? Apocalyptic, Sempiternity, and the Purposes of Experience .....	159

H. RIKHOF (Utrecht)	
A Response to Laurence Paul Hemming .....	177
F.S. FIORENZA (Cambridge, MA)	
The Experience of Transcendence or the Transcendence of Experience: Negotiating the Difference .....	183
R. HORNER (Fitzroy, Vic.)	
A Response to Francis Schüssler Fiorenza .....	219

## OFFERED PAPERS

R. FAESEN (Leuven)	
Christian Faith, Apophatic Theology and Experience of Trans- cendence: Some Reflections by Three Medieval Mystical Authors from the Low Countries .....	227
S. EDMONDSON (Alexandria, VA)	
“Let Wisdom Speak to Your Heart...”: A Monastic Theologi- cal Epistemology .....	243
P. GAMBERINI (Napoli)	
Relational Ontology and Mystical Experience .....	257
P. ROSSI (Milwaukee, WI)	
The Authority of Experience: What <i>Counts as</i> Experience? ..	269
W. STOKER (Amsterdam)	
The Rationality of Religious Experience and the Accountability of Faith .....	285
J. ZACHHUBER (Berlin)	
Religion vs. Revelation? A Deceptive Alternative in Twentieth- Century German Protestant Theology .....	303
P. CORTOIS (Leuven)	
Ritual and Antiritual Experience .....	317
INDEX OF AUTHORS .....	331

## INTRODUCTION

This volume of proceedings of the fourth international Leuven Encounters in Systematic Theology (LEST IV), organised at the Faculty of Theology, K.U. Leuven on November 5-8, 2003, consists of two parts. In the first part, the opening lecture and the other keynote lectures, including the responses, are gathered. In the second part, we present a selection of the contributions offered in the thematic seminars.

The first contribution of Part I is the opening lecture, held by the chair of the conference, Lieven Boeve, professor of fundamental theology (K.U. Leuven): *Theology and the Interruption of Experience*. Tying in with a debate on faith and experience between two internationally well-known Flemish theologians, Edward Schillebeeckx and Antoon Vergote, he first points at the modern presumptions of this debate. Subsequently, he presents a theology of experience conceived of as ‘interruption’, which goes beyond this debate and its presuppositions. Although critical of its presumption of continuity between faith and context, Boeve maintains with modern correlationist theology the critical-productive intrinsic relation between tradition and context, challenging tradition towards recontextualisation. Against the presumption of discontinuity between faith and culture of anti-modern positions, and beyond the continuity of modern correlationist theologies, he forges the category of interruption, holding together continuity and discontinuity. Religious experience, then, is the experience of interruption, both of the context and tradition. In the last instance, it is the interruption of God, to which Christian faith testifies – a faith, which in its own turn is interrupted by it. Experiences of faith remain very particular experiences bound to concrete histories and narratives, in which God is not simply to be grasped, but rather, as in an interruptive pause, halts our Christian narratives and throws them open to what is proclaimed in these narratives as the Kingdom of God, which is both anticipated and promised in Jesus Christ.

The second text in these proceedings is by Richard Schaeffler, emeritus professor of philosophy at Ruhr-Universität (Bochum, Germany), entitled *Die religiöse Überlieferungsgemeinschaft als Schule der Erfahrung* (*The Religious Community of Tradition as School of Experience*). For Schaeffler, traditions are necessary if individuals are to be enabled to experience at all. At the same time, however, traditions and their institutions prove themselves only insofar as they succeed in becoming schools of experience. For religious experience presupposes a particular form of