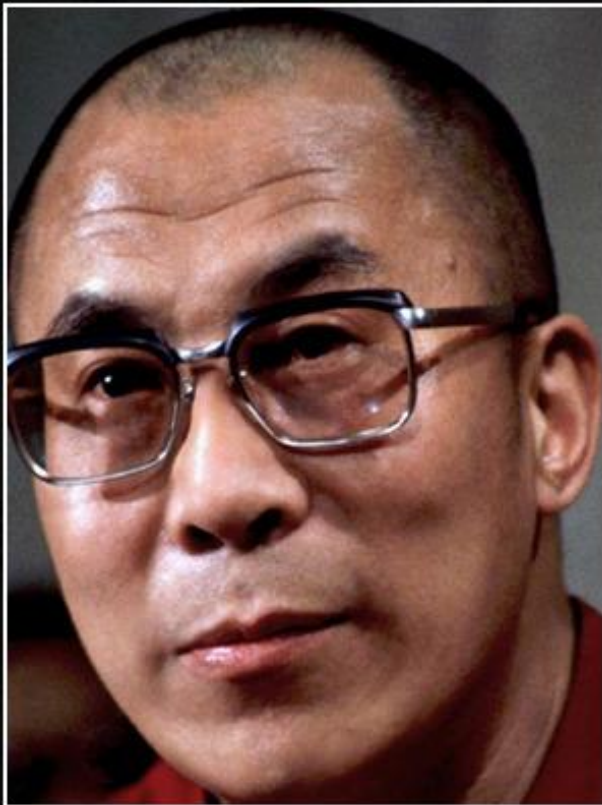




The Science on **PAST LIFE**

Dr. Ong Tien Kwan

Accords with Facts



If science proves facts that conflict with Buddhist understanding, Buddhism must change accordingly. We should always adopt a view that accords with the facts.

— *Dalai Lama* —

AZ QUOTES

Buddhism and Science

Areas of Interest:

1. **Past Life** (a.k.a. Rebirth, Reincarnation)
2. Death and the Dying Process
3. Psychic or paranormal Phenomena
 - I. NDE
 - II. OBE
 - III. Psychokinesis
 - IV. Remote Viewing
4. Mind & Consciousness
 - I. Nature of Consciousness
 - II. Science of Mind – Meditation, Mindfulness, Happiness, Positive Emotions
5. Nature of Realities

Cultures and Past Life

- Religions that believe in past life
 - Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism
- Religions that do not believe in past life
 - Christianity, Islam, Judaism
 - However...
 - Kabbalah mentions reincarnation
 - Early Christians, e.g. Gnostics
 - Council of Constantinople in 553 CE
- Cultures that believe in past life
 - Ancient Greek philosophers, e.g. Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato
 - Native Americans, particularly Northwestern Coastal and Inuit (Eskimos)
 - Druze in Syria, Lebanon, Israel and Jordan

Buddhism and Past Life

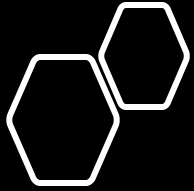
Rebirth is one of the foundational doctrines of Buddhism, together with kamma, dependent origination, nibbana

Rebirth can happen in any of the planes of existence

Rebirth is determined by kamma

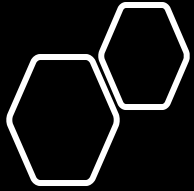
Past Life in the Suttas

- The Buddha reviewed his past lives on night of enlightenment
 - Tevijja (3 Knowledges) [MN 36: Maha Saccaka Sutta]
 - “Through many a birth I wandered, seeking the builder of this house. Sorrowful indeed is birth again and again.”
- The Buddha talked about his past life
 - Ghatikara Sutta [MN 81]: As Jotipala meeting Buddha Kassapa
- The Buddha declared where beings were reborn after death
 - Ananthapindikovada Sutta [MN 143]: Ananthapindika reborn as deva



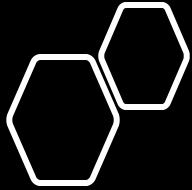
The Science on Past Life

- Not many interested in researching past life
 - Most scientists are westerners, Christian background
 - Conventional scientists believe life begins from matter
- Lots of data for the picking
 - Not just in cultures that believe in past life
 - Also in western, non-believing cultures
- Methodology
 - Interviews
 - Verifications of claims
 - Elimination of other possible sources of knowing
 - Physical evidence, Unexplained phenomena



