

Brahman's dream (Are we immortal after all?)

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When it comes to a theory of creation of the world, the Hindus have a very short and matter of fact answer for it: It is God's dream. It is, of course, not their only explanation of how the world came into existence. There are others, some quite fanciful, yet none is equal to Brahman's Dream in its simplicity and 'hands-on' approach.

No other theory of creation, scientific or mythological, brings the mystery of the Universe closer to our hearts and minds than the dream while at the same time offering endless scope for exegesis. It brings it close to us because we all dream on a daily basis. True, some say that they never dream. It would however be more correct if they said 'we never recall any dreams'. Obviously Brahman's Dream is of no help to them when it comes to grappling with our topic until they wake up one day with a dream of the night.

On that day, they will, like regular dreamers, marvel at the fact that upon waking we emerge from a kind of 'parallel Universe', if not exactly like the one we know from our waking state, nevertheless one in which we find ourselves at home while dreaming.

In other words, one where we interact with family and friends, with strangers and foes, one where we go in and out of our home or other buildings, where we encounter an array of animals and other creatures, where we climb steep mountains, splash in frothing rivers or sparkling pools, stomp through eerie swamps or sail across horizon-less oceans, and where on occasions we will fly in planes or balloons and even whizz through space on magic carpets.

We see at once how apt and instructive this analogy is when embarking on an attempt to elucidate the enigma of our Universe, for it is not difficult to put ourselves into the position of Brahman, imagining that we are 'asleep' and dreaming the world. Indeed, the parallels are extremely close, if not identical. **In both cases we are dealing with just one single entity from which emanates a multitudinous and spacious world.**

In fact the phenomenon of waking and that of dreaming are so close to one another that Brahman's dream, indeed, all dreams, will serve as a perfect analogy to waking. This claim might come as a surprise, but once we look at the two phenomena with a discerning eye, we will find that both are in essence the same. Both states are impermanent. Both come and go, which alone puts them on the same footing as far as the claim to being 'real' is concerned.

Indeed, anything that comes into being, changes and then vanishes can only be regarded as a transitory occurrence and as such can merely be regarded as a relative reality. By this I mean that the imagery and sensations of both dreams

and waking are reliant on something that is more stable and unchanging and therefore more real for their existence. They are, in other words, not self-subsisting facts, but 'parasitical realities' in the same way as is a mirror picture.

While it is not so difficult to accept such a claim with regard to our dreams, it is considerably more problematic to come to grips with it where our waking experience is concerned. For one thing, dreams are more ethereal than waking encounters. The dream body, for instance, is rather changeable being at times merely a feeling of motion and thoughts, while the physical body always appears to be solid and easily recognisable far into the future. But that doesn't mean it isn't constantly changing. However this happens in such an imperceptible manner that it is only detectable over long periods of time. Yet when our biologists assure us that most cells of our body are constantly being replaced, even our apparently solid physical form takes on a much more fluid character.

So while the physical frame appears to be more solid and lasting, its fluidity is undeniable and thus is in principle no different from the dream body. The same is also true of the rest of waking imagery. While it seems more solid and lasting it is in reality no less subject to constant change than the dream imagery. In fact the closer we look at the substance of waking reality the more fluid it becomes. I am thinking of the atomic structure of matter, which has been shown to be nothing but a 'bundle of vibrating energy'. In other words, seen through the eyes of the physicist there is principally no difference between the matter of the waking world and the energy of our dream imagery.

Indeed, in reality both are products of the brain; products of energy coursing through the brain - interplay of matter and energy- Clearly, there is neither a dream world nor a waking Universe without a brain in operation, without an active mind. Thus neither the world of waking nor the world of dreams can be regarded as an objective reality. Instead both turn out to be purely subjective phenomena.

Quite generally, there is no such thing as objective reality. The world appears and disappears according to our state of mind. When we go to sleep the waking world vanishes with it. It proves that the waking world is a relative reality, a subjective fact much the same as is the dream world.

This is hard to accept at first. We are at once tempted to object by saying: "But the world exists to others who are still awake!" Unfortunately this is based on a double premise and thus an invalid argument. Indeed, we cannot have two points of view at one and the same time. There is no way out of this conundrum: the waking world is a personal affair; it is in the eye of the beholder. **The waking world might as well be a dream!**

Indeed, the similarity between the two is nowhere more graphically exemplified than in an fMRI examination of lucid dreaming at the Max Planck Institute in Munich (2011). There it transpired that the same brain activity occurred for clenching fists, for instance, whether it was done in waking or in lucid dreaming.

