

Martin Heidegger

Being Time

Trans.

Macquarrie

Robinson

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(1)

is to become the sole explicit and abiding theme for one's analytic—the business of philosophers¹.

By considering these prejudices, however, we have made plain not only that the question of Being lacks an answer, but that the question itself is obscure and without direction. So if it is to be revived, this means that we must first work out an adequate way of *formulating* it.

5 ¶ 2. The Formal Structure of the Question of Being

The question of the meaning of Being must be *formulated*. If it is a fundamental question, or indeed *the* fundamental question, it must be made transparent, and in an appropriate way.¹ We must therefore explain briefly what belongs to any question whatsoever, so that from this standpoint the question of Being can be made visible as a *very special* one with its own distinctive character.

Every inquiry is a seeking [Suchen]. Every seeking gets guided beforehand by what is sought. Inquiry is a cognizant seeking for an entity both with regard to the fact that it is and with regard to its Being as it is.² This cognizant seeking can take the form of 'investigating' ['Untersuchen'], in which one lays bare that which the question is about and ascertains its character. Any inquiry, as an inquiry about something, has that *which is asked about* [sein *Gefragtes*]. But all inquiry about something is somehow a questioning of something [Anfragen bei . . .]. So in addition to what is asked about, an inquiry has that *which is interrogated* [ein *Befragtes*]. In investigative questions—that is, in questions which are specifically theoretical—what is asked about is determined and conceptualized. Furthermore, in what is asked about there lies also that *which is to be found out by the asking* [das *Eyfragte*]; this is what is really intended:³ with this the inquiry reaches its goal. Inquiry itself is the behaviour of a questioner, and therefore of an entity, and as such has its own character of Being. When one makes an inquiry one may do so 'just casually' or one may formulate the

¹ . . . dann bedarf solches Fragen der angemessenen Durchsichtigkeit. The adjective 'Durchsichtig' is one of Heidegger's favourite expressions and means simply 'transparent', 'perspicuous', something that one can 'see through'. We shall ordinarily translate it by 'transparent'. See H. 146 for further discussion.

² . . . in seinem Dass- und Sosein.¹

³ . . . das eigentlich Intendierete . . . The adverb 'eigentlich' occurs very often in this work. It may be used informally where one might write 'really' or 'on its part', or in a much stronger sense, where something like 'genuinely' or 'authentically' would be more appropriate. It is not always possible to tell which meaning Heidegger has in mind. In the contexts which seem relatively informal we shall write 'really'; in the more technical passages we shall write 'authentically', reserving 'genuinely' for 'genuine' or 'echt'. The reader must not confuse this kind of 'authenticity' with the kind, which belongs to an 'authentic text' or an 'authentic account'. See H. 42 for further discussion. In the present passage, the verb 'intendieren' is presumably used in the medieval sense of 'intending', as adapted and modified by Brentano and Husserl.

question explicitly. The latter case is peculiar in that the inquiry does not become transparent to itself until all these constitutive factors of the question have themselves become transparent.

The question about the meaning of Being is to be *formulated*. We must therefore discuss it with an eye to these structural items.

Inquiry, as a kind of seeking, must be guided beforehand by what is sought. So the meaning of Being must already be available to us in some way. As we have intimated, we always conduct our activities in an understanding of Being. Out of this understanding arise both the explicit question of the meaning of Being and the tendency that leads us towards its conception. We do not *know* what 'Being' means. But even if we ask, 'What is "Being"?' we keep within an understanding of the 'is', though we are unable to fix conceptually what that 'is' signifies. We do not even know the horizon in terms of which that meaning is to be grasped and fixed. *But this vague average understanding of Being is still a Fact.*

However much this understanding of Being (an understanding which is already available to us) may fluctuate and grow dim, and border on mere acquaintance with a word, its very indefiniteness is itself a positive phenomenon which needs to be clarified. An investigation of the meaning of Being cannot be expected to give this clarification at the outset. If we are to obtain the clue we need for interpreting this average understanding of Being, we must first develop the concept of Being. In the light of this concept and the ways in which it may be explicitly understood, we can make out what this obscured or still unilluminated understanding of Being means, and what kinds of obscuration—or hindrance to an explicit illumination—of the meaning of Being are possible and even inevitable.

Further, this vague average understanding of Being may be so infiltrated with traditional theories and opinions about Being that these remain hidden as sources of the way in which it is prevalently understood. What we seek when we inquire into Being is not something entirely unfamiliar, even if proximally¹ we cannot grasp it at all.

In the question which we are to work out, *what is asked about* is Being—that which determines entities as entities, that on the basis of which

¹ 'zunächst'. This word is of very frequent occurrence in Heidegger, and he will discuss its use of it on H. 370 below. In ordinary German usage the word may mean 'at first', 'to begin with', or 'in the first instance', and we shall often translate it in such ways. The word is, however, cognate with the adjective 'nah' and its superlative 'näher', which we shall usually translate as 'close' and 'closest' respectively; and Heidegger often uses 'zunächst' in the sense of 'most closely', when he is describing the most 'natural' and 'obvious' experiences which we have at an uncritical and pre-philosophical level. We have ventured to translate this Heideggerian sense of 'zunächst' as 'proximally', but there are many border-line cases where it is not clear whether Heidegger has in mind this special sense or one of the more general usages, and in such cases we have chosen whatever expression seems stylistically preferable.

[worraufhin] entities are already understood, however we may discuss them in detail. The Being of entities 'is' not itself an entity. If we are to understand the problem of Being, our first philosophical step consists in not *μῆθ' ὅτι* *ἔστι* *ὁ* *ὄν* in not 'telling a story'—that is to say, in not defining entities as entities by tracing them back in their origin to some other entities, as if Being had the character of some possible entity. Hence Being, as that which is asked about, must be exhibited in a way of its own, essentially different from the way in which entities are discovered. Accordingly, *what is to be found out by the asking*—the meaning of Being—also demands that it be conceived in a way of its own, essentially contrasting with the concepts in which entities acquire their determinate signification.

In so far as Being constitutes what is asked about, and "Being" means the Being of entities, then entities themselves turn out to be *what is interrogated*. These are, so to speak, questioned as regards their Being. But if the characteristics of their Being can be yielded without falsification, then these entities must, on their part, have become accessible as they are in themselves. When we come to what is to be interrogated, the question of Being requires that the right way of access to entities shall have been obtained and secured in advance. But there are many things which we designate as 'being' ["*seiend*"], and we do so in various senses. Everything we talk about, everything we have in view, everything towards which we comport ourselves in any way, is being; what we are is being, and so is how we are. Being lies in the fact that something is, and in its Being as it is; in Reality; in presence-at-hand; in subsistence; in validity; in Dasein; in the 'there is'.¹ In which entities is the meaning of Being to be discerned? From which entities is the disclosure of Being to take its departure? Is the starting-point optional, or does some particular entity have priority when we come to work out the question of Being? Which entity shall we take for our example, and in what sense does it have priority?

