The American public’s positive reception and the editor’s commitment make possible today a rerelease of the translation of *Etant donné: Essai d’une phénoménologie de la donation* (Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1997, 1998, and 2005), first appearing in 2002 from Stanford University Press. My thanks go to both. But the passage of ten years also permits me to make some remarks that complete those made in the preface to the earlier publication of this translation (concerning the triptych formed with *Reduction and Givenness* and *In Excess*, and especially concerning the relation of this triptych with *God Without Being*).

First, and beyond the obvious satisfaction that any author would receive in such circumstances, it can be observed that the question of givenness is now established in phenomenology and in philosophy as such. Even the objections, which are scattered throughout every serious engagement, have confirmed it. That the phenomenon is not confined to its status as object or as being but must be characterized more originarily; that this characterization can be made in terms of what Husserl (and, for that matter, his predecessors at Marburg, too) regularly called *Gegebenheit* and what the young Heidegger identified as the “the magic word of phenomenology and the ‘stumbling block’ of all the others”;¹ that this characteristic deserves and makes possible further specifications—all this seems admitted by the philosophical community today. The sole question, perfectly legitimate, is to know if such givens are available to us and if we can define such a univocal concept of givenness/given. Responding to this question has motivated many works, often quite remarkable ones.² The issue has become common, and I am quite happy that I am no longer alone on this path—a path that one hopes will become more and more frequented. I have, for my part, added some details concerning the historical origin of *Gegebenheit*,³ as well as the status of the saturated phenomenon that accomplished *Gegebenheit*.⁴
A second remark concerns the schema of a triple reduction. It was, in fact, already outlined in the speculative recovery of the doctrine of the three orders elaborated by Pascal, an attempt I made in the final chapter of my study *Sur le prisme métaphysique de Descartes: Constitution et limites de l’onto-théo-logie dans la pensée cartésienne* (Paris, 1986 [see the English translation by Jeffrey L. Kosky, *On Descartes’ Metaphysical Prism* (Chicago, 1999)]). That is, I suggested, the distinction between the order of bodies, the order of the mind, and the order of the heart, in a hierarchy where each superior order sees the inferior orders without the latter being able to see it, sets us on the path (with all appropriate approximations) toward the reductions set forth in *Reduction and Givenness*, then put into operation in *Being Given*. Take, respectively, the transcendental reduction by the I of the phenomenon to the object in Husserl; then the reduction by *Dasein* of the phenomenon to the being in Heidegger; finally, a third reduction, which recovers, validates, and at the same time disqualifies the first two: the reduction of the phenomenon to the given in it—precisely the one that permits concluding “so much reduction, so much givenness.” This tripling of reductions could give rise to as many difficulties as possibilities—only the results and the descriptions to come will decide.

Another difficulty could arise from the use, introduced by *Le phénomène érotique: Six méditations* (Paris, 2003 [English translation by Stephen Lewis, *The Erotic Phenomenon: Six Meditations* (Chicago, 2006)]), of another, comparable formulation: the erotic reduction. Is this a fourth reduction, and would this inflation compromise the first three? Or is this another name for the third, and would this redundancy be useless and harmful? In fact, neither is the case. The erotic reduction comes from the reduction to the given because it specifies a particular figure of it. The final pages of *Being Given* (323ff.) indicated this quite clearly: the phenomenon as given ends up at the gifted—the figure of the *ego* such as it receives itself from the given that it receives. Now, this gifted is accomplished the majority of the time by receiving itself on the occasion of receiving a phenomenon given to it but without this phenomenon itself having the status of gifted, since it remains most of the time not an *alter ego* or a personal other but something other than *ego*, a mere phenomenon of the world. The third reduction, therefore, typically confronts the gifted with a given in the world, not another gifted. A final possibility, therefore, remains open: that where a gifted would receive itself in the reception of a gifted itself of the same
type as the gifted. Now as soon as I receive myself from a personal other, in particular when I am affected by a flesh that first affects itself—in short, as soon as I receive myself from another person who himself receives himself from another person (in this case, me)—such an intrigue of one gifted with another gifted defines exactly the space of the erotic reduction. It is therefore not added to the third reduction (to the given), nor is it confused with it; it radicalizes it by leading it to its utmost possibility.

A third remark remains to be made, one certainly less obvious than the first two (which bear respectively on the past or the present of this work), since it bears on what remains still to come, Deo volente. How can a phenomenology of givenness be developed? What fields can it—and, significantly, it alone—open? And to just what extent can it confirm its phenomenological legitimacy by its power to make manifest? These questions can find a response, even provisional, only from the results obtained, in fact, by the work of bringing to light the things themselves; in this sense I can say nothing and make no promises. It remains the case that, according to a paradox spotted by Heidegger, thought calls for phenomenology precisely when it concerns phenomena that are at first glance and for the most part hidden, not yet seen. Now of such phenomena, which at first are not seen, the res quae non videntur as Saint Augustine calls them, there is no shortage; consider all that does not present itself to be seen in the mode of the objects we produce technically, or, at least, constitute scientifically, or in the mode of the beings that make a world around us. I have since 2002 made at least two attempts precisely in this direction. On one hand, I have attempted to reread an author often interpreted in a metaphysical lexicon that does not do justice to his theological originality but succeeds only in distorting it—Saint Augustine. This rereading wanted to test whether the concepts and the phenomenological operations could arrive, using the dimensions of givenness (given, gift, gifted, facticity, event, saturated phenomenon, call and response, etc.), at a more coherent view of his genius.5 On the other hand, I have attempted to describe decidedly nonobjective but absolutely certain phenomena—indeed, ones that take on in their apparent invisibility, the rank of saturated phenomenon: undefinable man, impossible God, all-powerful gift, unforeseeable event.6

The question of givenness has only barely begun to be understood, but at least it has been posed.
NOTES

2. To cite only those that appeared in English: R. Horner, Jean-Luc Marion: A Theological Introduction (Ashgate, 2005); P. Jonkers and R. Welten, eds., God in France: Eight Contemporary French Thinkers on God (Leuven, Belgium, 2005); Michael Ian Leask and Eoin Cassidy, eds., Givenness and God: Questions of Jean-Luc Marion (New York, 2005); K. Hart, ed., Counter-experiences: Reading Jean-Luc Marion (South Bend, IN, 2007); Bruce Ellis Benson and Norman Wirzba, eds., Words of Life: New Theological Turns in French Phenomenology (New York, 2010); J. R. White, ed., “Selected Papers on the Thought of Jean-Luc Marion,” special issue, Quaestiones Disputatae 1, no. 1 (Steubenville, 2010).
4. For example, The Visible and the Revealed (New York, 2008) reissues the earliest (and still imprecise) version of the argument of the “Saturated Phenomenon” (which first appeared in J.-F. Courtine, ed., Phenomenologie et théologie [Paris, 1996]), but, more significantly, also includes “The Banality of Saturation,” which first appeared in Hart, Counter-experiences.