Dear Phil,

I have been thinking about the question you posed in your recent letter.

The parts of mathematics I find most exciting are those in which an unexpected restructuring of the problem leads quickly to important central results. One example is the introduction by Gelfand and Neumark of Banach algebras into the theory of group representations, where miraculous results unfold one after the other in a simple inevitable and almost dreamlike manner.

It is I think a dream of mathematicians to wish that ways will be found which will make many difficult and impenetrable areas suddenly transparent and accessible. . . .

Cordially,

I. I.   Hirschman