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Also a closer look at the two states shows readily that there are many aspects of waking that are as deceptive as the 'dream facts'. One of them is space. When we are dreaming we are able to wander through endless fields, fields that can only be illusory since they are conjured up within the constricted space of the skull. Once we have a precise look at space of waking we will discover that in truth it is no less deceptive than space of the dream world.

In order to demonstrate this we need to resort to some elementary math. It is almost platitudinous by now that space and time are inextricably entwined, so much so that one cannot continue to exist without the other. Put simply, if I have nowhere to go I don't need any time for it.

Now if we can show that there is no such thing as time, or more precisely, that it is a most beguiling deception, then it will follow that space too can only be a canny entrapment fabricated by our ears and eyes, extensions of our brain, functions of an active mind.

So let us then test this proposition by asking how long it is twelve noon precisely. Is it one hour, one minute, one second, or one nanosecond? No, of course not, none of these applies, for adding even the tiniest fraction of a nanosecond is after all enough to make twelve noon into twelve noon plus. In short, as soon as we add more than zero (0) to twelve noon it is no longer 12 noon precisely. Despite the figure 12 on the face of the clock, there is no such time as 12 noon precisely. From this follows that waking time too, is not a reality per se as we are prone to think, but merely a brain function, much as time is in a dream. Put another way, time is nothing more substantial than a figment of our imagination, a chimera without any substance whatever.

Since time and space are inseparable twins, space too must be relegated to the realm of phantoms. While science, as it stands today, accepts the relativity of space, it nonetheless views it as an unshakable, objective reality that exists independently of an observer.

This is fallacious, for space only exists to an active mind and vanishes the moment that mind goes to sleep. But even aside from such fundamental observation, suspicion that space may well be deceptive must arise from daily experience of it. That experience is encountered when a friend we embrace is of a different height to when he is standing on a hill in the distance. We attribute this to optical laws and think no more about it.

But to the more critical mind this raises definite suspicions. Suspicions that something whose appearance is as elastic as that cannot possibly be as real as we blithely assume it to be. This more critical mind, awake to the fact that such assumptions are due to having become accustomed to the fickleness space displays so regularly in the course of our everyday encounters with it, will in spite of it all dissect its shape shifting ways. It will not be lulled into believing that such a phenomenon can be more than a bewitching delusion and refuse to accept it as objective reality.

We are forever inclined to insist that waking is totally real while regarding dreams as mere phantoms, for when we wake up from them, so we claim, they seem most decidedly unreal. Here again, we forget that while dreaming our dreams feel most definitely real. The proof of this is not difficult to find, for when a lion, for instance, threatens us in one of our nocturnal ventures, we will run just as readily and as fast from it as we would in waking time.

This contradictory assessment of the reality status of the dream brings into focus the fact that our judgment is entirely

dependent on the point of view we take up. It highlights the circumstance that phenomena are relative to the stance and capacity of the observer. Yet when confronted with the world and its contents we invariably deal with them as if they were absolutes, as if they were entities independent of our senses, independent of our manner of experiencing them.

But they are not. In this connection it is worth examining briefly the relationship between absolutes and relatives. By way of analogy let us assume that thoughts in the head represent absolute reality while their physical manifestations betoken their relative or 'parasitical' existence. In order to see palpably what must happen to such 'absolutes' as they project onto the plain of manifestation, let us examine Euclid's theorem of the straight line, which is said to be the shortest connection between two points in space.

As 'absolute thought' these two points have no extension nor has the connecting line any breadth. But when these absolutes are projected into the realm of manifestation, they are necessarily falsified since even the finest pen will represent the absolute dots of no extension as tiny circular areas and the line without breadth as a ribbon.

This illustrates the transmutation of all absolutes as they are made manifest in our world. They become falsified to relative or parasitical realities. Just how parasitical time is, for instance, can readily be seen when we realise that both the past and the future have no footing without the present. Put another way: we can only think of the past or the future while being in the present thus making both past and future aspects of the present. In short, they are not objective realities, but mere concepts of an active mind.

This also demonstrates that time is not really tripartite, but one, which brings us to yet another common notion where we see separate entities when in reality there is but one. These entities are dreams and waking. **Contrary to popular belief these two phases of being are strictly interdependent.** This comes to light once we realise that dreams foreshadow all waking events, that they are nothing less than the blueprint of waking. Under such circumstances it is impossible to divide them, which adds further weight to the argument that they are on an equal footing, that one is no more real than the other. At the same time the predictive nature of the dream suggests that everything that is to become manifest pre-exists in the absolute. Here again, the Euclidean analogy pictures the falsification, the splitting up of that which originally is ONE and beyond time and space.