If the question about Being is to be explicitly formulated and carried through in such a manner as to be completely transparent to itself, then any treatment of it in line with the elucidations we have given requires us to explain how Being is to be looked at, how its meaning is to be understood and conceptually grasped; it requires us to prepare the way for choosing the right entity for our example, and to work out the genuine way of access to it. Looking at something, understanding and conceiving it, choosing, access to it—all these ways of behaving are constitutive for our inquiry, and therefore are modes of Being for those particular entities

¹ 'Sein liegt im Dasein und Sosein, in Realität, Vorhandenheit, Bestand, Geltung, Dasein, im "es gibt".' On 'Vorhandenheit' ('presence-at-hand') see note 1, p. 48, H. 25. On 'Dasein', see note 1, p. 27.

which we, the inquirers, are ourselves. Thus to work out the question of Being adequately, we must make an entity—the inquirer—transparent in his own Being. The very asking of this question is an entity's mode of Being; and as such it gets its essential character from what is inquired about—namely, Being. This entity which each of us is himself and which includes inquiring as one of the possibilities of its Being, we shall denote by the term "*Dasein*".¹ If we are to formulate our question explicitly and transparently, we must first give a proper explication of an entity (Dasein), with regard to its Being.

Is there not, however, a manifest circularity in such an undertaking? If we must first define an entity *in its Being*, and if we want to formulate the question of Being only on this basis, what is this but going in a circle? In working out our question, have we not 'presupposed' something which only the answer can bring? Formal objections such as the argument about 'circular reasoning', which can easily be cited at any time in the study of first principles, are always sterile when one is considering concrete ways of investigating. When it comes to understanding the matter at hand, they carry no weight and keep us from penetrating into the field of study.

But factually² there is no circle at all in formulating our question as we have described. One can determine the nature of entities in their Being without necessarily having the explicit concept of the meaning of Being at one's disposal. Otherwise there could have been no ontological knowledge heretofore. One would hardly deny that factually there has been such knowledge.³ Of course 'Being' has been presupposed in all ontology up till now, but not as a *concept* at one's disposal—not as the sort of thing we are seeking. This 'presupposing' of Being has rather the character of taking a look at it beforehand, so that in the light of it the entities presented to us get provisionally articulated in their Being. This guiding

¹ The word 'Dasein' plays so important a role in this work and is already so familiar to the English-speaking reader who has read about Heidegger, that it seems simpler to leave it untranslated except in the relatively rare passages in which Heidegger himself breaks it up with a hyphen ('Dasein') to show its etymological construction: literally 'being-there'.² Though in traditional German philosophy it may be used quite generally to stand for almost any kind of Being or 'existence' which we can say that something *has* (the 'existence' of God for example), in everyday usage it tends to be used more narrowly to stand for the kind of Being that belongs to *persons*. Heidegger follows the everyday usage in this respect, but goes somewhat further in that he often uses it to stand for any *person* who has such Being, and who is thus an 'entity' himself. See H. 11 below.

³ 'faktisch'. While this word can often be translated simply as 'in fact' or 'as a matter of fact', it is used both as an adjective and as an adverb and is so characteristic of Heidegger's style that we shall as a rule translate it either as 'factual' or as 'factually', thus preserving its connection with the important noun 'Faktizität' ('facticity'), and keeping it distinct from 'tatsächlich' ('factual') and 'wirklich' ('actual'). See the discussion of 'Tatsächlichkeit' and 'Faktizität' in Sections 12 and 29 below (H. 56, 135).

⁴ "... deren faktischen Bestand man wohl nicht leugnen wird."

activity of taking a look at Being arises from the average understanding of Being in which we always operate and *which in the end belongs to the essential constitution¹ of Dasein itself*. Such 'presupposing' has nothing to do with laying down an axiom from which a sequence of propositions is deductively derived. It is quite impossible for there to be any 'circular argument' in formulating the question about the meaning of Being; for in answering this question, the issue is not one of grounding something by such a derivation; it is rather one of laying bare the grounds for it and exhibiting them.²

In the question of the meaning of Being there is no 'circular reasoning' but rather a remarkable 'relatedness backward or forward' which what we are asking about (Being) bears to the inquiry itself as a mode of Being of an entity. Here what is asked about has an essential pertinence to the inquiry itself, and this belongs to the ownmost meaning [Eigentlichen Sinn] of the question of Being. This only means, however, that there is a way—perhaps even a very special one—in which entities with the character of Dasein are related to the question of Being. But have we not thus demonstrated that a certain kind of entity has a priority with regard to its Being? And have we not thus presented that entity which shall serve as the primary example to be *interrogated* in the question of Being? So far our discussion has not demonstrated Dasein's priority, nor has it shown decisively whether Dasein may possibly or even necessarily serve as the primary entity to be interrogated. But indeed something like a priority of Dasein has announced itself.

¶ 3. The Ontological Priority of the Question of Being

When we pointed out the characteristics of the question of Being, taking as our clue the formal structure of the question as such, we made it

¹ 'Wesensverfassung'. 'Verfassung' is the standard word for the 'constitution' of a nation or any political organization, but it is also used for the 'condition' or 'state' in which a person may find himself. Heidegger seldom uses the word in either of these senses; but he does use it in ways which are somewhat analogous. In one sense Dasein's 'Verfassung' is its 'constitution', the way it is constituted, 'as condition *humana*'. In another sense Dasein may have several 'Verfassungen' as constitutive 'states' or factors which enter into its 'constitution'. We shall, in general, translate 'Verfassung' as 'constitution' or 'constitutive state' according to the context; but in passages where 'constitutive state' would be cumbersome and there is little danger of ambiguity, we shall simply write 'state'. These states, however, must always be thought of as constitutive and essential, not as temporary or transitory stages like the 'state' of one's health or the 'state of the nation'. When Heidegger uses the word 'Konstitution', we shall usually indicate this by capitalizing 'Constitution'.
² . . . well as in der Beantwortung der Frage nicht um eine ableitende Begründung, sondern um aufweisende Grund-Freilegung geht. Expressions of the form 'es geht . . . um' appear very often in this work. We shall usually translate them by variants on '—is an issue for . . .'

clear that this question is a peculiar one, in that a series of fundamental considerations is required for working it out, not to mention for solving it. But its distinctive features will come fully to light only when we have delimited it adequately with regard to its function, its aim, and its motives.

