

## Excursions from the Mesostratum

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### Abstract

We explore the conjecture that the mesostratum is populated with phantoms and spirits of people who are deceased yet still linger nearby and attempt to influence earthly human activities. Phantoms and formless spirits in the mesostratum limbo may engage in post mortem, past death excursions (PDE).

**Keywords:** Spirit, phantom limbo, transcendent mesostratum, NDE, OBE, miraculous events.

### Introduction

Most modern scientists automatically reject reports of miraculous and transcendent events because they are unable to offer scientific explanations for such phenomena. C. Radhakrishnan insists that “after science signs off, the only option for further investigation is through Vedantic methods.” [1] In agreement, we argue that enlightened scientists and physicists may explain these phenomena as evidence of a hyper-reality that transcends but influences material reality. Accordingly, we offer the mesostratum, a transcendent reality, which extends far beyond the material horizon. We describe the mesostratum as the interface between the superstratum and physiostratum, between a transcendent reality and material reality, in which phantoms and spiritual entities reside and influence both terrestrial and extraterrestrial venues and beings. [2]

We conjecture that the mesostratum is a limbo populated by multitudes of phantoms and formless spirits that cling to the physiostratum and wish to, and occasionally do, access or influence their former earthly abode, as well as the spirits of living people. It may be that most spirits are benign and helpful, that some are malicious and evil, that many are simply lost, and that all ultimately strive to unite with their soul, atman and in God and Brahma. We postulate that our higher consciousness resides with spirit which hovers between the superstratum and physiostratum, between soul and body, and metaphorically between heaven and earth.

According to Radhakrishnan, previous Bhagavad Gita commentators have missed the core Vedantic view pertaining the to three layers: Paramatma, Avyakta and Kshara: correlating with Superstratum (Atman), Mesostratum (Avyakta), and physiostratum (Kshara). The Avyakta is beyond observation by the senses and cannot be understood beyond transitions of form and content. Bhagavad Gita 2:25 [3]

During a near-death-experiences, many get a glimpse of mesostratum forms and content, of phantoms and spirits residing there and return with the feeling that they have received enlightenment and guidance. This depends on the nature of the spirits, whether they are

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indifferent, benevolent, mischievous, or malicious. We usually allow our judgement, conscience, or spiritual consciousness to be our guide. Christians may choose to let Jesus be their guide. After all, according to John 14:6: Jesus said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” Adherents of Vedantic teachings and transcendental meditation can gain access to and employ other resources of guidance. Daoists find the way effortlessly.

It is suggested that upon the body’s death, formless spirits may become lost in a mesostratum limbo without guidance, be misled, confused. Some spirits may assume a phantom human form and access mesostratum resources which allow ghostly reappearances on earth. This paper is offered for consideration by those who wish to explore and understand the nature of the realm their spirit may enter when it departs its earthly abode.

## Near Death Experiences

John Petrovic writes, “I have a professional colleague who did [have a near-death experience] when he had a heart attack . . . Before this experience, Don was quite a worldly and hard-nosed type of person. At a technical meeting, we had lunch and during that lunch when I asked him about his heart attack he spontaneously began to relate to me his near-death experience. I was somewhat taken aback, since this type of discussion was quite out of character for Don as I had known him up to that time.” [4]

“Don said that his heart attack began and he was in great pain due to it and very fearful about the possibility of dying. He told me it felt like he left his body and was then transported to some other place, where he was given the choice to proceed further or to go back. Don told me that the choice to proceed further had great peace associated with it, while the choice to go back had much pain. But he chose to go back because he felt he couldn’t leave his wife yet. So he was sent back. . . . I was very surprised. I had never expected to hear a near-death experience related by someone as worldly as Don.”