While for our ancient forebears there would have been no objection to the claim that dreams foreshadow the future, the majority of our present day researchers will reject it point blank. However there are pockets of receptivity toward this idea, for there are a number of studies that have demonstrated that there is continuity between dreaming and waking. ("Finding Meaning in Dreams" G. William Domhoff: "We believe the findings to be presented in this chapter demonstrate a continuity between dreams and waking life: the concerns people express in their dreams are the concerns they have in waking life." (Chapter 8) "There is now impressive evidence on the similarities between dreaming and waking cognition, suggesting they lie along a continuum rather than being distinctive forms of thinking. Chapter 9) Other researchers have found that there are a sufficient number of dreams that have proven to be 'psychic'. This has prompted them to classify them as a separate and scientifically attestable category. .

My own research has convinced me of the dream's function as blueprint for waking. I have demonstrated this in my essay "To test or not to Test; - is there a way of verifying the validity of the interpretation of our dreams?" - (IJoDR, vol. 7, No 2, October 2014) So dreaming and waking, as I see it, are not only relative realities, but also utterly **solipsistic facts**. Moreover these facts are due to the stream of thoughts that courses our brain.

These thoughts fall into two categories, mental and physical. It might at first seem quite absurd to speak of 'physical thoughts', but when we realise that 'think' and 'thing' are born of the same root this idea begins to make perfect sense. Obviously our forebears believed that the thought process was also the creative agent that brought them and the Universe into existence. As we have seen earlier on, there is no argument whatever that can destroy the logic of this.

As we give solipsism a closer look we note that this term is made up of two Latin words: 'solus' alone and 'ipse', self. It intimates that the self alone can be known to exist. In order to see my perspective on solipsism we need to begin by examining the 'self'.

The first thing we notice is that its existence is self-evident. This means that in contrast with everything else it needs no argument to demonstrate that it exists. When we ask ourselves why that is, we find that it is due to being imbued with consciousness. Further reflection reveals that **consciousness is the sine qua non of existence** and that part of it is an inherent sense of self. Put another way: as consciousness rises, the sense of self arises with it. Or: without consciousness there is no sense of self, indeed there is nothing, no thing, 'no think'. So when the self goes to sleep the Universe disappears with it in much the same way as the dream world vanishes when we wake up from a dream. The self and the world need an active mind, they need consciousness for their existence.

Earlier on I have maintained that something that comes and goes, something that is not ever-present cannot be defined as being real. On the surface consciousness seems to be as intermittent as waking and dreaming and thus as relatively real as them. But upon further investigation it turns out that consciousness has some great surprises in store for us.

As we look at the man, for instance, who has been struck on the head and is now lying on the ground with no signs of outward responses, we exclaim anxiously: "He is unconscious!" We say this because he appears to be oblivious to the world. Yet he is breathing, he is not dead and when he eventually wakes up he is the same man that was struck down, which is evidence that his consciousness was continuous.

His state was actually little different from a man who was asleep and therefore unaware of his bed and body, yet still able to dream and recount his nocturnal ventures after waking up. It hardly needs pointing out that his ability to remember his dreams is a definite sign that he was perfectly conscious in that state, although oblivious to the outer world.

But what about the person we consider to be dead? A body, in other words, that shows no sign of breathing, whose heartbeat has stopped and whose brain no longer registers any brainwaves?

Until doctor Moody's book, "Life after Death", came along in 1975, the received perception of death was fairly uniform: it meant the end of existence, a break in human conscious-

ness. Moody himself had no doubt that 'life' continued after what we term death, that consciousness was not extinguished and that the individual, although discarnate, retained its identity and lived on in a different realm.

His research was naturally heavily criticised. Some voices lamented that his methods were 'unscientific', maintaining, as did Paul Kurtz, that "there is no reliable evidence that people who report such experiences have died and returned, or that consciousness exists separately from the brain or body."

Paul Kurtz. (1991). *Toward a New Enlightenment: The Philosophy of Paul Kurtz*. Transaction Publishers. p. 349. ISBN 1-56000-118-6

Supportive of such doubt, the psychologist James Alcock noted that "(Moody) appears to ignore a great deal of scientific literature dealing with hallucinatory experiences in general, just as he quickly glosses over the very real limitations of his research methods."