Hitherto our arguments for showing that the question must be restated have been motivated in part by its venerable origin but chiefly by the lack of a definite answer and even by the absence of any satisfactory formulation of the question itself. One may, however, ask what purpose this question is supposed to serve. Does it simply remain—or is it at all—a mere matter for soaring speculation about the most general of generalities, or is it *rather, of all questions, both the most basic and the most concrete?*

Being is always the Being of an entity. The totality of entities can, in accordance with its various domains, become a field for laying bare and delimiting certain definite areas of subject-matter. These areas, on their part (for instance, history, Nature, space, life, Dasein, language, and the like), can serve as objects which corresponding scientific investigations may take as their respective themes. Scientific research accomplishes, roughly and naively, the demarcation and initial fixing of the areas of subject-matter. The basic structures of any such area have already been worked out after a fashion in our pre-scientific ways of experiencing and interpreting that domain of Being in which the area of subject-matter is itself confined. The 'basic concepts' which thus arise remain our proximal clues for disclosing this area concretely for the first time. And although research may always lean towards this positive approach, its real progress comes not so much from collecting results and storing them away in 'manuals' as from inquiring into the ways in which each particular area is basically constituted [Grundverfassungen]—an inquiry to which we have been driven mostly by reacting against just such an increase in information.

The real 'movement' of the sciences takes place when their basic concepts undergo a more or less radical revision which is transparent to itself. The level which a science has reached is determined by how far it is *capable* of a crisis in its basic concepts. In such immanent crises the very relationship between positively investigative inquiry and those things themselves that are under interrogation comes to a point where it begins to totter. Among the various disciplines everywhere today there are freshly awakened tendencies to put research on new foundations.

Mathematics, which is seemingly the most rigorous and most firmly constructed of the sciences, has reached a crisis in its 'foundations'. In the controversy between the formalists and the intuitionists, the issue is

② Hans-Georg Gadamer
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ical self-mediation between the present and tradition. Thus the relation of question and answer is, in fact, reversed. The voice that speaks to us from the past—whether text, work, trace—itself poses a question and places our meaning in openness. In order to answer the question put to us, we the interrogated must ourselves begin to ask questions. We must attempt to reconstruct the question to which the traditional text is the answer. But we will be unable to do so without going beyond the historical horizon it presents us. Reconstructing the question to which the text is presumed to be the answer itself takes place within a process of questioning through which we try to answer the question that the text asks us. A reconstructed question can never stand within its original horizon: for the historical horizon that circumscribed the reconstruction is not a truly comprehensive one. It is, rather, included within the horizon that embraces us as the questioners who have been encountered by the traditional word.

Hence it is a hermeneutical necessity always to go beyond mere reconstruction. We cannot avoid thinking about what the author accepted unquestioningly and hence did not consider, and bringing it into the openness of the question. This is not to open the door to arbitrariness in interpretation but to reveal what always takes place. Understanding the word of tradition always requires that the reconstructed question be set within the openness of its questionableness—i.e., that it merge with the question that tradition is for us. If the “historical” question emerges by itself, this means that it no longer arises as a question. It results from the cessation of understanding—a detour in which we get stuck.³²¹ Part of real understanding, however, is that we regain the concepts of a historical past in such a way that they also include our own comprehension of them. Above I called this “the fusion of horizons.”³²² With Collingwood, we can say that we understand only when we understand the question to which something is the answer, but the intention of what is understood in this way does not remain foregrounded against our own intention. Rather, reconstructing the question to which the meaning of a text is understood as an answer merges with our own questioning. For the text must be understood as an answer to a real question.

The close relation between questioning and understanding is what gives the hermeneutic experience its true dimension. However much a person trying to understand may leave open the truth

³²¹ See the account of this wrong turning of the historical in my analysis above, pp. 181ff., of Spinoza's *Theologico-Political Treatise*.
³²² Cf. pp. 306ff. above.

of what is said, however much he may dismiss the immediate meaning of the object and consider its deeper significance instead, and take the latter not as true but merely as meaningful, so that the possibility of its truth remains unsettled, this is the real and fundamental nature of a question: namely to make things indeterminate. Questions always bring out the undetermined possibilities of a thing. That is why we cannot understand the questionableness of something without asking real questions, though we can understand a meaning without meaning it. *To understand the questionableness of something is already to be questioning.* There can be no tentative or potential attitude to questioning, for questioning is not the posing but the testing of possibilities. Here the nature of questioning indicates what is demonstrated by the actual operation of the Platonic dialogue.³²³ A person who thinks must ask himself questions. Even when a person says that such and such a question might arise, this is already a real questioning that simply masks itself, out of either caution or politeness.

This is the reason why understanding is always more than merely re-creating someone else's meaning. Questioning opens up possibilities of meaning, and thus what is meaningful passes into one's own thinking on the subject. Only in an inauthentic sense can we talk about understanding questions that one does not pose oneself—e.g., questions that are outdated or empty. We understand how certain questions came to be asked in particular historical circumstances. Understanding such questions means, then, understanding the particular presuppositions whose demise makes such questions “dead.” An example is perpetual motion. The horizon of meaning of such questions is only apparently still open. They are no longer understood as questions. For what we understand, in such cases, is precisely that there is no question.

To understand a question means to ask it. To understand meaning is to understand it as the answer to a question.

The logic of question and answer that Collingwood elaborated puts an end to talk about permanent *problems*, as in the way the “Oxford realists” approach to the classics of philosophy, and hence also an end to the concept of *history of problems* developed by neo-Kantianism. History of problems would truly be history only if it acknowledged that the identity of the problem is an empty abstraction and permitted itself to be transformed into questioning. There is no such thing, in fact, as a point outside history from which the identity of a problem can be conceived within the vicissitudes of the history of attempts to solve it. The fact is that

³²³ Pp. 362ff. above.

understanding philosophical texts always requires re-cognizing what is cognized in them. Without this we would understand nothing at all. But this in no way means that we step outside the historical conditions in which we are situated and in which we understand. The problem that we re-cognize is not in fact simply the same if it is to be understood in a genuine act of questioning. We can regard it as the same only because of our historical shortsightedness. The standpoint that is beyond any standpoint, a standpoint from which we could conceive its true identity, is a pure illusion.