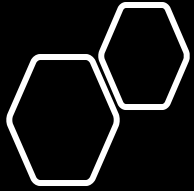
Past Life Researchers

- **Prof. Ian Stevenson**, Dept. of Psy., UVA
 - Founded Division of Perceptual Studies that investigates parapsychological phenomena such as reincarnation, NDE, OBE, after-death communications, deathbed visions, altered states of consciousness and psi (RV)
 - 40 years of research on reincarnation
 - 3,000 cases of rebirth in children worldwide
 - Identification of people and places in past life; birth marks and birth defects; xenoglossy; phobias
 - “Reincarnation and Biology”: 200 cases of birthmarks & defects
 - “Children Who Remember Previous Lives”



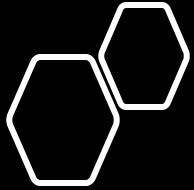
Past Life Researchers

- **Associate Professor Jim Tucker**
 - Current Director of Div. Of Perceptual Studies, UVA (since Sept. 2014)
 - Medical Director of Child and Family Psychiatry Clinic
 - Investigates mainly cases of past life in USA
 - Author of
 - **Life before Life: A Scientific Investigation of Children's Memories of Previous Lives**
 - **Return to Life: Extraordinary Cases of Children who Remember Past Live**



Research Findings

- Children usually talk about past lives between age 2 and 4, with memories fading by 6
- Deep unusual knowledge about past self, family members
- Familiarity with places – houses, town, neighbours, friends
- Occasionally possess knowledge even past families do not know