James Alcock. (1981) *Psychology and Near-Death Experiences*. In Kendrick Frazier. *Paranormal Borderlands of Science*. Prometheus Books pp. 153-169. ISBN 0-87975-148-7

The possibility that Near Death Experiences, or NDEs, were little more than hallucinations, were perhaps the strongest arguments against NDEs as evidence that consciousness persists beyond death. In this connection, Robert Todd Carroll, writes that the NDEs "can be explained by neurochemistry and are the result of a dying, demented (sic) or drugged brain". Robert Todd Carroll. (2003). *The Skeptic's Dictionary: A Collection of Strange Beliefs, Amusing Deceptions, and Dangerous Delusions*. Wiley. p. 251. ISBN 0-471-27242-6

But then, in 1998, a book came on the market that contained a report on an NDE that fulfilled all the requirements of impeccable scientific observation, procedural reporting and indubitable substantiation. In other words the report was underpinned by the fact that there were numerous professionals at the scene of the NDE to witness the case. The book in question is called "Light and Death" by Michael Sabom, M.D. (Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 49530. ISBN 0-310-21992-2)

The numerous professionals present, over twenty (20) in all, consisted of doctors, nurses and medical technicians, all of whom attended Dr. Spetzler's daring operation on a basilar artery aneurism that was inaccessible along the usual pathways of operations. (Ibid 35) Understandably under such circumstances the "documentation far exceeds any recorded before and provides us with our most complete scientific glimpse yet into the near-death experience". (Ibid page 38)

Spetzler's highly original approach, requiring the draining and cooling of the patient's blood, known as hypothermic arrest, was nicknamed 'stand still' by the attending doctors. And rightly so, for this procedure results in a complete shut down of all signs of life. In brief, during such an operation the body temperature is a mere 60 degrees Fahrenheit (15.55 C) while the lungs draw no breaths, the heartbeat is flat-lined and the EEG registers no brain waves at all. In other words, as Sabom writes: "In everyday terms she would be dead."

'She' was Pam Reynolds, a woman in her thirties whose life hung on a very thin thread, who was now in a state that would be classed by any medical standards as dead. Dead not just for minutes, but for one and a half hours. Yet, like Lazarus, she returned to life to everyone's relief and amaze-

ment. She returned safely and well to her reheated body. But even more amazingly, the story she had to relate backed up all the essential characteristics Moody had observed in the NDEs of his interviewees.

Pam, like so many other near-death patients, travelled into the 'Elysian Fields' along a well-established route reported by Moody and many other authors on NDEs. "It was like a tunnel but it wasn't a tunnel" Pam recounted... "It's a dark shaft I went through, and at the very end there was this very little tiny pinpoint of light that kept getting bigger and bigger and bigger. The light was incredibly bright, like sitting in the middle of a light bulb." (Ibid page 44) It was there where she heard her grandmother calling her. Soon she began to discern different figures in the light - "and they were all covered with light, they were light and had light permeating all around them." (Ibid page 44)

What is of no less interest to us here is the way Pam's crossing of the 'River Styx' began: "The next thing I recall was the sound: It was a natural D. As I listened to the sound, I felt it was pulling me out of the top of my head. The further out of my head I got, the more clear the tone became... I remember seeing several things in the operating room when I was looking down. It was not like normal vision. It was brighter and more focused and clearer than normal vision." (Ibid page 41)

Before I continue, I wish to make it emphatically clear that Pam was clinically **brain-dead** when she saw the 'several things in the operating room' she reported after her transcendental adventure. In other words those items and actions in the theatre were not visions of 'a dying, demented or drugged brain', as the "Skeptics Dictionary" might have it, but perceptions of a living entity that was utterly independent of the body and its senses. In view of this it is actually incorrect to say that Pam's experience was a 'near death experience', for neither her lower or higher brain showed any EEG activity, also there was no blood flowing to either of them since her heart was silent and the lungs devoid of breath. Nevertheless I shall continue to use the NDE term with respect to her case because ultimately she did not die, but come back to life.

There is perhaps one item that incontestably demonstrates that what she heard and saw in the operating room while 'under the knife', was unaided by the brain and other senses. This object was the saw that Dr. Spetzler employed in the course of the operation. This medical instrument, apart from being of an entirely new design, was brought into the operating room while Pam was already anaesthetised, thus making it impossible for her to catch a glimpse of it with her bodily senses. Yet Pam was able to describe its shape and the case in which it was housed with full accuracy. "The thing that I hated the sound of looked like an electric toothbrush and it had a dent in it, grooves at the top where the saw appeared to go into the handle..." (Ibid pg. 41)

But, of course, this will not satisfy those 'scientific minds' that are under the influence of the Faraday-Huxley or Brewster Syndrome, since they are not prepared to look at any evidence with an open mind.