We can understand the reason for this now. The concept of the problem is clearly an abstraction, namely the detachment of the content of the question from the question that in fact first reveals it. It refers to the abstract schema to which real and really motivated questions can be reduced and under which they can be subsumed. Such a "problem" has fallen out of the motivated context of questioning, from which it receives the clarity of its sense. Hence it is insoluble, like every question that has no clear, unambiguous sense, because it is not really motivated and asked.

This also confirms the origin of the concept of the problem. It does not belong in the sphere of those "honestly motivated refutations"³²⁴ in which the truth of the subject matter is advanced, but in the sphere of dialectic as a weapon to amaze or make a fool of one's opponent. In Aristotle, the word "problema" refers to those questions that present themselves as open alternatives because there is evidence for both views and we think that they cannot be decided by reasons, since the questions involved are too great.³²⁵ Problems are not real questions that arise of themselves and hence acquire the pattern of their answer from the genesis of their meaning, but are alternatives that can only be accepted as themselves and thus can be treated only in a dialectical way. This dialectical sense of the "problem" has its proper place in rhetoric, not in philosophy. Part of the concept of the problem is that there can be no clear decision on the basis of reasons. That is why Kant sees the rise of the concept of the problem as limited to the dialectic of pure reason. Problems are "tasks that emerge entirely from its own womb"—i.e., products of reason itself, the complete solution of which it cannot hope to achieve.³²⁶ It is interesting that in the nineteenth century, with the collapse of the unbroken tradition of philosophical question-

ing and the rise of historicism, the concept of the problem acquires a universal validity—a sign of the fact that an immediate relation to the questions of philosophy no longer exists. It is typical of the embarrassment of philosophical consciousness when faced with historicism that it took flight into an abstraction, the concept of the "problem," and saw no problem about the manner in which problems actually "exist." Neo-Kantian history of problems is a bastard of historicism. Critiquing the concept of the problem by appealing to a logic of question and answer must destroy the illusion that problems exist like stars in the sky.³²⁷ Reflection on the hermeneutical experience transforms problems back to questions that arise and that derive their sense from their motivation.

The dialectic of question and answer disclosed in the structure of hermeneutical experience now permits us to state more exactly what kind of consciousness historically effected consciousness is. For the dialectic of question and answer that we demonstrated makes understanding appear to be a reciprocal relationship of the same kind as conversation. It is true that a text does not speak to us in the same way as does a Thou. We who are attempting to understand must ourselves make it speak. But we found that this kind of understanding, "making the text speak," is not an arbitrary procedure that we undertake on our own initiative but that, as a question, it is related to the answer that is expected in the text. Anticipating an answer itself presupposes that the questioner is part of the tradition and regards himself as addressed by it. This is the truth of historically effected consciousness. It is the historically experienced consciousness that, by renouncing the

³²⁷Nicolai Hartmann, in his essay "Der philosophische Gedanke und seine Geschichte," *Abhandlungen der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (1936), no. 5 (repr. in Hartmann, *Kleine Schriften*, II, 1–47), rightly pointed out that the important thing is to realize once more in our own minds what the great thinkers realized. But when, in order to hold something fixed against the inroads of historicism, he distinguished between the constancy of what the "real problems are concerned with" and the changing nature of the way in which they have to be both asked and answered, he failed to see that neither "change," nor "constancy," the antithesis of "problem" and "system," nor the criterion of "achievements" is consonant with the character of philosophy as knowledge. When he wrote that "only when the individual avails himself of the enormous intellectual experience of the centuries, and his own experience is based on what he has recognized and what has been well tried . . . , can that knowledge be sure of its own further progress" (p. 18), he interpreted the "systematic acquaintance with the problems" according to the model of an experimental science and a progress of knowledge that falls far short of the complicated interpenetration of tradition and history that we have seen in hermeneutical consciousness.

³²⁴Plato, *Seventh Letter*, 344b.

³²⁵Aristotle, *Topics*, I, 11.

³²⁶*Critique of Pure Reason*, A 321ff.

chimera of perfect enlightenment, is open to the experience of history. We described its realization as the fusion of the horizons of understanding, which is what mediates between the text and its interpreter.

The guiding idea of the following discussion is *that the fusion of horizons that takes place in understanding is actually the achievement of language*. Admittedly, what language is belongs among the most mysterious questions that man ponders. Language is so uncannily near our thinking, and when it functions it is so little an object, that it seems to conceal its own being from us. In our analysis of the thinking of the human sciences, however, we came so close to this universal mystery of language that is prior to everything else, that we can entrust ourselves to what we are investigating to guide us safely in the quest. In other words we are endeavoring to approach the mystery of language from the conversation that we ourselves are.

When we try to examine the hermeneutical phenomenon through the model of conversation between two persons, the chief thing that these apparently so different situations—understanding a text and reaching an understanding in a conversation—have in common is that both are concerned with a subject matter that is placed before them. Just as each interlocutor is trying to reach agreement on some subject with his partner, so also the interpreter is trying to understand what the text is saying. This understanding of the subject matter must take the form of language. It is not that the understanding is subsequently put into words; rather, the way understanding occurs—whether in the case of a text or a dialogue with another person who raises an issue with us—is the coming-into-language of the thing itself. Thus we will first consider the structure of dialogue proper, in order to specify the character of that other form of dialogue that is the understanding of texts. Whereas up to now we have framed the constitutive significance of the *question* for the hermeneutical phenomenon in terms of conversation, we must now demonstrate the linguisticity of dialogue, which is the basis of the question, as an element of hermeneutics.

Our first point is that the language in which something comes to speak is not a possession at the disposal of one or the other of the interlocutors. Every conversation presupposes a common language, or better, creates a common language. Something is placed in the center, as the Greeks say, which the partners in dialogue both share, and concerning which they can exchange ideas with one another. Hence reaching an understanding on the subject matter of a conversation necessarily means that a common lan-

guage must first be worked out in the conversation. This is not an external matter of simply adjusting our tools; nor is it even right to say that the partners adapt themselves to one another but, rather, in a successful conversation they both come under the influence of the truth of the object and are thus bound to one another in a new community. To reach an understanding in a dialogue is not merely a matter of putting oneself forward and successfully asserting one's own point of view, but being transformed into a communion in which we do not remain what we were.³²⁸

³²⁸ Cf. my "Was ist Wahrheit?" *Kleine Schriften*, I, 46–58 (GW, II, 44–56).

