The Return of the Theological in the Thought of Jean-Luc Marion: A Reading of *Givenness and Revelation*

Cyril O'Regan

Nova et vetera, Volume 16, Number 3, Summer 2018, pp. 995-1007 (Article)

Published by The Catholic University of America Press
DOI: *https://doi.org/10.1353/nov.2018.0069*

The Return of the Theological in the Thought of Jean-Luc Marion: A Reading of *Givenness and Revelation*

Cyril O'Regan
University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, IN

Givenness and Revelation, which is the book form of the 2014 Gifford Lectures, is at once both a small book and one that is accessible because it applies rather than argues for difficult notions such as "givenness," "revelation," "icon," "anamorphosis," and of course, "saturated phenomenon," which have been the fruit of exhausting phenomenological excavation carried out by Jean Luc Marion over the past twenty-five years.[1] At the same time, it would be a mistake to assume either that this text does not cut as deep as Marion's texts usually do or that it does not make a number of important contributions. As do all of Marion's books, *Givenness and Revelation* corresponds to Goethe's injunction that, in great work, surface is depth, but I would also suggest that its blinding clarity is in the last instance Pascalian, rather than Cartesian. This is not only because Marion follows Pascal in elucidating the order of love that is opposed to the order of reasoning, but also because, while the movement of the text is "logical" in that it can be followed, its economy is everywhere illustrative of a kind of finesse that is sure of when to elaborate, when to be silent, and when to suggest and tease and allow the reader to complete. If there are other French thinkers who perform with a similar finesse, such as Jean-Louis

[1] See Jean-Luc Marion, *Givenness and Revelation*, trans. Stephen E. Lewis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016). This work will be cited parenthetically in the text.

Chrétien and Jean-Yves Lacoste, it is because Marion has been the model. As I have indicated, Marion too has a model, even if a very distant, seventeenth-century one. If there is a more proximate model, I strongly suspect that the model belongs more nearly to the field of literature than either theology or philosophy—and that it is, of course, French. I cannot help but think of Paul Valéry, or at least his model of mind, Monsieur Teste.

Now, as for contributions, I can think of this little book making quite a few. When it comes to reflection on Christ as "icon" (ch. 3), Marion cements the structural importance that Cusa's *de vision dei* has for him. Similarly, the prominence of the Trinitarian reflection of William of Saint Thierry is noticeable. Indeed, the mystical Trinitarianism and/or Trinitarian mysticism of Saint Thierry (chs. 1 and 2) seems now to occupy a space once occupied by Bonaventure. One can only hazard a guess as to why this might be so: perhaps Saint Thierry is thought to combine the best insights of both Aquinas and Bonaventure. In this text, the critical dialogue with Heidegger continues, and there are some ways in which one could think of the text as a do-over and riposte to Heidegger's famous essay "Phenomenology and Theology" (1928). If there is a particular point of contention in the text, then it concerns the relation between Heidegger's notion of truth as disclosure (*alethe*) and Marion's notion of revelation (34, 37). If the contrast in one sense invites thinking through again important distinctions made by Franz Rosenzweig between manifestation and revelation in *The Star of Redemption*, it also invites placing Marion's text alongside quite similar resistances to Heidegger's stipulative finitism exhibited in Catholic thinkers such as Edith Stein, Erich Przywara, and Hans Urs von Balthasar. Crucially, and not entirely unrelatedly, *Givenness and Revelation* implies crucial decisions regarding the nature of Scripture, revelation, and their relation that involve both proximity and distance from, on the one hand, Ricoeur, who tends to make revelation and Scripture a function of a general hermeneutic (language, text, meaning, meaningfulness, and truth), albeit with a number of "regional specific features," and on the other, the not-so-philosophically-attuned Barth, who, if he denies the regulation of Scripture by a non-scriptural discourse, is in danger of forgetting that it is Christ the icon who can be said to be both the subject and "cause" of Scripture. Within this broadly hermeneutical manifold, the references to Schleiermacher's *Reden* and the *Glaubenslehre* (95) are intriguing, precisely because of the different

ways they parse the relation between speech and phenomenon, such as, in the former case, suggesting that all language—including biblical language—is resolvable to a more fundamental non-linguistic experience, and in the latter case, biblical language seeming to occupy the same level as experience. I am totally persuaded of the merits of each of these contributions, even if some of them are in the end questions demanding resolution.