So for those who will approach the case in the true spirit of scientific enquiry will have to concede that Pam's report not only backs up Moody's observations, but also puts to rest all the arguments about a spirit world where one's relations are encountered after death. It also shows that the senses of our body are not a primary function, but a secondary one, one that in fact is of a lesser quality than primary

sensing. This fact is supported by research undertaken by Dr. Ken Ring who "investigated 31 blind people who had near-death-experiences or out-of-body experiences. 80% of these respondents claimed that they were able to see when out of their bodies, even those who were congenitally blind." ("Mindsight and Near-Death and Out-of-Body Experiences in the Blind" by Dr. Ken Ring and Sharon Cooper, Copyright 1999 William James Center for Consciousness Studies, Institute of Transpersonal Psychology) Clearly NDEs demonstrate that the normally functioning brain is more of a hindrance than help when it comes to clarity and focus of sound and sight.

Pam's NDE also testifies to the veracity of innumerable reports of reincarnated subjects that could recall their own funerals and could see their burial and the attending mourners.

From such evidence we must infer that contrary to Paul Kurtz's opinion NDEs support the view that **consciousness exists separately from the brain**. But that is not all. Pam's experience of being pulled out of the head also confirms the Hindu view that the top of the head is a crucial portal in the human body. It is in fact one of the seven chakras that are distributed along the spine.

It is actually the seventh chakra or energy wheel. It is called Sahasrara. The first chakra, Muladhara, sits at the base of the spine. It is there that the upward journey of the serpent-shaped Kundalini, the latent spiritual energy, begins, ultimately affording enlightenment in the spiritually mature once Sahasrara is reached.

'The Tantric Way' by Mookerjee and Khanna notes the following thing about Sahasrara: "It is 'the Lotus of a Thousand Petals'... it is also called Brahmarandhra and is the meeting place of the Kundalini Shakti with pure consciousness." (The Tantric Way, page156)

"Brahmarandhra means 'hole of Brahman'. It is the dwelling house of the human soul...the hollow place in the crown of the head known as anterior fontanelle in the newborn child. This is between the two parietal and occipital bones. This portion is very soft in a babe. When the child grows, it gets obliterated by the growth of the bones of the head." (Yoga-Age.com; online Resources of Yoga Practices.)

In this context it is also written in the Upanishads, "Brahma created the physical body and entered the body to give illumination inside through this Brahmarandhra." (Ibid. - the Upanishads are Vedic texts in Sanskrit; Hinduism's sacred scriptures) **Under such circumstances it is not so strange to envisage Brahman dreaming the world through us as we experience our environment**. Interestingly, this notion of God shining light into humanity is endorsed in the New Testament. In John 1:4 to 5 it says: "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."

If we consider this as interpretative of Brahman's light or consciousness entering the human body, we recognise the darkness as the body of flesh and blood. The body, matter, is in itself insentient and lifeless and devoid of intelligence. It is much like the moon, which as such lacks luminosity and does not shine until the rays of the sun reflect on it. But just as the sun's luster abates as it reflects on the surface of the moon, so the radiance of Brahman's light is dimmed as it floods our brain, thus becoming ordinary everyday awareness and intelligence.

But Pam's experience - and indeed NDEs in general - also shows that **this world can be experienced without a**

brain. When Pam saw her body on the operating table and watched from above what was done to 'her' she was 'brain dead'. But the entity with which she identified at that time was obviously not dead, and certainly not unconscious. Although without a clearly defined form, that entity managed to see; to see in fact more clearly what was happening to her lifeless body than if she would have been watching with her physical eyes.

That entity is usually referred to as the 'soul' or the 'etheric' or 'subtle body'. While it resides in the body of flesh and blood it identifies with it and enlivens it with its own inherent consciousness. In other words, the brain of the body receives its consciousness from the etheric, which is unaffected by the destruction of the body.

There can be little doubt about this, for Pam Reynolds and countless NDE survivors demonstrate that **consciousness continues beyond death** and that consciousness is part and parcel of the subtle body. Moreover Pam's experience of leaving the body through the top of the head confirms the Hindu view that this subtle body resides in the seventh chakra or Sahasrara. In view of this it cannot be unreasonable to accept that the light of Brahmarandhra is derived from Brahman himself and thus from his Consciousness.