Michael Sabom described approximately 200 cases of near-death experiences. The most extensively medically documented one was that of “Pam Reynolds” (not her real name). Pam Reynolds had a giant basilar artery aneurysm, a ballooned section of a large artery at the base of her brain. If the aneurysm ruptured, the result would be immediate death. So she needed a major operation to fix the problem. [5]

Here is Pam’s account of her near-death experience: “There was a sensation like being pulled, but not against your will. I was going on my own accord because I wanted to go . . . The feeling was like going up in an elevator real fast. And there was a sensation, but it wasn’t a bodily, physical sensation. It was like a tunnel but it wasn’t a tunnel. . . I became aware of my grandmother calling me. But I didn’t hear her call me with my ears . . . It was a clearer hearing than with my ears. I trust that sense more than I trust my own ears. The feeling was that she wanted me to come to her, so I continued . . . and at the very end there was this very little pinpoint of light that kept getting bigger and bigger and bigger. . . the light was incredibly bright, like sitting in the middle of a lightbulb. It was so bright that I put my hands in front of my face fully expecting to see them and

I could not. But I knew they were there. Not from a sense of touch . . . but I knew they were there . . .” As the surgery neared completion and she was in recovery, the spirit of Pam’s uncle urged and helped her to return to her body and her NDE concluded.

The most remarkable aspects of Pam Reynolds’ NDE are her out-of-body experience (OBE) descriptions of the surgical procedures and equipment that were being employed at the time the surgeon was cutting into her skull to expose her brain. These descriptions are difficult to explain from a scientific medical viewpoint, and indicate that her conscious awareness and vision did not resided in her body during the surgery.

Kenneth Ring in *Lessons from the Light* comments on the implications of NDE for an afterlife which may assume the form of a post death experience, discussed next. Ring reports that those who have had the NDE are, “. . . persuaded that what they have seen and understood during their vision represents something as authentic as it is indubitable. And, by the same measure, typically, these individuals are equally sure that what they have experienced is no dream, fantasy, or hallucination. More than one such person has asseverated to me, and with great emphasis, that their NDE was ‘more real than life itself’, or ‘more real than you and I sitting here talking about it’, or similar avowals.” [6]

## Post Death Excursion

We contemplate and inquire into the post mortem, past death excursion (PDE) phenomenon. We can cite evidence of the PDE because of accounts by living people who have seen an apparition, a phantom, or who have hallucinated what appeared to be the presence of the deceased person nearby. [7] These are almost invariably cases where the spirits of the deceased manage to materialize or occupy living minds. Such an occupation may implant memories of experiences of the deceased into the neural network of a living person. Voluntary or involuntary meditation or receptivity may result in a realistic illusion, apparition, hallucination arising from the transmission of subjective signals sent by the deceased via the mesostratum.

The most well-known extraordinarily miraculous PDE is that of Jesus. According to Luke 24:36-49 (NIV), Jesus appeared to his disciples . . . stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” . . . They were startled and frightened . . . He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see.” . . . He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.”

A relevant modern example of PDE is the case of Lt. David McConnel who was a British pilot trainee. During an otherwise routine flight, he died in a plane crash on December 7, 1918.

Importantly, the exact time of his death, 3:25 pm, was known because the watch he was wearing stopped when his plane crashed. At roughly the same time that McConnell crashed, his military training roommate, a Lt. J.J. Larkin, stated that he saw McConnell walk into the pilot lounge, and that he had a short conversation with him. Here is Larkin's account which he wrote on December 22, 1918 for transmission to McConnell's father and family: [4]

"I heard someone walking up the passage; the door opened with the usual noise and clatter which David always made . . . I turned half round in my chair and saw him standing in the doorway, half in and half out of the room, holding the door knob in his hand. He was dressed in his full flying clothes . . . there being nothing unusual in his appearance. His cap was pushed back on his head and he was smiling . . . I am not positively sure of the exact words he used . . . I was looking at him the whole time he was speaking. He . . . closed the door noisily and went out."

What is described above, by an unimpeachable witness who avowed that he did not believe in ghosts prior to this event, is the apparent solid apparition of a fellow pilot who had just died in an aircraft accident. Furthermore, it was clearly documented that the witness, Lt. Larkin, had no knowledge of McConnell's death at the time that he experienced the apparition. This is a ghostly encounter that is difficult to explain on any orthodox materialistic basis. We suggest that this represents an instance of PDE where McConnell's spirit assumed a form of materialization such that he could revisit former earthly surroundings, temporarily.

We should not be surprised that many disembodied spirits are reluctant to depart earth and may literally haunt places with which they were once familiar. Indeed, such spirits may linger and attempt to help living loved ones. There are plenty of accounts world-wide where spirits of deceased people apparently have made post death excursions that are witnessed as apparitions, phantoms, and ghosts.