Nonetheless, it seems obvious to me that the two main contributions of the text lie in, on the one hand, the articulation of the link between phenomenology and Trinitarian theology, which has been more or less absent since Marion's very "early" work, and on the other, the apologia on behalf of Augustine, who throughout this text, in implicit as well as explicit ways, is being recommended to our phenomenological and theological attention. The Trinitarian interest is not confined to chapter 4. This chapter, which involves quite specific reflection on the Holy Spirit, depends on the previous analysis of Christ as "icon" in chapter 3, and both of these chapters are set up by chapters 1 and 2, whose main purpose appears to involve clearing away interpretive and conceptual hindrances to thinking and experiencing the triune God aright. The elevation of Augustine, however, is not an independent variable with regard to the main task of *Givenness and Revelation*, which, in my view, is to elaborate the Trinity within the horizon of what we can vaguely and generally refer to as "phenomenality," but which more technically and nearly can be characterized as "givenness" and/or "revelation" as long as we do not define the latter in terms of brute fact, to which Kant, Fichte, German Idealism, and Liberal Protestant theology in general objected. Although Marion calls on a wide and varied theological cast, both East and West, Augustine is the main player, especially the Augustine of the early books of *De Trinitate* and his commentaries on both the Psalms and John. Accordingly, I will fold Augustine, who is elevated both indirectly and directly above all other thinkers, into what Marion has to say about the proper mode of access to the Trinity and what conceptualities (we might challenge ourselves also to think of practices and forms of life) might get in the way. The overall lesson to be drawn from this text is that it constitutes a return of the theological in the thought of Jean Luc Marion after a long hiatus in which he has struggled with recalibrating phenomenology as "a rigorous science" in order to remove what, in his view, has been the "accidental" hostility to theology. In any event, having secured

his phenomenological conceptuality, Marion feels more confident to open out phenomenology to theology without fear of confounding two discourses that have each their own protocols and limits.

Trinity within the Horizon of Phenomenality

One sees with *Givenness and Revelation* as a whole the operation of a complex strategy to position or reposition the self and/or community aright before the triune God as given in the horizon of phenomenality. There are two complementary aspects of this approach. (1) The first aspect, or first tactic, is more negative in kind and involves removing interpretive-conceptual obstacles that impede access to the Trinity as the saturated phenomenon or network of saturated phenomena (a corollary of Christ as the saturated phenomenon). (2) The second, and more important, aspect is positive and presentative: it follows the New Testament unveiling of the triune God who breaks into and corrugates the phenomenal field and stretches the self; it also addresses theological interpretation (East and West) faithful to the givenness rendered in the New Testament and avoidant of the doctrinaire pseudomorphosis or distortion that is coeval with fidelity.

Negative Aspect: Genealogical Unrubbishing

Let me begin with the negative aspect of Marion's complex strategy, what we might call the line or tactic of "genealogical unrubbishing." By this, I mean to denote patterns in the first two chapters of historical remarks that point either to (1) difficulties regarding accessing the phenomenality of the Trinity generated largely *within* Christian theological discourse or to (2) the difficulties that arise regarding Trinitarian discourse *without* Christian theological discourse due to an emergent circumambient discourse laying down rules of intelligibility regarding a God presumed to exist and to be pertinent. With regard to the difficulties of access generated within Christian discourse, Marion's genealogical remarks have something of a Rahnerian stamp. Certainly, the two featured elements of Rahner's genealogy in the first two chapters of Marion's extraordinarily influential little book on the Trinity are recorded: (1) the neoscholastic (perhaps Scholastic) methodological or "epistemological" separation of *de uno* and *de trino* (ch. 1) in which the persons of the Trinity function as additions to the unitary essence of God laid forth in *de uno*; (2) the segregation of the discourse on the Trinity into operationally distinct discourses concerning immanent Trinity, or the Trinity *in se*, and the economic Trinity, the mission of the Trinity in and as constituting salvation history. More needs to be

said about the nature and limits of Marion's recollection of Rahner's genealogy, which itself is a collection of genealogical remarks and does not exhibit a sustained argument with a clear categorical thesis, and I will address these issues shortly.

