

Sri Lanka

Cases of
the Reincarnation Type

Volume II

Ten Cases in Sri Lanka

Ian Stevenson, M.D.

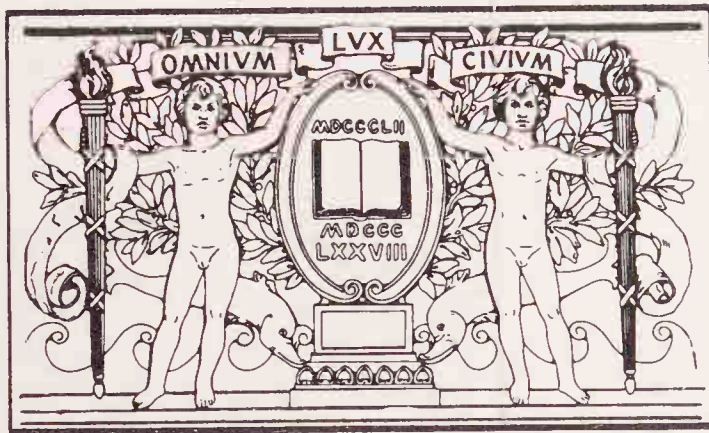
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The second volume of *Cases of the Reincarnation Type* presents ten thoroughly investigated cases in Sri Lanka (Ceylon). As in Volume I, the lives of the subjects have been traced for years. A great amount of information has also been derived about the lives of the previous personalities, and through interviews with families and friends, their characters have been accurately reconstructed. In nearly every case, research indicates that the subject displayed a kind of behavior unusual in his family but one that corresponded to that of a previous personality. Close comparisons between the two lives suggest which personal traits may carry over with reincarnation.

Each report contains a comprehensive discussion by the author of the weak and strong features of the case. Any discrepancies in the testimonies are recorded and analyzed. The author also observes the extent of which memories of the previous life faded or persisted as the subject matured. Additional research has revealed that extrasensory perception is not a plausible interpretation of any of the cases. Also presented in this volume are two rare cases in which a written record was made of the subject's statements about the previous life before any verification of his statements was attempted. These reports are of special interest because they have not been vulnerable to the criticism of embellishment by adults who knew the details of the previous life the subject claimed to have lived.

An extra feature is a long essay on the belief in reincarnation among the Sinhalese people and about the more important recurrent features found in Sinhalese cases. This chapter, along with a glossary of cultural terms, will assist the reader unfamiliar with Theravada Buddhism in understanding the context of the case reports.




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Volume II

Ten Cases in Sri Lanka



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To the Memory of
Francis Story

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Acknowledgments

BEFORE he died in 1971, Francis Story knew, I think, how much I appreciated his extraordinary efforts in the investigation of cases of the reincarnation type. He studied them tirelessly in Sri Lanka and Thailand particularly, and also in Burma and India. He often accompanied me on my field trips, especially in Sri Lanka and Thailand, and he also carried out many investigations to a quite advanced stage by himself. This was certainly true of his studies of the cases of Warnasiri Adikari and Disna Samarasinghe, of which we published together two individual reports.¹ I am including revised and updated reports of these cases in the present volume.

E. C. Raddalgoda acted as an interpreter for me from my first visit to Sri Lanka in 1961 up to the time of his death in the summer of 1973. In this respect he had the longest record of service—as well as one of the most useful—of any interpreter assisting me.

Mr. Godwin Samararatne has assisted me as an interpreter since 1966. He has given me most valuable help in the preliminary investigation of many cases and in filling gaps in our information by making return visits to the informants after I have left the Island. I am also much indebted to Mr. Samararatne for carefully reading the case reports—some of them more than once—and giving me his suggestions for corrections and other improvements.

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¹ Francis Story's writings on rebirth have been collected into a single volume. See F. Story. 1975. *Rebirth as doctrine and experience: Essays and case studies*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society.

Mr. Tissa Jayawardene has sent me preliminary information about numerous new cases in Sri Lanka. He has also furnished other valuable assistance such as in obtaining and translating birth and death certificates. In March 1976 he accompanied Godwin Samararatne and me during much of my visit to Sri Lanka and gave valuable assistance in the field.

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Prof. G. Obeyesekere, now of the University of California, San Diego, sent me a copy of an unpublished article by himself describing the beliefs and practices associated with *pretas* (ghosts) in Sri Lanka.

The Glossary was much improved by the suggestions of Dr. H. L. Senviratne of the Department of Anthropology, University of Virginia. Mr. Godwin Samararatne also gave the Glossary his usual careful attention.

Several of the cases here reported have been published in briefer form elsewhere.² I am grateful to the editors of the publications in which these reports appeared for permission to make use of this material. However, in each instance of such prior publication I have extensively revised and enlarged the report for presentation in this volume.

Mrs. Laura A. Dale, Editor of the American Society for Psychical Research, New York, has continued to earn my gratitude and that of my readers by her painstaking attention to many matters, large and small, by which she has helped to improve the quality of this work.