It may even be that these questions are not philosophical, are not philosophy's questions. Nevertheless, these should be the only questions today capable of founding the community, within the world, of those who are still called philosophers; and called such in remembrance, at very least, of the fact that these questions must be examined unrelentingly, despite the diaspora of institutes and languages, despite the publications and techniques that follow on each other, procreating and accumulating by themselves,

That philosophy died yesterday, since Hegel or Marx, Nietzsche, or Heidegger—and philosophy should still wander toward the meaning of its death—or that it has always lived knowing itself to be dying (as is silently confessed in the shadow of the very discourse which declared *philosophia perennis*); that philosophy died on its own agony, on the violent way it opens history by opposing itself to nonphilosophy, which is its past and its concern, its death and wellspring; that beyond the death, or dying nature, of philosophy, perhaps even because of it, thought still has a future, or even, as is said today, is still entirely to come because of what philosophy has held in store; or, more strangely still, that the future itself has a future—all these are unanswerable questions. By right of birth, and for one time at least, these are problems put to philosophy as problems philosophy cannot resolve.

Hebraism and Hellenism,—
 influence moves our world.
 At one time it feels more
 powerfully the attraction of
 one of them, at another time
 of the other; and it ought
 to be, though it never is,
 evenly and happily balanced
 between them. (Mathew
 Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy*)

**Violence and
 Metaphysics
 An Essay on the
 Thought of
 Emmanuel
 Levinas**

③
 Jacques Derrida
 Why? Difference
 Four
 Trans. Alan Bass
 U Chicago 1978

like capital or poverty. A community of the question, therefore, within that fragile moment when the question is not yet determined enough for the hypocrisy of an answer to have already initiated itself beneath the mask of the question, and not yet determined enough for its voice to have been already and fraudulently articulated within the very syntax of the question. A community of decision, of initiative, of absolute initiality, but also a threatened community, in which the question has not yet found the language it has decided to seek, is not yet sure of its own possibility within the community. A community of the question about the possibility of the question. This is very little—almost nothing—but within it, today, is sheltered and encapsulated an unbreachable dignity and duty of decision. An unbreachable responsibility. Why unbreachable? Because the impossible has *already* occurred. The impossible according to the totality of what is questioned, according to the totality of beings, objects and determinations, the impossible according to the history of facts, has occurred: there is a history of the question, a pure memory of the pure question which in its possibility perhaps authorizes all inheritance and all pure memory in general and as such. The question has already begun—we know it has—and this strange certainty about an *other* absolute origin, an other absolute decision that has secured the past of the question, liberates an incomparable instruction: the discipline of the question. Through (through, that is to say that we must *already* know how to read) this discipline, which is not yet even the inconceivable tradition of the negative (of negative determination), and which is completely previous to irony, to maieutics, to *epoche*, and to doubt, an injunction is announced: the question must be maintained. As a question. The liberty of the question (double genitive)? must be stated and protected. A founded dwelling, a realized tradition of the question remaining a question. If this commandment has an ethical meaning, it is not in that it belongs to the *domain* of the ethical, but in that it ultimately authorizes every ethical law in general. There is no stated law, no commandment, that is not addressed to a freedom of speech. There is therefore neither law nor commandment which does not confirm and *enclose*—that is, does not dissimulate by presupposing it—the possibility of the question. Thus, the question is always enclosed; it never appears immediately as such, but only through the hermeneutism of a proposition in which the answer has already begun to determine the question. The purity of the question can only be indicated or recalled through the difference of a hermeneutical effort.

Thus, those who look into the possibility of philosophy, philosophy's life and death, are already engaged in, already overtaken by the dialogue of the question about itself and with itself; they always act in remembrance of philosophy, as part of the correspondence of the question with itself. Essential to the destiny of this correspondence, then, is that it comes to speculate, to reflect, and to question about itself within itself. This is where the objectification, secondary interpretation, and determination of the question's own history in the world all

begin; and this is where the combat question in general and "philosophy moment or mode of the question its philosophy as a power and adventure, determined event or turning point *will*. This difference is better conceived to have been conceptualized as *such*, is determined for the historian of facts, techniques, and categories, it is perhaps the most deeply would not better thinking this difference transpire within the tradition by which be overtaken, then the tradition's origin adhered to as rigorously as possible? in the depths of childhood, but precisely Close to us and since Hegel, in his have ordered us to this total repetition and has been acknowledged as of truth. Husserl and Heidegger. Despite the tradition—which is in no way tradition Husserlian phenomenology and to what tion and for reasons of economy, Heidegger, very briefly:

1. The entirety of philosophy is constituted as well known, this amounts neither to is simply that the founding concepts would not be possible to philosophize medium. That Plato, for Husserl, was task whose telos was still sleeping in contrary, Plato marks the moment at which is determined as philosophy—this difference of a common root which is Greek. *will* disappear neither in phenomenology 2. The archaeology to which Husserl entails, for both, a subordination or *metaphysics*. Even though, for each, ing, or at least does so apparently.

3. Finally, the category of the *ethic* but coordinated with something other function. When ethics is not treated it and the relationship to the other are ethical specificity.⁵

begin; and this is where the combat embedded in the difference between the question in general and "philosophy" as a determined—finite and mortal—moment or mode of the question itself also begins. The difference between philosophy as a power and adventure of the question itself and philosophy as a determined event or turning point *within* this adventure.

This difference is better conceived today. That this difference has come to light, has been conceptualized as *such*, is doubtless an unnoticed and inessential sign for the historian of facts, techniques, and ideas. But, understood in all its implications, it is perhaps the most deeply inscribed characteristic of our age. And would not better thinking this difference be knowing that if something is still to transpire within the tradition by which philosophers always know themselves to be overtaken, then the tradition's origin will have to be summoned forth and adhered to as rigorously as possible? Which is not to stammer and huddle lazily in the depths of childhood, but precisely the opposite.

Close to us and since Hegel, in his mighty shadow, the two great voices which have ordered us to this total repetition—which itself has recalled us to ourselves and has been acknowledged as of utmost philosophical urgency—are those of Husserl and Heidegger. Despite the most profound dissimilarities, the appeal to tradition—which is in no way traditional—is shaped by an intention common to Husserlian phenomenology and to what we will call provisionally, by approximation and for reasons of economy, Heideggerian "ontology."³

Thus, very briefly:

1. The entirety of philosophy is conceived on the basis of its Greek source. As is well known, this amounts neither to an accidentalism, nor to a historicism.⁴ It is simply that the founding concepts of philosophy are primarily Greek, and it would not be possible to philosophize, or to speak philosophically, outside this medium. That Plato, for Husserl, was the founder of a reason and a philosophical task whose telos was still sleeping in the shadows; or that for Heidegger, on the contrary, Plato marks the moment at which the thought of Being forgets itself and is determined as philosophy—this difference is decisive only at the culmination of a common root which is Greek. The difference is fraternal in its posterity, entirely submitted to the same domination. Domination of the same too, which will disappear neither in phenomenology nor in "ontology."