What needs to be put on the table first, however, is Marion's non-Rahnerian genealogical supplement to Rahner's genealogical sketch. This concerns the conceptual pressures that bear on the prospects of Trinitarian discourse generated in the broader cultural-social field of discourse. Marion distinguishes between two different species of interference: the first sponsored by straightforwardly aggressive rationalism (e.g., Tindale and Tolland; ch. 2, pp. 30–31), which dictates that the Trinity cannot be a sanctioned item of Christian discourse; the second, the more subtle and sophisticated (and more effective) marginalization of Trinitarian discourse effected by Fichte, Kant, and Schleiermacher (ch. 2, pp. 31–34). I think it would also be good to reflect on these remarks a little more, and again, I will do so in due course. Perhaps the only thing that should be said at the moment is that this second, non-Rahnerian genealogical indication should not necessarily be regarded as anti-Rahnerian. For instance, Walter Kasper, who, if far more historically inclined than Rahner, still fundamentally operates in terms of Rahner's Trinitarian ground axiom that the immanent Trinity is the economic Trinity and vice versa, has spent considerable energy painting the distortions of the Trinity not only subsequent to but consequent to the interference run by the rationalistic, ethical, and aesthetic discourses of modernity.

Comments on the Rahnerian Aspects of Marion's Genealogical Remarks

With regard to Marion's recollection of Rahner's genealogical remarks concerning the obstacles generated within the Christian Trinitarian tradition, we can perhaps say the following. (1) Rahner's remarks are considered by Marion to be useful in that they draw attention to the way theological reflection on the Trinity can both distort and unveil the saturated phenomenon. Marion evinces a recognition of the pragmatic, rather than theoretical, value of Rahner's genealogical remarks, and also perhaps a recognition of their indicative, rather than fully fleshed out, character that would demand a far more detailed and historical analysis than provided by Rahner in his book on the Trinity. Moreover, Marion's judgment would in all likelihood not change even if Rahner's genealogical account were supplemented by his essays in *Theological Investigations* on God and mystery and his reflection on Trinity and

the New Testament. (2) There seem to be slight variances between Marion and Rahner when it comes to the degree of the implication of the magisterial tradition regarding the two binaries that Marion and Rahner believe to be problematic. Of the two, it is Marion who is more explicit in naming Suarez as the main culprit (21–24, 92–93).

As is well known, in important footnotes in *The Trinity*, Rahner raised the question as to whether magisterial figures such as Aquinas and Augustine were implicated in the "tragic" demise of the experiential relevance of the Trinity. Of course, whether it was a sign of real scruple or simply a lack of forthrightness, Rahner did not definitively answer his own question. Subsequently, in writers on the Trinity who were broadly in his line such as Catherine LaCugna, it was answered: it is central to her argument in her well-known text on the Trinity and spiritual life, *God for Us* (1991,) that not only are Aquinas and Augustine implicated, but they bear a singular responsibility in the "defeat" of the doctrine of the Trinity. Now, it is important to note that Marion does not exactly exonerate Aquinas. In terms of both what Marion says and the tone in which he says it, Aquinas might be culpable, although clearly not necessarily so. In any event, it seems to me that we are called to examine Aquinas's reflections in questions 26–43 of *Summa theologiae* I and elsewhere in order to come to a determination as to whether Aquinas's Trinitarian discourse obscures in significant ways a phenomenological rendering of the Trinity. One could say that Marion assigns theologians a task, perhaps a task that Matthew Levering and Gilles Emery have taken on and for the most part carried out. (3) Importantly, Marion's embrace of Rahner's ground axiom is *formal* rather than material (here he might profitably be compared with Emmanuel Falque). He is simply approving the re-positioning of the Trinity in the horizon of phenomenality. Marion does not offer a verdict even in passing as to whether Rahner's own constructive articulation of the Trinity within the economy is itself adequate to a Trinity that breaks and corrugates the phenomenal plain and stretches and repositions the self. It is clear, however, that he would reprove any neo-Rahnerian view that would readjust the immanent–economic distinction in a Kantian direction that would make the immanent Trinity belong to the reality of the "thing in itself" and the economic refer to the phenomenal field to which alone we have access. This would, we can infer from Marion, have the calamitous effect of depriving the economic/phenomenal field of ontological vehemence and, correlatively, of constituting the immanent Trinity as absolutely nothing to do with the phenomenal

