On Thoughts and Aphorisms

How is it that we lose a chance to widen our knowledge by prevailing in a debate?\textsuperscript{17}

A debate is never anything but a conflict of opinions; and opinions are nothing but very fragmentary aspects of the truth. Even if you were able to put together and synthesise all opinions on a given subject, you still would not achieve anything but a very imperfect expression of the truth.

If you prevail in a debate, it means that your opinion has prevailed over the opinion of another, not necessarily because yours was truer than his, but because you were better at wielding the arguments or because you were a more stubborn debater. And you come out of the discussion convinced that you are right in what you assert; and so you lose a chance to see a view of the question other than your own and to add an aspect of the truth to the one or the ones you already possess. You remain imprisoned in your own thought and refuse to widen it.

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57 – Because the tiger acts according to his nature and knows not anything else, therefore he is divine and there is no evil in him. If he questioned himself, then he would be a criminal.

What would be the truly natural state for man? Why does he question himself?\textsuperscript{18}

On earth\textsuperscript{19} man is a transitional being. Therefore, in the course of his evolution, he has had several natures in succession, which

\textsuperscript{17} Written question and answer.
\textsuperscript{18} Oral question and answer.
\textsuperscript{19} Mother added: “This precise detail is not superfluous; I said ‘on earth’ meaning that man does not belong merely to earth; in essence man is a universal being, but he has a special manifestation on earth.”
have followed an ascending curve and will continue to follow it until he reaches the threshold of the supramental nature and is transformed into the superman. This curve is the spiral of mental development.

We tend to call “natural” any spontaneous manifestation which is not the result of a choice or a preconceived decision, that is to say, without the intrusion of any mental activity. This is why when a man has a vital spontaneity which is very little mentalised, he seems more “natural” in his simplicity. But this naturalness is very much like that of the animal and is at the very bottom of the human evolutionary scale. He will only regain this spontaneity free from mental intrusion when he attains to the supramental stage, that is to say, when he transcends mind and emerges into the higher Truth.

Until then all his behaviour is, naturally, natural! But with the mind evolution has become, one cannot say twisted, but distorted, because by its very nature the mind was open to perversion and almost from the beginning it became perverted, or, to be more precise, it was perverted by the Asuric forces. And this state of perversion gives us the impression that it is unnatural.

Why does he question himself? Simply because this is the nature of the mind!

With the mind individualisation began and a very acute feeling of separation, and also a kind of impression, more or less precise, of freedom of choice — all that, all these psychological states are the natural consequences of mental life and they open the door to everything we see now, from aberrations to the most rigorous principles. Mind has the impression that it can choose between one thing and another, but this impression is the distortion of a true principle which would be completely realisable only when the soul or psychic being appears in the consciousness and if the soul were to take up the governance of the being. Then man’s life would truly become the manifestation of the supreme Will expressing itself individually, consciously. But in the normal human state this is something extremely exceptional which to
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the ordinary human consciousness does not seem at all natural — it seems almost supernatural!

Man questions himself because the mental instrument is intended to see all possibilities. And the immediate consequence of this is the concept of good and evil, or of what is right and what is wrong, and all the miseries that follow from that. One cannot say that it is a bad thing; it is an intermediate stage — not a very pleasant one, but still... one which was certainly inevitable for the complete development of the mind.

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58 – The animal, before he is corrupted, has not yet eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; the god has abandoned it for the tree of eternal life; man stands between the upper heaven and the lower nature.

Is it true that there was an earthly paradise? Why was man driven out of it?20

From the historical point of view (I am not speaking from the psychological but from the historical point of view), if I base myself on my memories — only I cannot prove it; nothing can be proved, and I do not think there is any truly historical proof, that is to say, one which has been preserved, or at any rate none has yet been found — but according to what I remember, there was certainly a moment in earth’s history when there existed a kind of earthly paradise, in the sense that it was a perfectly harmonious and natural life; that is to say, the manifestation of the mind was in accord, was still in complete accord with the ascending march of Nature and totally harmonious, without perversion or distortion. This was the first stage of mind’s manifestation in material forms.

20 Oral question and answer.