2. The archaeology to which Husserl and Heidegger lead us by different paths entails, for both, a subordination or transgression, in any event a *reduction of metaphysics*. Even though, for each, this gesture has an entirely different meaning, or at least does so apparently.

3. Finally, the category of the *ethical* is not only dissociated from metaphysics but coordinated with something other than itself, a previous and more radical function. When ethics is not treated this way, when law, the power of resolution, and the relationship to the other are once more part of the *archia*, they lose their ethical specificity.⁵

An interview with Michel Foucault, conducted by Paul Rabinow in May 1984
Translation by Lydia Davis, volume 1 "Ethics" of "Essential Works of Foucault", The
New Press 1997.

P.R. You have recently been talking about a "history of problematics". What is a history
of problematics ?

M.F. For a long time, I have been trying to see if it would be possible to describe the
history of thought as distinct both from the history of ideas (by which I mean the
analysis of systems of representation) and from the history of mentalities (by which I mean the
analysis of attitudes and types of action [schémas de comportement]). It seemed to me
there was one element that was capable of describing the history of thought—this was
what one could call the problems or, more exactly, problematisations. What distinguishes
thought is that it is something quite different from the set of representations that underlies
a certain behavior; it is also quite different from the domain of attitudes that can
determine this behavior. Thought is not what inhabits a certain conduct and gives it its
meaning; rather, it is what allows one to step back from this way of acting or reacting, to
present it to oneself as an object of thought and to question it as to its meaning, its
conditions, and its goals. Thought is freedom in relation to what one does, the motion by
which one detaches from it, establishes it as an object, and reflects on it as a problem.
To say that the study of thought is the analysis of a freedom does not mean one is dealing
with a formal system that has reference only to itself. Actually, for a domain of action, a
behavior, to enter the field of thought, it is necessary for a certain number of factors to
have made it uncertain, to have made it lose its familiarity, or to have provoked a certain
number of difficulties around it. These elements result from social, economic, or political
processes. But here, their only role is that of instigation. They can exist and perform their
action for a very long time, before there is effective problematization by thought. And
when thought intervenes, it doesn't assume a unique form that is the direct result or the
necessary expression of these difficulties; it is an original or specific response—often
taking many forms, sometimes even contradictory in its different aspects—to these
difficulties, which are defined for it by a situation or a context, and which hold true as a
possible question.

To one single set of difficulties, several responses can be made. And most of the time
different responses actually are proposed. But what must be understood is what makes
them simultaneously possible: it is the point in which their simultaneity is rooted; it is the
soil that can nourish them all in their diversity and sometimes in spite of their
contradictions. To the different difficulties encountered by the practice regarding mental
illness in the eighteenth century, diverse solutions were proposed: Tuke's and Pinel's are
examples. In the same way, a whole group of solutions was proposed for the difficulties
encountered in the second half of the eighteenth century by penal practice. Or again, to
take a very remote example, the diverse schools of philosophy of the Hellenistic period
proposed different solutions to the difficulties of traditional sexual ethics.

But the work of a history of thought would be to rediscover at the root of these diverse solutions the general form of problematization that has made them possible—even in their very opposition; or what has made possible the transformation of the difficulties and obstacles of a practice into a general problem for which one proposes diverse practical solutions. It is problematization that responds to these difficulties, but by doing something quite other than expressing them or manifesting them: in connection with them, it develops the conditions in which possible responses can be given; it defines the elements that will constitute what the different solutions attempt to respond to. This development of a given into a question, this transformation of a group of obstacles and difficulties into problems to which the diverse solutions will attempt to produce a response, this is what constitutes the point of problematization and the specific work of thought.

It is clear how far one is from an analysis in terms of deconstruction (any confusion between these two methods would be unwise). Rather, it is a question of a movement of critical analysis in which one tries to see how the different solutions to a problem have been constructed; but also how these different solutions result from a specific form of problematization. And it then appears that any new solution which might be added to the others would arise from current problematization, modifying only several of the postulates or principles on which one bases the responses that one gives. The work of philosophical and historical reflection is put back into the field of the work of thought only on condition that one clearly grasps problematization not as an arrangement of representations but as a work of thought.

L'Abbédaire de Gilles Deleuze, avec Claire Parinet

Directed by Pierre-André Boutang (1996)

Summary by Charles Stivale

<http://www.langlab.wayne.edu/CStivale/D-G/ABCs.html>

"Q as in Question"

Parinet states that philosophy for Deleuze serves to pose questions and problems, and that questions are constructed, with their purpose being not to answer them, but to leave these questions behind. So, for example, leaving the history of philosophy behind <cf. "H as in History of Philosophy"> meant creating new questions. In an interview, one doesn't ask Deleuze questions really, so she asks how Deleuze leaves this behind. Parinet sees it as kind of a forced choice, and so wonders what the difference is for Deleuze between a question in the context of mass media and a question in history of philosophy. Deleuze pauses, saying it's difficult. In the media, there are conversations most of the time, no questions, no problems, only interrogations. If one says, how are you doing?, it doesn't constitute a problem. What time is it?, not a problem, but an interrogation. If one sees the usual level on television, even in supposedly serious broadcasts, it's full of interrogations, saying, "what do you think of this?" does not constitute a problem, but a demand for one's opinion, an interrogation. That's why t.v. isn't very interesting. Deleuze doesn't have a very great interest in people's opinions.

He gives the example of the question: Do you believe in God? He asks where the problem is there, where the question is. There is none. So if one asked questions or problems in a t.v. show, Deleuze admits the number of broadcasts is vast, but it happens rarely that a t.v. show encompasses any problems. Deleuze feels they could, for example, ask about the Chinese question. But what happens usually is they invite specialists on China <Deleuze laughs> who say things about China that one could figure out all by oneself, without knowing anything about China <laughing>. Returning to the large question about God, what is the problem or question about God? It's not whether one believes in God or not, which doesn't interest many people, but what does it mean when one says the word "God"? Deleuze suggests that this might mean: are you judged after death? So how is this a problem? Deleuze sees this as establishing a problematic relationship between God and the agency <instance> of judgment. So is God a judge? This is a question.