field, thus moving toward the condition of a *Deus otiosus*, which would not correspond to scriptural witness and would be out of sync with the mainline theological tradition.

Comments on the Non-Rahnerian Aspects of Marion's Genealogical Remarks

We return to those indications supplied by Marion of a genealogical discourse that points to how the broader discourses of modernity have exerted particular pressure on the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. In *Givenness and Revelation*, attention is drawn to English and German forms or moments of this discourse. Still, it is safe to say that the German discourse provides, by far, the more sophisticated of the two forms of discursive interference on Christian presentation of the Trinity, with particular inflections provided by Kant and Schleiermacher with the object of providing grounds, practical or experiential, for the rules that have to be followed by Christian discourse if it is to be assessed as valid. The interiorizing of the rules of practical reason and experience (feeling) lead in each case to dismissal of the Trinity as a possible object of a discourse. Of course, we could say more about this cultural-social phenomenon that continues to have effect in contemporary theological discourses, serving in many cases as the argumentative ground for Trinitarian proposals (e.g., Moltmann, Jüngel, and Jenson). This would be valuable insofar as it would thicken Marion's historical/genealogical observations. Yet it would also get in the way of truly marking in genealogical fashion those discourses in modernity that were precisely a reaction to the Kantian and Schleiermacherian refusal of the Trinity. I am referring to the Trinitarian discourses of Hegel (32, 33) and Schelling (33, 96, 97), which are marked ambiguously in Marion's text, or perhaps marked as ambiguous, as representing an opening that is a return to pristine roots or a closing by other means. That these discourses are important to Marion is confirmed by the fact that, in the French edition of the Gifford Lectures, he has added an extra chapter on manifestation and/or revelation in Hegel and Schelling. Still, even on the basis of what we can see of the English edition before us, Marion seems to agree with the overall conjugation by the greats in French *Communio* interpretation of German Idealism and the "later" Schelling (Chapelle, Léonard, Bruaire, Tillette, Brito) that the emphases on revelation and/or manifestation essentially marks these discourses as different in kind from the discourses of Kant and Schleiermacher, and also as having a different hospitality *ratio* vis-à-vis the Christian construction of the Trinity. Once again, Marion does not provide a

verdict as to whether, in the end, either or both discourses will prove hospitable to Christianity as constituted by its response to the corrugation or irrigation of the phenomenal field, but instead proposes a question and a line of investigation that those more genealogically inclined than he can pursue. It is appropriate to draw attention to his ambivalence regarding the discourse of German Idealism, and perhaps also to a worry about the ambiguous character of the Trinitarianism of the discourse of German Idealism, a discourse that recalls the Christian discourse that both operates within the horizon of phenomenality and, at the same time, distorts it. Marion seems to suggests that, if distortion is to occur, it will be evident in the case of the operation of the Holy Spirit. More specifically, it will be evident in the case of the eclipse of the transcendence of the Holy Spirit when its operations come to be identified with a subjectivity that extends its autonomy over the entire phenomenal field. This subjectivity will thereby not have been lanced or constituted as heteronomous or have been permitted the anamorphosis that constitutes it as truly ecstatic and truly *epektatic*. In the soft edges of this genealogical indication, one can see the connection with Marion's remarks in *God without Being* on the idolatrous figuration of the Eucharist in which community reception substitutes for the non-conceptualizable reality that is given.