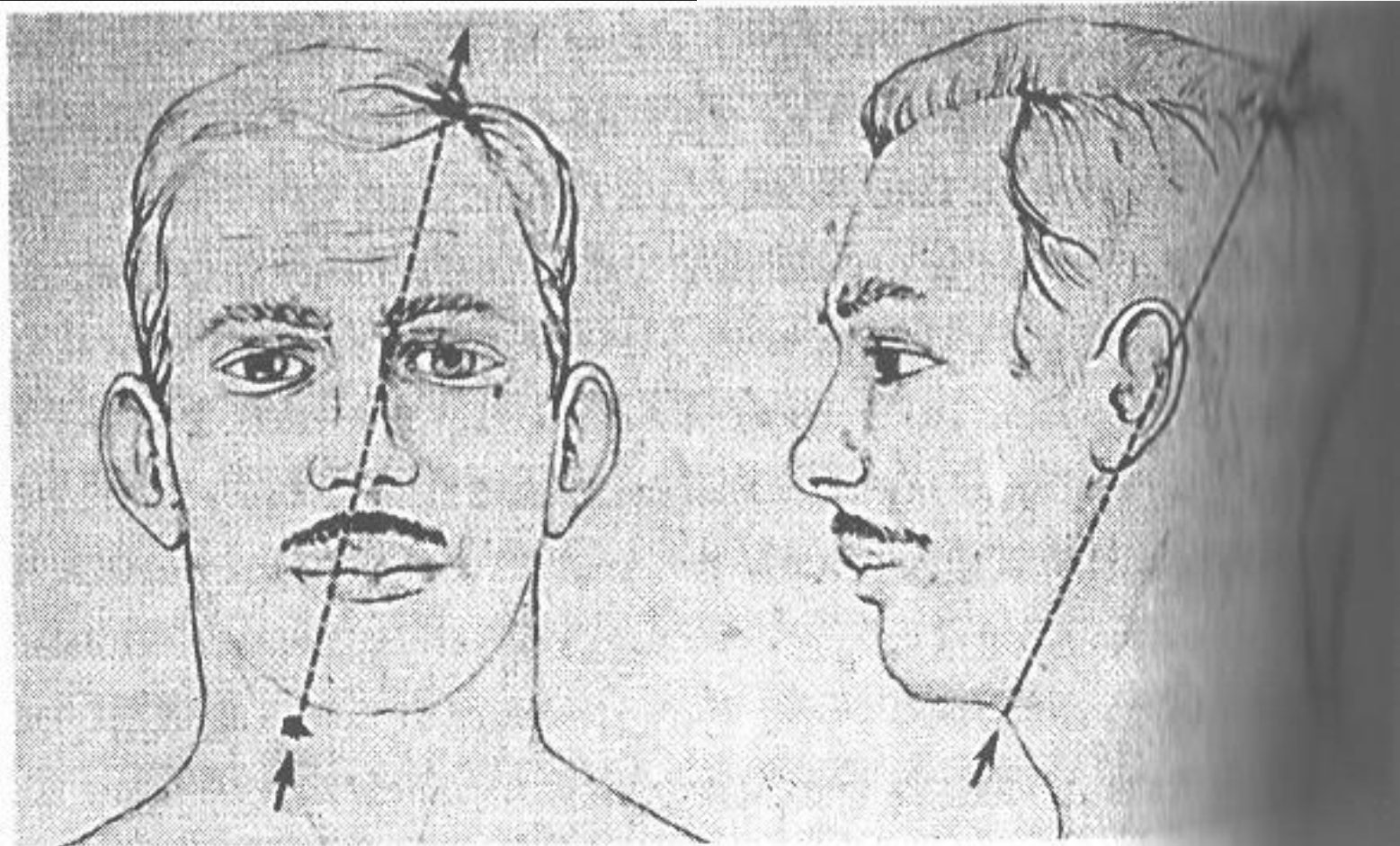


Notable Features

1. **Birth Marks and Birth Defects**
 - Investigated 210 cases of children with birth marks corresponding to previous wounds/injuries
2. **Unusual talents or skills**
 - Golfing, music, drawing
3. **Special interests**
 - Planes, horses
4. **Phobias from past life traumas**
 - Fear of water, fire, buses, planes
5. **Xenoglossia:** a phenomenon in which a person is able to speak or write a language he or she could not have acquired by natural means

