

that correspond to the wounds of the prior personality. Moreover, the birthmark corresponding to the exit wound is larger than the birthmark corresponding to the entry wound, just as the wounds themselves were, that being the normal pattern for bullet wounds. That is one type of case out of many involving birthmarks and defects.

The two hefty volumes of *Reincarnation and Biology* present extensive reports on cases of several types: volume 1 is devoted to birthmarks and volume 2 to birth defects and other anomalies. Many of the detailed accounts include photographs. The much more concise book *Where Reincarnation and Biology Intersect* corresponds chapter by chapter with the two-volume one but abridges and summarizes the material and is addressed to a general reader. The fuller two volumes, on the other hand, contain a good deal of technical detail and far more specific accounts of the evidence. For most readers, the shorter book will suffice, but anyone seriously interested in a scientific investigation of evidence for reincarnation should consult the longer version. And even a casual reader will find some of the detail in the two-volume set of absorbing interest.

A question that naturally arises is how the phenomenon works. Assuming that the memories of a former life are true, what causes unusual marks on a new infant body to correspond to physical abnormalities on the body of a former personality? Stevenson considers that question in chapters 2 and 3, where he points to several circumstances under which modifications in a person's body can be made by mental rather than physical intervention. Christian stigmatics are a well-known example; persons meditating on the crucified Jesus may undergo bodily changes in which marks or open wounds appear on their foreheads, palms, feet, sides, or other places corresponding to scriptural or iconographic details of the Passion.

Although the idea runs counter to the materialist assumptions that still dominate received opinion in our culture, it is clear that our mind affects our body, just as our body affects our mind. Because that is true, if reincarnation is also true, it is easy to understand that the mind of a person who reincarnates quickly, with something of the prior mind intact, would affect the new body, especially when traumatic memories are involved. Thus birthmarks and birth defects would be the physical impressions of memories carried over from a past life.