Positive Aspect: Elucidating the Phenomenality of the Trinity

I have spent so much time following the tracks laid down by the genealogical crumbs in *Givenness and Revelation* that I may have given the impression that Marion's most important contribution lies in its genealogical speculations. This would be to misunderstand the text and to misconstrue Marion. It is true that the overall achievement of the text has to do with elucidating givenness in general and the saturated phenomenon now rigorously defined to open up a pathway to theology while avoiding two constitutive dangers that turn out to be two sides of the same coin, either structurally theologizing phenomenology or reducing theology to phenomenology. Arguably, however, the specific achievement of the text is to have pressed the investigation in and through beyond Christ as icon and, in so doing, to have returned to Marion's earliest explorations of Trinitarian de-constitution and re-constitution of a subjectivity that would affirm and enhance itself. I have in mind in particular the luminous essays in *Idol and Distance* on Hölderlin and Pseudo-Dionysius, respectively. On Marion's account, the theological fulcrum of Trinitarian theology—precisely because it serves as the phenomenological pivot—is Christ. Christ as rendered in

the New Testament is the visibility of the invisible Father, and thus the icon. Since this has been laid out with some degree of detail in chapter 3 with deft references to the Synoptic Gospels and John, as well as Paul, whose reflections on Christ as icon functions as summary, the burden or burdens of chapter 4 are different: how to give an account of one's "placing" before the icon such that the icon can have an anamorphic effect; how to be convinced of the reality of the Holy Spirit who precisely does not appear. Treating these phenomenological questions with due rigor has decidedly important theological implications, just as the issues in the theological tradition regarding the status of the Holy Spirit, such as the reflections by Basil and Gregory of Nazianzen, require a phenomenological correlative. Of course, both questions are rooted in the accounts of the Holy Spirit in the biblical text, in which the Spirit's identity is constituted by relation to the Father and Christ, and in which we have the systemic difficulty of distinguishing between human workings and the workings of the Spirit.

Allowing myself to be led by the problematic of the non-appearance of the Spirit, and after the manner of the kind of interpretive strategy followed throughout, which functionally elevates the theological over the phenomenological register and tracks down theological indications in the text, I would like to do two things: (1) address the way that Marion uses both Eastern and Western Fathers when it comes to the Trinity in general and the Holy Spirit in particular, and especially the way in which he suggests (a) the fundamental equivalence between East and West (weaker thesis) and (b) that Augustine might be regarded as *primus inter pares* (stronger thesis; not demonstrated); (2) say something about the horizonal presence of de Lubac and especially von Balthasar in Marion's reduction of the Trinitarian reflection of the Church Fathers to phenomenality, which affects not only his holding of the weaker thesis of the equal negative capability of East and West for reduction to phenomenality but also his preference for Augustine.

I begin with the first point, the capacity for reduction to phenomenality in the Christian Trinitarian tradition. Although it should be remembered that we are talking merely about observations made in passing or embedded in the footnotes, Marion seems to want to make the point that the Trinitarian tradition has the capacity to be reduced to phenomenality when it comes to both the Trinity in general and the Holy Spirit in particular. In addition, he wants to say that both Eastern and Western forms of Trinitarian and pneumatological thought have historically demonstrated this capacity.

There are moments, however, in which he seems to support a slightly stronger view, something like a thesis of "equiprimordial" capacity (or equipotentiality), which means that, logically, any differences between East and West regarding the Trinity in general and the Holy Spirit in particular can be regarded as superficial. Tactically, Marion focuses on theological constructions that antedate dogmatic divisions between East and West on the Trinity and on the Holy Spirit in particular, focusing particularly on Basil, Nazianzen, and Augustine. Now, the making equivalent of Eastern and Western Trinitarianism is hardly uninteresting. In addition to the farrago of complaints in contemporary scholarship on Augustine's lack of attention (unfair) to the Bible and the overly conceptual and philosophical thrust of *De Trinitate*, there is the general assumption of the advantage of the Greek East when it comes to the articulation of the Holy Spirit. Perhaps not surprisingly, given his deep reading of Augustine's corpus, and *De Trinitate* in particular, neither the complaints nor scholarly preference (found among Western as well as Eastern theologians) are sanctioned. This I call Marion's weaker Trinitarian and/or pneumatological thesis.