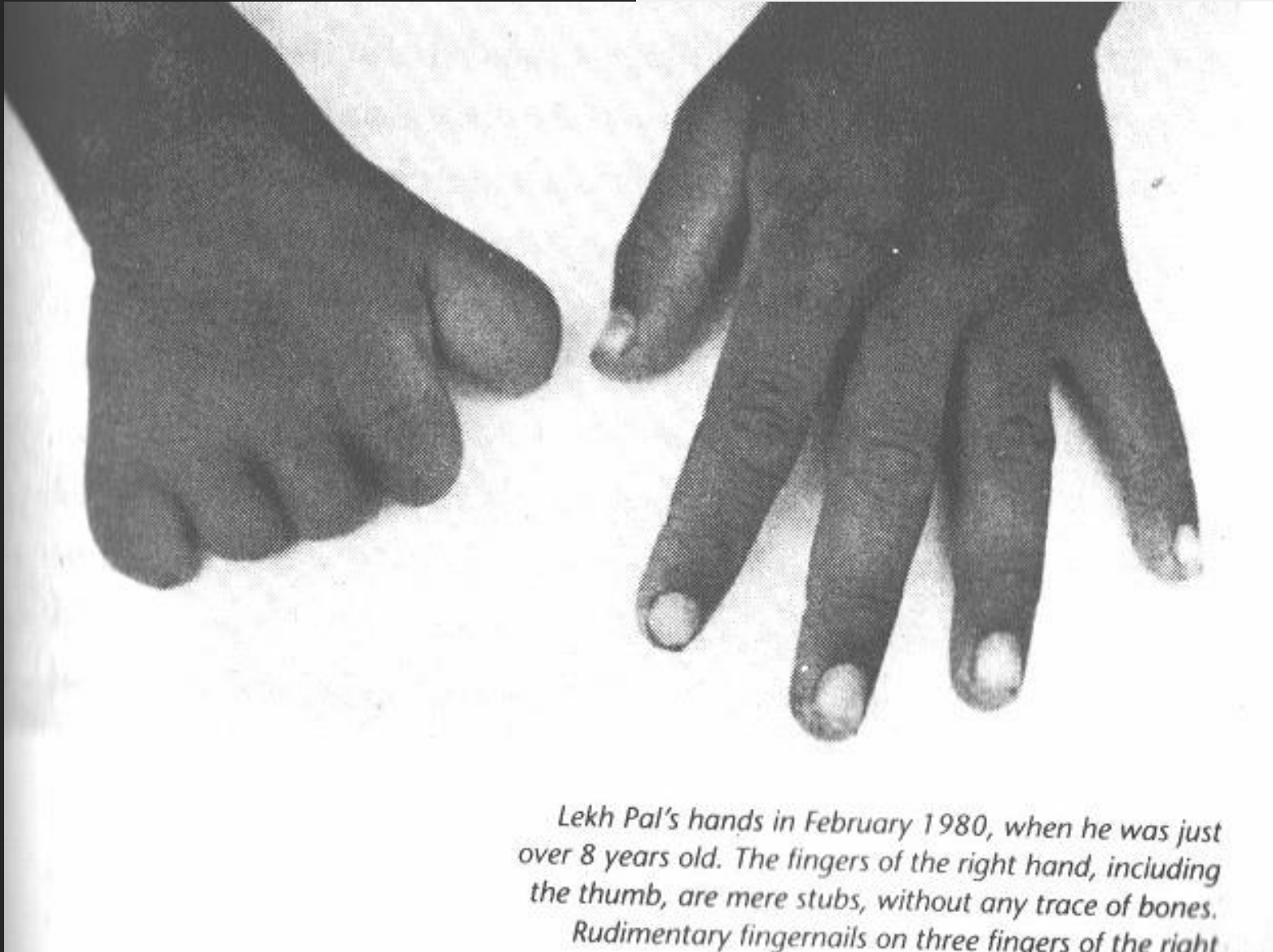
Birth Marks & Birth Defects

PATRICK	KEVIN
<p>Talked about life as Kevin at age 4 Talked about old house and pet dog Talked about Kevin's activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limping at 16 months• Followed by fracture on left leg• Diagnosed Metastatic Neuroblastoma
<p>Walk with an uncommon gait Left eye blind (corneal opacity) Nodule on skull just above right ear Small "cut" line on right side of neck</p>	<p>Spread to: [left hip joint, femur] left eye → blindness right skull just above right ear IVC inserted on right side of neck</p>
<p>Mechanism: Mental images or imprints can produce specific effects on the body</p>	



Artist's reconstruction of the trajectory of the bullet through the head of Cemil Hayik that would have caused wounds of entry and exit corresponding to the birthmarks on Cemil Fahrıcı.

Birth Marks



Lekh Pal's hands in February 1980, when he was just over 8 years old. The fingers of the right hand, including the thumb, are mere stubs, without any trace of bones. Rudimentary fingernails on three fingers of the right