Another example is Pascal; someone suggests his text on the bet: does God exist or not? One bets on it, one reads Pascal's text and sees that it's not a question of a bet because, Deleuze argues, Pascal poses another question: it's not if God exists or not, which would not be very interesting, but it's: what is the best mode of existence, the mode of someone who believes that God exists, or the mode of someone who believes that God doesn't exist? So, Pascal's question does not concern the existence (or not) of God, but rather the existence of whomever believes in God's existence or not. For various reasons, says Deleuze, Pascal develops his own questions, but they can be articulated: Pascal thinks

that someone who believes that God exists has a better existence than someone who does not. It's Pascal's interest, there's a problem, a question, and it's already no longer the question of God. There is an underlying matter, a transformation of questions within one another.

Deleuze suggests that this is the same when Nietzsche says "God is dead," it's not the same thing as God does not exist. Deleuze asks, if one says God is dead, what question does that refer to, one that is not the same as when one asks whether God exists? In reading Nietzsche, says Deleuze, one notices that he could care less about God's death, and that he's posing another question through that, specifically that if God is dead, there's no reason that man wouldn't be dead as well, one has to find something else than man, etc. What interested Nietzsche was not at all whether God was dead, but something else entirely.

These, says Deleuze, are questions and problems, and they could certainly be presented on t.v. or in the media, but that would create a very strange kind of show, on this underlying story of problems and questions. Whereas in daily conversations as well as in the media, people stay on the level of interrogations. Deleuze refers to a particular show (since this interview is posthumous, he says), "The Hour of Truth" <Deleuze laughs>, entirely interrogations, of the kind, "Mime Veil, do you believe in Europe?" It would be interesting, Deleuze argues, if one asked about the problem of Europe. That's exactly the same as for the question of China. They constantly think about preparing the uniformization of Europe, they interrogate each other about it, on how to make insurance uniform, etc. And then, they find a million people at the Place de la Concorde from everywhere, Holland, Germany, etc., and the interrogators don't control it at all, they call on specialists to tell them why there are so many Dutch people at the Place de la Concorde. They just skirt around the real questions when they needed to be asked. Deleuze admits that what he's been saying is a bit confused <he laughs>.

Parinet gives the example of Deleuze who used to read daily newspapers, but no longer reads Le Monde or Libération. She asks if there's something in the level of the press or the media not asking questions that disgusts him, and Deleuze responds yes! He gets the feeling of learning less and less. He says he's quite ready to learn things, since he knows nothing, but since the newspapers say nothing either, what can one do? Parinet says that he always watches the evening news as the only t.v. show he never misses, and wonders if Deleuze has a question to formulate each time that is never formulated in the media. Deleuze says he doesn't know, and Parinet says that he seems to think that questions never get asked. Deleuze says that he thinks that, to a great extent, the questions can't be asked. Here Deleuze chooses a specific example, a recent French scandal that dates back to the Vichy era, the arrest of Paul Touvier. [Paul Touvier, arrested in 1989 for war crimes against humanity for sending seven Jews to their deaths on June 29, 1944, at Rillieux-la-Pape near Lyon, is the first Frenchman to be found guilty of war crimes and sentenced on April 20, 1994, to life imprisonment. He died of cancer in July, 1996. Touvier had been sentenced to death in absentia in 1946 and spent much of the next 40 years on the run living in Roman Catholic monasteries.] Deleuze suggests how questions are avoided and deliberately not posed. Apparently Touvier was protected

from questions about his conduct during the war since he must now possess information that could implicate some Catholic church officials. So, says Deleuze, everyone knows about what Touvier knows, but there's an agreement not to ask questions, and so they won't get asked. This is what's known as a consensus, says Deleuze, i.e. an agreement according to which simple "How are you doing?" interrogations will be substituted for problems and questions, that is, interrogations that ward off any real questions.

Parneret seems to want to object to what Deleuze is saying, so he says he'll try another example, regarding the conservative French party reformers and the political apparatus on the Right. Deleuze says everyone knows what this is about, but the newspapers don't tell the public a thing. For Deleuze, these reformers pose a very interesting question: it's an attempt to shake up elements of the Party apparatus that are always very centralized around Paris. Specifically, the reformers want regional independence, something very interesting that no one is insisting upon. The connection to the European question, says Deleuze, is that they want to create a Europe not of nations, but of regions, i.e. a veritable regional and inter-regional unity, rather than a national and international unity. This is a problem, Deleuze argues, one that the Socialists will have to face at some point, between regionalist and internationalist tendencies. But the Party apparatuses, i.e. the provincial federations, still correspond to an old-fashioned, Paris-centered structure that maintains quite a significant role.

So, Deleuze concludes that the conservative reformers constitute an anti-Jacobine movement, that the Left will have one as well. Deleuze feels that negotiations <pourparlers> should take place about all this, but no one will do so, they even refuse to because, when they do, they will reveal themselves. Hence, they'll only answer interrogations, which are nothing other than conversations without any interest. Except for rare exceptions, television is condemned to discussions, to interrogations. For Deleuze, it's not even a question of deliberate deceptions, just insignificance, without any interest.

Parneret raises the example of a journalist, Anne Saint-Claire, who tries to pose good questions, not at all interrogations, and Deleuze responds, fine, that's her business, he's quite sure that she's very happy with herself. To Parneret's question of why Deleuze never accepted a television interview, whereas Foucault and Serres did so, and whether he is retreating from life as Beckett did, Deleuze says here is the proof, this interview, he'll be on t.v.! But his reasons for not accepting relate to what he had already said: he has no desire at all to have conversations and interrogations with people, something he cannot stand, particularly when no one knows what problem is being raised. He returns to his example of God: is it a matter of the non-existence of God, of the death of God, of the death of man, of the existence of God, of the existence of whoever believes in God, etc.? It's a muddle, very tiring, Deleuze says. So when everyone has their turn to speak, it's domesticity in its purest state, with some idiot of a host <présentateur à la con> as well... Deleuze ends this muttering "pitié, pitié" <mercy, mercy>...