There are a few moments in chapter 4, however, where Marion seems to suggest the stronger thesis: while Basil, Nazianzen, and Augustine are fundamentally equal in their capacity for reduction to phenomenality, on an analogy with Louis Althusser's view of "overdetermination," Augustine is superior, even if only "in the last instance." We have a suggestion—no more, but also no less. Moreover, we can grant that, in the kind of text that *Givenness and Revelation* is, Marion is under no obligation to produce his warrants. Still, the suggestion is too intriguing not to speculate about what relative advantages Augustine might enjoy; I say "relative" because the equality thesis is primitive and the very fact that Marion does not press Augustine's advantage leaves it open that he can tolerate a different preference, albeit one that is not fundamentally hostile to that of Augustine. Against the backdrop of Marion's comprehensive analysis of Augustine in *The Self's Place: An Approach of Saint Augustine* (2012), Augustine might plausibly be thought to have two advantages, one quite general and the other more specific. Augustine's general advantage would have to do with his continual insistence that the identity of the Holy Spirit is a function of its relation to Christ as the icon around whom the entire phenomenal field is ordered or better reordered. Augustine's second and more specific advantage is his recognition that it is the Holy Spirit who positions the self before

the icon in order that the self sees through the icon to the Father, and thus also to the Son, who is intrinsically invisible. One might see here the reversal of "placing" that Marion addresses in his Augustine book (no. 38) when speaking of the *Confessions* as admitting of a specifically Trinitarian rendition supplied elsewhere, such as *De Trinitate* and *Enarationes in Psalmos*, the two most cited texts other than the *Confessions* (and perhaps also Augustine's commentaries on John's Gospel and 1 John).

We come to our second issue, which is to what extent *Communio* theology in general, and the Trinitarian theology of von Balthasar in particular, forms a horizon for Marion's reduction of Trinitarian thought in general to phenomenality, and also and more specifically for his preference in the last instance for Augustine. Marion provides definite clues that Balthasar is a conversation partner when he speaks of "stage" (109) and of the Holy Spirit as "director" (106). These, as every scholar of Balthasar knows, are important lexical and conceptual items in his *Theo-Drama*. Obviously, the more specific "director" image is the more important of the two, since it reinforces the point that the Holy Spirit is behind the scenes and never directly appears on the stage. Translated into Marion's terms, the Spirit is not the object of a gaze, whether reordered or refigured or not. Should we take our distance from the text and fundamentally telescope it, I think we might discover other affinities. Notice the title of the chapter "The Logic of Manifestation." As Marion reads manifestation or revelation, which defies the logic of formal deduction and the more informal logic of expectation, we know that "logic" here is not being used in the usual sense. This logic cannot be the logic of German Idealism, the logic of *Erscheinung* that dictates that manifestation is truly such only to the extent that contingency and gratuity can ultimately be explained or explained away. Marion seems to accept a critique of Hegel that is articulated by Derrida and Henry, among others, but also fairly central to a band of distinguished *Communio* philosophers and theologians. If there is a logic of manifestation or revelation, then it is otherwise than that of Hegel, maybe also otherwise than the looser logic of the "later" Schelling's *Philosophie der Offenbarung*.

But then which philosophical-theological *Communio* thinker most clearly advocated and exhibited in his Trinitarian thought this alternative "logic"? The answer is necessarily Balthasar, who devotes three volumes (English translation) to the elaboration of a "theologic." In his elaboration, Balthasar moves from a general dialogue with both Hegel and Heidegger on manifestation, which breaks open