Birth Marks

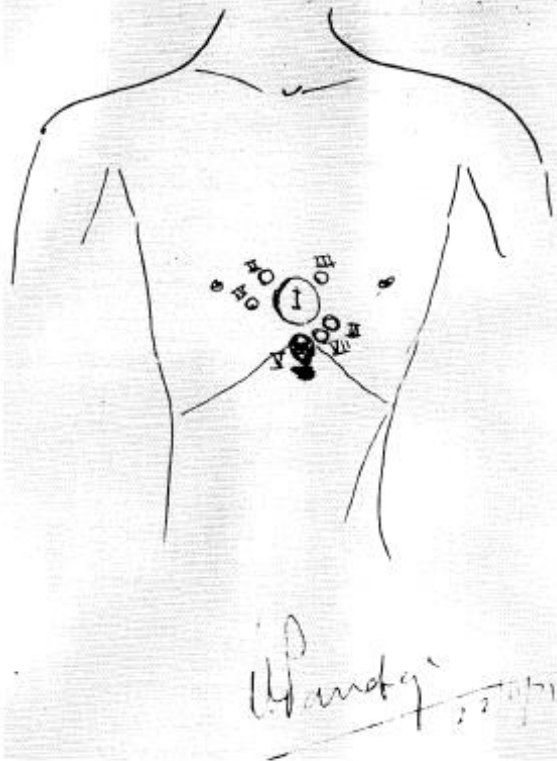
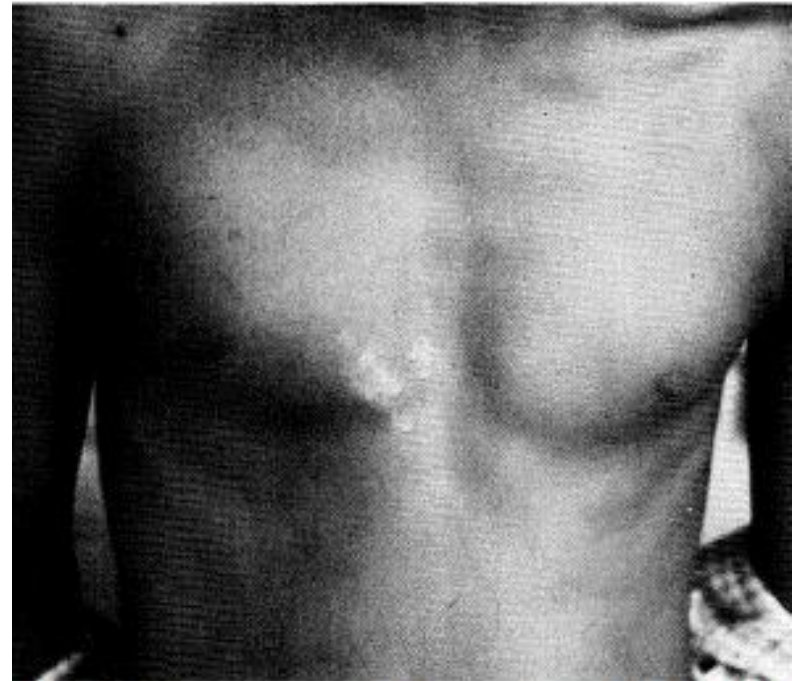


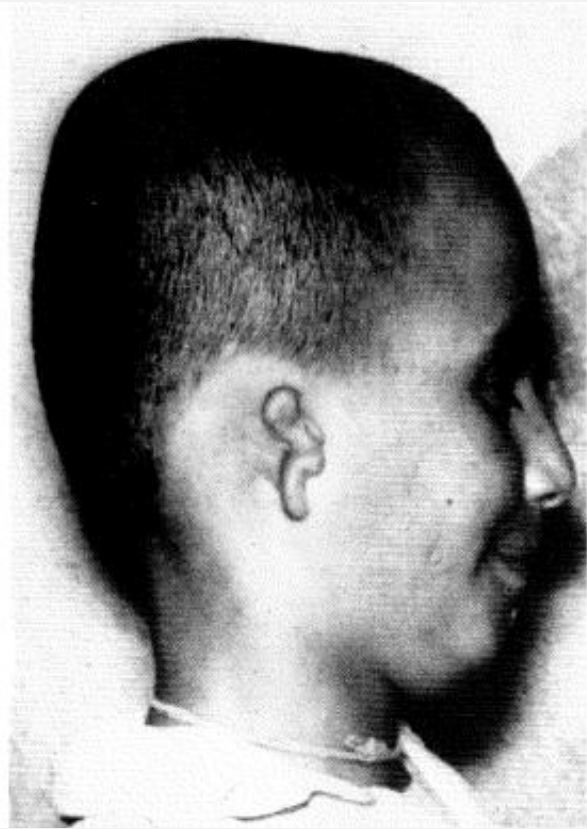
Fig. 2. The circles show the principal shotgun wounds on Maha Ram, for comparison with Figure 1.