Parneret says the most important thing is that Deleuze is here today answering their little interrogations. Deleuze responds: "A titre posthume" <on the condition it's posthumous>.

followed by screams. Windscreens spiderwebbed, and the volume increased as shadowy figures mindlessly smudged of chaotic movement.

rose over the ghost of a good time. A few sur-
tered dazed. Picking through a dawn of Chaplin
d Dogger was alive or wrong. But he was neither
ing was a deadbolt on any objective reflection. As
concerned there had once been giants in the earth
ere was only plastic. Truth withered on the vine as
declared a victory for common sense. Four deaths
g Dogger, who didn't count because he was old,
others who didn't count because they weren't cops
s clarified that repetitive beating of a live skull in the
lice duty was legal but that acoustic amplification
d was not. The rave organizers, who had hired the
ed to save money by trespassing for the next event.
e to look after. This charge looked to me in expect-
omething I couldn't guess. Finally he decided I
ger and wandered off. My generation lacked some
ment—I only hoped this made us unpredictable.
orities had taken action hoping some miracle would
equal and opposite reaction, but no miracle materi-
th retaliation was swift and violent though sad
years. Dogger had called us a dull bruise pounded
er. A sleepy generation with the rave scene acting as
m. And he never would listen when I told him the
was understandable, for a brood overseen by those
the same mistake and act surprised at the same result
again and again and again and again and again and

6

Steve Aylett
from Toxicology
Four walls & windows, NY
1999

JAWBREAKER



Terry Tantomount lived like a kitten struggling up stairs. He never had the faintest idea of the right thing to say in any given situation. And it seemed there was a very specific right and wrong to this.

“Have I put on weight?”

“Yeah, thank god.”

At a dinner party once he held two lobsters facing each other and puppetted a conversation—even here he didn't parp the appropriate exchange. People flinched with embarrassment. Sometimes he saw them trying to cover for him but mostly he just saw disappointment, scorn, anger—even disgust.

“Don't tell me you've been asleep all this time.”

“Okay.”

Sometimes the desired answer was clued in the question but it seemed such an absurd shell game—did people think so little of themselves they wanted to be lied to?

“Hey babe, if I didn't know better I'd say you were jealous.”

“Sure I am, honey.”

In childhood these misfires had the immediacy of a popart burn but as time lagged it became a dull bruise pummelled over and over. He learned that “How are you?” wasn’t a question, and other basics. But he didn’t understand it and could no more than dip his beak. How to proceed? Grow a pelt of dignity? Feign indifference? It was torment without thunder.

“Republican or Democrat?”

“Are those my options?”

Terry’s fanciful notions of honesty and sense made him as popular as a burning tire. When questioned directly about their sources, people displayed such absolute resolve to dodge the issue, Terry usually took pity and relented. If backed into a corner they became hostile or at the very least emphatically dishonest prior to hasty retreat. It seemed they were doing yeoman’s work in someone else’s notions.

“Guess what I’ve got.”

“A deadly hidden agenda?”

At first he thought his girlfriend Yanda could reach him the cues in this baggy pants farce. But she seemed evasive, even ashamed. “Nobody asks questions like that,” she said. But Terry existed. He had no choice but to assume she didn’t mean it. That way lay madness. Every dawn he said a plain noble prayer for communication.

“What about them Yankees?”

“Yeah, what about ‘em?”

But facts are found where temptation is brightest. Terry had noticed Yanda always got a lot of mail—one package minimum. The one time she didn’t, she seemed at a loss. She even yelled at him in the middle of a discussion, “What am I meant to say to that?” It was the only time she didn’t know her own dialogue.

The idea entered his head like a fox belying under a fence. When Yanda was out a couple days later, he searched the house. Under the bed was a postal packet containing a thin script. Lead treasure.

“Have I put on weight?”

“Of course not.”

“Don’t tell me you’ve been asleep all this time.”

“Of course not.”

“Hey babe, if I didn’t know better I’d say you were jealous.”

“Of course not.”

“Republican or Democrat?”

“Democrat.”

“Guess what I’ve got.”

“Oh great—I love that game.”

“What about them Yankees?”

“Yeah, fourth and ten, ball on their thirty yard line with only forty seconds to go.”

The script included every correct response for the day’s exchanges between Yanda and himself. That evening he barred them back at Yanda and her face lit up. At first Terry loved seeing her believe this was him, but quickly became disgusted by her delight. Didn’t she value the genuine article at all? And this stuff was so drab, so uninspired. It took an effort for him not to add splashes of color. But he knew that upset people.

He traced the mail source to a complex in the city. He’d hoped this at least would be interesting—a Mount Weather-style bunker or Pinay cabal. But it was an unmanned factory emitting no light. The same beige streams of dialogue were continually recycled under grey stacks, the blind produce of identical codes, bound and labelled for delivery. There was neither sentience nor malevolence in this automation. Energy was neither created nor destroyed in writ so poor.

Examining the records, Terry learned that his own scripts were being delivered in error to a *Telly* Tamamount right in his town. He dropped by the guy's house and was greeted at the door by a crazed, seething wreck, a jumpy cadaver with deodorant balls for eyes. "Told ya I don't want any!" shrieked the guy, terrified. Terry's heart went out to him.

"Telly? I know what you've been going through. Nothing connects? You've been getting scripts meant for me, man. Admin goof?"

The man stared. "I . . . I don't know what to say." And Terry saw relief flood him, pushing tears from his face.

Reading over some of the old scripts the man had given him, Terry ambled home. He was supposed to have said this stuff? It was insipid—false and impoverished. No wonder people were ashamed to admit they accepted it above their own spirit. He'd long suspected that if he ever discovered the nature of the game he would find it too dumb and unrewarding to play anyway. To be so hen-hearted? To live his life as stock footage? To guard forever against divergence into originality? To what end? And what would be left to him? By comparison his life of stress and concern thus far seemed a funky adventure.

And wasn't he the lucky one. He felt an easy freedom, his limbs hanging light in his joints, while at the same time his heart bled with compassion for the folk he passed. Here he'd been suffering and all these were here too, without the born spark even to fight or tell it.

"Was it busy out?"

"Yanda," he said, sitting down heavily and dropping the scripts aside. "Listen. I'm not really in any hurry to be illuminated. Heaven doesn't tolerate cunning or wit. This grub in the head's an inconvenience, I realize that, and I should probably say I'm sorry, though that's just a guess on my part. But I

want you to know. Despite your sentences being a barricade to truth. Despite your approval existing only for tiffes. Despite your gargantuan efforts to bury yourself, deny your mind and cremate your courage. Despite your attempt to remove all distinguishing marks—I see you. You're an angel, babe. Mad, soft round the edges, scared, and trying your damndest with what you have. I love you down to the deepest atom. What do you say to that?"