the self to a depth in appearance that it cannot command (volume 1), to an account of Christ as truth, as the appearance with unsurpassable authority (*exousia*) and ontological vehemence, who is exegeted by the Holy Spirit (volume 2), and finally to considerations of the Holy Spirit in Eastern and Western Christianity both patristic and non-patristic (volume 3). As I register this, although I am making no suggestion of genetic dependence here, I think that we can see that the phenomenological transversal of *Givenness and Revelation* is accompanied, or at least shadowed, by a "theo-logical" double. This theo-logic double involves serious reflection on the "incognito" character of the Holy Spirit, since the Holy Spirit always seems to be a function of relation, and thus is "between," or *metaxu*, or ingredient in, a "we" (volumes 2 and 3), but this logic also addresses the issue of the relative advantage or disadvantage of Western and Eastern Trinitarian thought and thought on the Holy Spirit in particular. Balthasar advances the following position that should be set side by side with the one advanced by Marion. First, wishing to relativize dogmatic differences between East and West on the Trinity while respecting basic differences in emphases, Balthasar argues for a functional equivalency between Eastern and Western Trinitarianism. It should be noted, however, that Balthasar's elaboration of the thesis of equivalency is somewhat broader than that of Marion in that it does not apply uniquely to the Patristic period. Still, the overlap is striking. Second, against the backdrop of this equivalency, Balthasar suggests that it is legitimate for a community or individual theologian to exercise a preference for a Western or Eastern emphasis. On the surface, this seems decisionistic, since Balthasar fails to provide any guidance with regard to such a choice, let alone protocols for it. Of course, even the failure is useful in that it tells us that the exercise of preference is not on the same level as the posited equivalency.

Still, within the context of the triptych, it is possible to backfill. There are good theological reasons, but even better historical ones, why contemporary Catholic thinkers might stick to the classical Western Trinitarianism inaugurated by Augustine, and more specifically its rendition of the relation of the Holy Spirit to Christ and the Church. Balthasar seems to be of the opinion that Western theology grasps better the incognito quality of the "person" of the Spirit, as well as the defining characteristic of Spirit as referring to Christ. The clincher, in both Balthasar's case and de Lubac's, is that the classical Augustinian position, which was displaced by Joachim de Fiore, is required as a bulwark against the excessive pneumatization

of theology from the nineteenth century on that goes hand in hand with immanentization. And both Balthasar and de Lubac think that constructing the Holy Spirit as a free radical is one of the means in and through which Christian thought participates in its own negation.

Conclusion
The Order of Love: *Hors-Texte*

As the famous poem of Robert Frost has it, two roads divide in the wood, here the phenomenological and the theological. I have chosen the latter and remain considerably more vexed about the validity of my choice than he was. The choice has been made, however, and in full knowledge that allowance for revelation as the epitome of the saturated phenomenon does not belong to the order of constitution. All anticipation is of the "unanticipable," to use Balthasar's term with Marion's meaning. As the presence of the inalienably alien, as used by Marion, "revelation" does come across as "dialectical" after the manner of the early Barth. The implied distinction between appearance and reality is not simply intended as a courtesy. Appearances can be deceptive, although again, not necessarily so. Marion clearly has an elective affinity for Pascal's order of love, and *Givenness and Revelation* continues to be a homage to Augustine. There are traits in each that can be called on to support the Barthian attribution. Yet, I am persuaded that they do not do so in fact. The Pascal of the order of love is not, for Marion, the Pascal of Jansenist leanings, but the one commended by de Lubac and Balthasar alike. In addition, the Augustine affirmed is also one who, if he insists on the irreducibility of grace, is not making pronouncements regarding who is saved or condemned. Marion's Augustine and Pascal, like their great *ressourcement* promoters, insist on grace as promoting wonderment, awe, gratitude, and worship, but against a backdrop of a nature that is thickly textured, ambiguously wrought, and full of wonderful stretching, as well as Promethean grasping and Dionysian substitution. One can attend to the dark side of human nature, and thus sinfulness, as Pascal and Augustine often do. Yet one does not need to do it exclusively, or even mainly, to come to the conclusion that the reaching out and stretching, which is both sign and enactment of virtue and the good, will move toward, but never touch, the source that made reaching and stretching possible. Should reaching and stretching touch their source, then all would be nature and nature would be all. Like Michelangelo's Adam, we reach and stretch toward the source but never touch, and thus grace is inalienably different and everything. NV