The PDE may go further than a ghostly appearance and become a reincarnation. There are many who have memories of previous lives in their conscious memories. An authority on this kind of PDE is Ian Stevenson who performed detailed investigations on over six hundred cases of claimed reincarnation. Stevenson's book, a classic in the field, presents the following celebrated account of reincarnation. [8]

Swarnlata Mishra was born in Shahpur on March 2, 1948, and lived in the town of Panna. At an age of three and one-half years, she began talking to the other children in her family about details of a previous life in a town called Katni, which was about 100 miles from Panna. She said that she had been a member of a family there named Pathak. Swarnlata revealed fragments of her apparent memories, mostly to her brothers and sisters, but also to some extent to her parents.

In March 1959, a Mr. Banerjee spent two days investigating Swarnlata's case with the Mishra family. He then went to Katni, where he met the Pathak family, the family Swarnlata claimed to

have been a member of in her previous life. Banerjee said he was guided by Swarnlata's descriptions into finding the right Pathak house. He found that the statements made by Swarnlata corresponded closely with the life of Biya, daughter of one particular Pathak family in Katni. Biya was also the deceased wife of Sri Chintamani Pandey, living in the town of Maihar. Biya had died in 1939. It is possible that the personality of Biya was somehow residing in the mind/body of Swarnlata, that Swarnlata was partially possessed by the spirit of Biya which had survived Biya's physical death in the form of a PDE.

In 1961, Stevenson personally interviewed the key people associated with the Swarnlata case. Possible explanations for the case include fraud, extrasensory perception, possession, or reincarnation. Stevenson eliminated fraud, discounted extrasensory perception, and narrowed the explanation of the observed facts as an indication of a continued spiritual existence after physical death.

## Conclusion

We have cited only a few illustrative examples from an extensive literature which supports the circumstances associated with OBE, NDE, and PDE and the concomitant reality of the mesostratum as the residence of phantoms and spirits. Figure 1 represents the conjectured relation among the Superstratum, the Mesostratum, and the Physiostratum and the phantom/spirit populations within each.

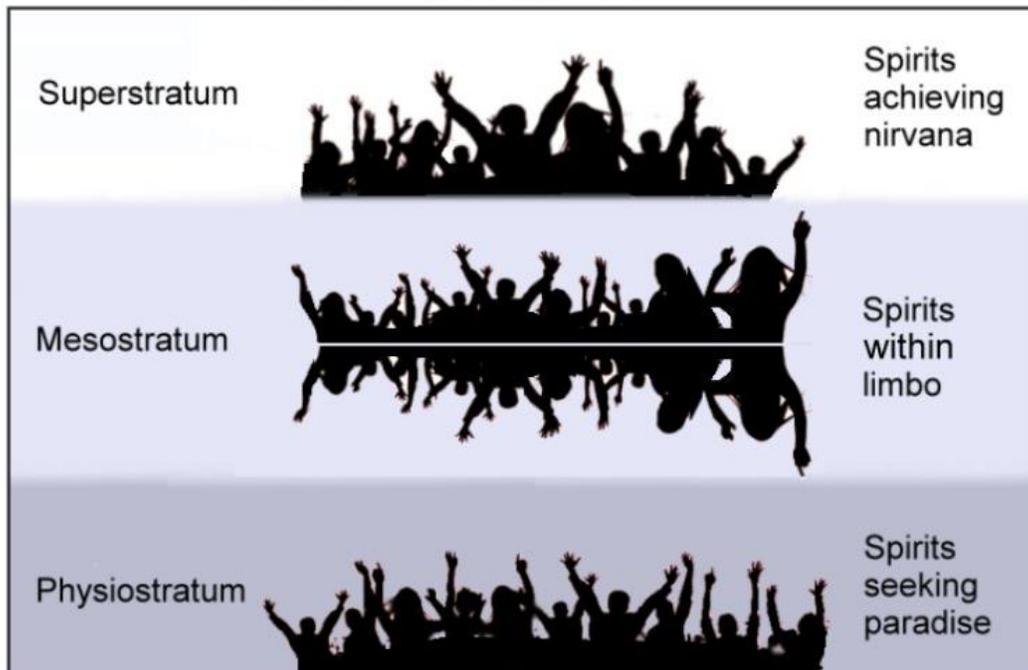


Figure 1 - Conceptualization of phantoms haunting the mesostratum.

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