

**Raghavan Iyer excerpt ‘The Scope of Self-Consciousness’***The Gupta Vidya*, Vol. I, pp. 274-275, Theosophy Trust: Norfolk, VA**THE SCOPE OF SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS****“WHO AM I?” “THAT THOU ART”**

*In sober truth, ... every “Spirit” so-called is either a disembodied or a future man. As from the highest Archangel (Dhyan Chohan) down to the last conscious “Builder” (the inferior class of Spiritual Entities), all such are men, having lived aeons ago, in other Manvantaras, on this or other Spheres; so the inferior, semi-intelligent and non-intelligent Elementals – are all future men. That fact alone – that a Spirit is endowed with intelligence – is a proof to the Occultist that that Being must have been a man, and acquired his knowledge and intelligence throughout the human cycle. There is but one indivisible and absolute Omniscience and Intelligence in the Universe, and this thrills throughout every atom and infinitesimal point of the whole finite Kosmos which hath no bounds, and which people call SPACE, considered independently of anything contained in it.*

*The Secret Doctrine, i 277*

Self-consciousness is the Gordian knot of both philosophical psychology and arcane metaphysics. Its paradoxes can be unravelled only through a discipline that combines sacrificial action and meditation. As the aspirant proceeds along these parallel lines, recondite evolutionary mysteries will reveal themselves to the awakening spiritual sight. Beyond and beneath all of these, present both at the beginning and at the end of the quest, lies the riddle of Being and Non-Being, the crux of the process of infinite perfectibility within eternal divine harmony. Each stage along the way reveals fresh beginnings and tentative illuminations, all revolving around the talismanic question, “Who am I?” and its ever-enigmatic response from the depths of divine consciousness, “*THAT thou art.*” This timeless dialogue between the divine soul and its projected ray is repeated over myriad lives in countless diverse forms. It is the quintessential enquiry of enquiries, comprehending the divine and the mundane while serving as the archetype of every science and every symbolic system. Although this enquiry is perennially and universally relevant, it truly demands an ever-deepening sense of detachment and an ever-expanding feeling of compassion for all humanity. The restoration of the dual sense of individual dignity and human solidarity is a

primary object of the Aquarian Age and a necessary prelude to participation in the succeeding age of Makara, of magical creativity.

The development of self-conscious humanity on earth began well over eighteen million years ago, following a much longer period of development during the first three-and-a-half Rounds of the earth chain. Throughout this vast period, successive ethereal hierarchies fashioned the sentient but non-intelligent vestures of future mankind. With each succeeding Round and globe, a different class of Builders evolved out of itself more and more dense shadowy projections. During the early portion of the present Fourth Round, the sixth group or hierarchy, counting downward from spirit, evolved out of itself the filmy astral vestures of the future physical man. The seventh, or lowest, hierarchy then gradually formed and condensed the physical body of animal man upon the ethereal frame. Neither the sixth hierarchy, which is connected with ethereal gods, nor the seventh hierarchy, which is connected with vast numbers of terrestrial spirits or elementals, was capable of completing self-conscious intelligent man. Thus, it became the task of the fifth hierarchy, the mysterious beings that preside over the constellation Makara, to inform the empty and ethereal animal form, creating out of it the rational man. This in itself is an awesome mystery which may be understood only through meditation and, ultimately, initiation. . .

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