Being Ready for Withdrawal:
Heideggerian Authenticity and Its Structural Similarity to Christian Faith

Dr. Yasuaki KIMIJIMA

Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, Hosei University, Tokyo

Email: yasuakikimijima@gmail.com

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to uncover the essential feature of Heidegger's concept of "authenticity" (Eigentlichkeit) as it appears in *Being and Time*, and to point out its structural similarity to Christian faith as he understands it.

To begin with, I will roughly characterize the Heideggerian authenticity, and then take up two previous interpretations, one of which is so-called "expressivist" view, famously represented by Charles Guignon, and the other is Denis McManus's recent interpretation.

According to McManus, a person who is authentic in Heidegger's sense is reasonably led to "all-things-considered judgment" of their situation. This is because whenever they choose to do something, they are pushed to meet multiple demands of their situation, but they must leave some of them unmet. Heidegger calls this falling short a kind of "nullity" (Nichtigkeit), and suggests that the authentic person is motivated by this nullity. Thus, in this regard, McManus's interpretation seems fairly plausible. However, this alone cannot suffice being authentic, and that is why Heidegger refers to another concept of nullity, which McManus explicitly omits in his paper. In my reading, this another nullity comes from the fact that whenever I choose to do something, the options to choose from is narrowed down in the first place as a result of my being-this-particular-me. Now, if the authentic person is also motivated by this another nullity, then it seems plausible that they try *not* to be satisfied with their own judgment on what to do, but rather to be always ready for withdrawal of such a judgment, and wait for an occasion to catch up with those possibilities that are excluded in the first place due to my being-this-me and so remain unknown to me.

If that is the case, it seems that Heideggerian authenticity, thus understood, has a structural similarity to Christian faith, which I think is best captured by Luther's words: "Faith means surrendering oneself to matters that cannot be seen." By way of conclusion, I would like to point out this similarity and briefly ponder its meaning.