There is yet another Hindu perception about Brahman's light we must examine. It is the view that human consciousness consists of three phases: Waking, dreaming and deep sleep. While this broadly concurs with western science, the Hindus' understanding of deep sleep differs considerably from what comes out of western dream laboratories. The Hindus simply maintain that it is a state of light and bliss, in short, a phase of awareness free from imagery. We might say that it is a state approaching pure consciousness. I said 'approaching' because light is a manifestation of consciousness and can therefore not be regarded as absolutely 'pure'.

Findings in western dream laboratories are far more complex than this. Yet they concur in one thing with Hinduism's perception of deep sleep: there are dreamless states among various other occurrences like NREM dreams and parasomnia behaviours, including sleepwalking and sleep terrors. (About.com's Medical Review Board Nov. 15, 2013) - Incidentally sleepwalking is the most palpable evidence that dreams direct our waking life! -

I suspect that it is during these dreamless periods of slow wave sleep that a 'dimmed' form of Brahman's light is experienced. But this is largely forgotten because of the intervening REM dreams that romp through our brain before we finally reach waking consciousness. My suspicion that we do experience this light in such dreamless phases is strengthened by personal experience.

In my early twenties I had a dream of a shadowy figure leading me towards the back of a temple in Colombo. When my companion opened the portal, a dimly lit room opened up. It was totally empty apart from a diminutive yogi sitting in Padmasana in the middle of the room. The moment I set eyes on him he stretched out his arm and touched my forehead with the tip of his finger. At the instant of contact I 'swooned'. I lost awareness of my body and surroundings. Yet I retained a blissful sense of self. It expanded into an endless sea of gentle, but radiant light. Time ceased to be. Imagery was lost. Thoughts were suspended until a new dream began. In it I found myself walking in strange robes through the thronging crowds of some kind of festivities. A small woman in a colourful sari came towards me. She

placed a treasure chest at my feet and opened it. Unfortunately I was unable to see inside it because the half open lid obstructed my view. At that moment I woke from this new dream. (F TiyD, page 187)

Put quite simply, I 'woke up' to 'Hindu deep sleep' in between two dreams. If it did occur in the phase of deep sleep then the two dreams framing the blissful stage were most likely NREM dreams.

I cannot say what kind of gap in apparent time there was in between the two dream scenes; in short, I cannot tell how long I spent in the timeless zone. But none of that is of importance, especially since it is relatively untrue because time is illusory. Strange to say is that on the other hand being in between dreams while apparently in the deepest of deep sleep was anything but illusory. Reflecting on it afterwards, I felt the best way of describing this circumstance was by liking it to being at the centre of the Universe. Of course, while in that state there was no thought of a world, indeed, as I have said, it was a thought-free state, one of pure bliss and of image-free consciousness.

If at this point of deep sleep we were actually experiencing reflected light of Brahman, the same light Pam Reynolds experienced in her discarnate state, the same light that untold NDE 'adepts' have experienced, it would suggest that **at that juncture of deep sleep we would be in a purely etheric mode.** In a cosmic analogy to this situation we would then be like the moon (the etheric) being illumined by the sun (Brahman) on the far side, while the earth (our body) would be in darkness due to the absence of reflected light on the near side of the moon.

If we remember now that countless NDE 'travellers' have reported an increase not just in dreaming, but in dreaming the future, we can deduce with a good measure of justification that the etheric body is not just the reflector of Brahman's light, but also the dreamer. However, as the dreamer it is at that point in an active state in contrast with the etheric in slow wave deep sleep, which at that time would be in passive mode.

Providing it is as I say, the same cosmological model will also illustrate the position of the human ego, its sense of self and the quality of consciousness reaching it. Just as the moon receives the light from the sun and then reflects it onto the earth, so the etheric is irradiated with Brahman's boundless light and consciousness from where it finds its way to the brain in order to be diffused throughout the body of flesh and blood.

From this is clear that although the ego's consciousness is part and parcel of Brahman's consciousness, which is absolute and unchanging and therefore **the only thing in existence that passes the reality test**, its Gestalt is of necessity illusory because absolutes become falsified on this plain of existence as the Euclidean analogy demonstrates. But that does not diminish the integrity of its essence since consciousness is beyond space and time, beyond location or any other constraints. Moreover, in view of the fact that consciousness is an absolute without a second, since in truth there is only ONE consciousness, solipsism is the only realistic philosophy of existence. In short ultimately there is really only one dreamer, only one reality, only one who sleeps awake forever: Brahman.