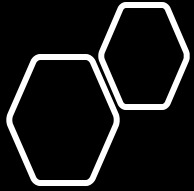


Hypopigmented macule on chest of an Indian youth who, as a child, said he the life of a man, Maha Ram, who was killed with a shotgun fired at close ran

Birth Defects

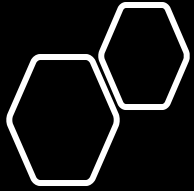
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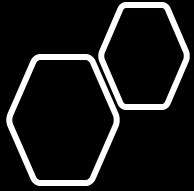
Unusual Talent

- Hunter, age 2, given a toy golf set
- Age 3, saw Golf Channel on TV
- One day, saw Bobby Jones, a golfer in 1920s, on infomercial → claimed he was BJ
- Tests: photos of golfers and houses
- Started golf lessons at age 2 (usual is 5)
- By 7, he has won 41 out of 50 junior tournaments



Phobias and Phobias

- **Phobias**
 - Girl who fear water and buses
 - Boy who fear loud noises
- **Phobias**
 - Love horses, music, farming

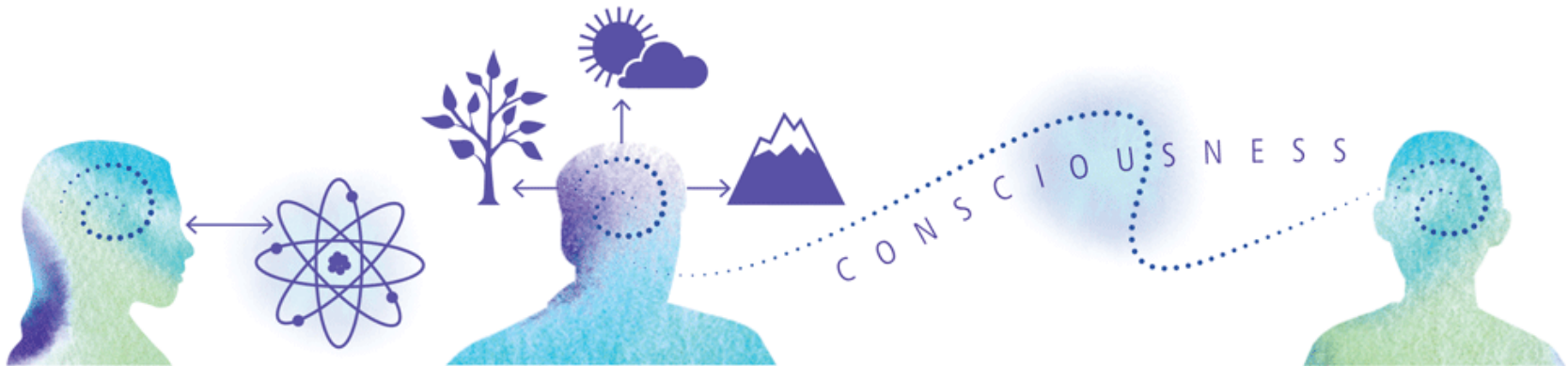


Xenoglossia

- The American boy who spoke a Tibetan dialect
 - Robin, at age 5, started to speak a foreign language that parents could not recognise
 - Visiting friend recognised language to be Asian, and brought an expert to listen, who recognised it as a dialect spoken in northern Tibet
 - When asked where he learned it, boy described “school”, “teachers” and place

Theory on Past Life

Tucker's Hypothesis on How Reincarnation Could Exist

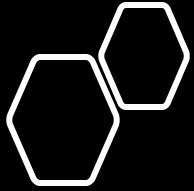


1 Quantum physics shows that at the most basic level of the universe, events involving its smallest particles, such as electrons and protons, only occur once they are observed.

2 This suggests that the material world may be derived from consciousness, not the other way around. Although that idea is debated by many, it is a belief that's been shared by a number of quantum physicists, including Max Planck, the father of quantum mechanics.

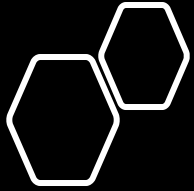
3 If consciousness creates the material world, then it may not be dependent upon that world to exist. It would follow that consciousness does not depend on a living brain to exist.

4 If consciousness doesn't require a brain, it may continue after the brain stops working. It could then get attached to a new brain and continue on in another life.



Past Life from Dreams

- Unique characteristics:
 - Often repetitive and unchanging events
 - Have historical details
 - May explain unusual behaviours (phobias or phobias) or strange habits
 - May show origin of physical and emotional issues



Past Life Regression

- A process of recalling past lives using various methods, most commonly, hypnosis
- Possible other explanations:
 - Confabulation: fabricated, distorted, misinterpreted memories
 - Owning other people's lives (and memories) as their own