

Martin Heidegger
Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)
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237. Faith and Truth

What is meant here is not the particular form of belonging to a "confession" but rather what is ownmost to faith, grasped from within what is ownmost to truth.

Faith means holding-for-true. In this sense it means appropriating a "true," no matter how it is given and can be taken over. In this broad sense it means agreement.

Holding-for-true changes according to what is true (and finally and foremost according to truth and what is its ownmost).

But faith—especially in its open or tacit opposition to knowing—means holding-for-true that which withdraws from knowing in the sense of an explaining intuiting [*erklärende Einsichtnahme*] (even "believing" a report whose "truth" cannot be demonstrated but is vouched for by reporters and witnesses). Even here it becomes clear that in its essentiality this faith depends on the specific manner of knowing that is set against it.

Faith: holding-for-true what is completely withdrawn from any knowing. But what does knowing mean here? What is actual knowing? It is the knowing that knows what is ownmost to truth and accordingly determines it primarily in the turning [*die Kehre*] from within this ownmost.

If what is ownmost to truth is the clearing for the self-sheltering-concealing of be-ing, then knowing-awareness is holding oneself in this clearing of sheltering-concealing and thus is the basic relation to the self-sheltering-concealing of be-ing and to be-ing itself.

Then this knowing-awareness is not a mere holding-for-true something that is true or something that is outstandingly true but rather is originally *holding oneself within the essential sway of truth*.

This knowing-awareness, essential knowing, is then more originary than any faith, which always refers to something that is true and therefore, if it ever wants to get out of total blindness, must necessarily *know* what true and something true means to it!

Essential knowing is a *holding oneself within the ownmost* [*Wesen*]. This is to say that essential knowing is not a mere representation of an encounter but rather is persevering within the break-through of a projecting-opening which, through enopening, comes to know the very abground that sustains it.

Thus, if one takes "knowing" in the heretofore sense of representation and possession of representation, then of course essential knowing is not a "knowing" but a "faith." However, this word then has an entirely different meaning, no longer that of holding-for-true, whereby truth is already known—even if confusedly—but rather that of holding-oneself-in-truth. And this holding oneself, having the character of a *projecting-open*, is always a questioning, nay *the* originary questioning as such by which man exposes himself to truth and puts what is ownmost up for decision.

Those who question in this manner are the originary and actual believers, i.e., those who take *truth* itself—and not only what is true—seriously and from the ground up, who put to decision whether what is ownmost to truth holds sway and whether this essential swaying itself carries and guides us, the knowing ones, the believing ones, the acting ones, the creating ones—in short, the historical ones.

This originary believing, of course, has nothing in common with accepting that which offers immediate support and renders courage superfluous. Rather, this believing is persevering in the utmost deciding. This alone can once again bring our history to a grounded ground.

For this originary believing is also not a self-seeking grabbing of a self-made security, insofar as, as questioning, it exposes itself precisely to the essential swaying of being and experiences *the necessity* of what is of ab-ground.