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It gives me pleasure also to renew my thanks to those donors and private foundations who have generously supported my investigations. These are the Parapsychology Foundation, the James S. McDonnell Foundation, the Bernstein Brothers Foundation, the John E. Fetzer Foundation, and an anonymous donor.

² F. Story and I. Stevenson. 1967. A case of the reincarnation type in Ceylon: The case of Warnasiri Adikari. *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research* (hereafter abbreviated in footnotes to *Journal A. S. P. R.*) 61: 130-45; I. Stevenson and F. Story. 1970. A case of the reincarnation type in Ceylon: The case of Disna Samarasinghe. *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 5: 241-55; I. Stevenson. 1974. Some new cases suggestive of reincarnation: V. The case of Indika Guneratne. *Journal A. S. P. R.* 68: 58-90.

Introduction to Cases in Sri Lanka

THE families of the subjects of the cases presented in this volume were all Sinhalese Buddhists, members of the dominant (70 per cent) majority of the inhabitants of Sri Lanka. Mahinda (or Mahendra), son of the Emperor Asoka of India, converted the Sinhalese to Buddhism in the third century B.C., and since then most Sinhalese have remained Buddhists (Adikaram, 1946; Perera, 1966; Rahula, 1966). They belong to the southern, or Theravada, branch of Buddhism, and some knowledge of it will assist understanding of the case reports that follow. For this the reader will do well to read some of the teachings of the Buddha as these have come down to us through the Pali Canon (Nyanaponika, 1964-67; Nyanatiloka, 1959a and 1959b; Warren, 1963). In addition, several modern authors (Jacobson, 1966; Piyadassi, 1964; Rahula, 1959; Story, 1973) have written authoritative works of Buddhist exegesis.

Other influences have modified the religion of Sinhalese Buddhists in their actual performance. Hinduism, chiefly imported by Tamils from southern India who have mingled with the Sinhalese for centuries and still form an important minority group, has had an important influence. Many Buddhists of Sri Lanka have blended considerable elements of Hinduism into their religious observances. The cult of Kataragama (Wirz, 1966) attracts Buddhists and Hindus alike, and even the Moslems share a little in it. An important strain of magical-animism also enters into the daily life of many Sinhalese Buddhists. Since its rituals are not part of the Buddhism transmitted in the Pali Canon, one might be tempted to attribute it to the influence of the Tamil Hindus, but similar magical-animist beliefs and practices occur also in other countries of Theravada Buddhism, such as Burma and Thailand, where Hinduism has had a much smaller influence, at least in modern times. Several modern anthropologists have provided excellent data and associated analyses of the syncretic religion actually practiced by many Sinhalese people (Ames, 1964a and 1964b; Gombrich, 1971; Obeyesekere, 1963).

Since I am reviewing here the beliefs of Buddhists concerning reincarnation and the influence such beliefs may have on the cases under examination, I think it appropriate to say something about the histories of the separate developments of Buddhism and Hinduism. A popular misconception of Buddhism depicts it as a mere offshoot of Hinduism, and some Hindus have attempted to assimilate Buddhism into Hinduism by assigning the Buddha an honored place in the pantheon of Hindu avatars—the succession of reincarnations of God. Buddhist scholars generally reject the claim that

Buddhism is only a branch of Hinduism as inaccurate, if not impertinent. And indeed there are excellent grounds for believing that Buddhism, like Jainism, developed as a kind of protestant movement out of ancient Brahmanism, which is also the ancestor of modern Hinduism (Joshi, 1970; Smart, 1964). I have no wish to enter into polemics about the evolution of these religions some 2,500 years ago. But if we are to penetrate more deeply into the relationships between beliefs and cases in studying reincarnation, we will not advance by blurring the important distinctions between Buddhism and Hinduism. Their similarities are obvious; their differences more subtle, but no less significant.

The Concept of Reincarnation among Sinhalese Buddhists

So far as I know, no one has undertaken surveys concerning beliefs among Sinhalese Buddhists comparable to those studies that I cited in the chapter introducing the Indian cases in the first volume of this series. However, my own interviews with a wide variety of Sinhalese persons have led me to conclude tentatively that they almost all believe in rebirth. The ignorance of reincarnation found among some low caste Indian villagers has apparently no counterpart among Sinhalese peasants. The observations of Ryan (1953) and Obeyesekere (1963), although by no means explicitly directed to this point, also suggest a near universal belief in rebirth among Sinhalese Buddhists. But I do not propose that conjectures should replace the systematic collection of data which this topic and many other matters related to this research urgently require, and I therefore offer only a provisional opinion on the subject.

With the reservation then that many Sinhalese Buddhists may not in fact subscribe to all items that I shall mention, I shall next offer an outline of the principal beliefs concerning reincarnation as found in the texts taught by the monks and more or less believed in by the mass of Sinhalese laymen.¹

Like Hindus, Buddhists believe that reincarnation takes place continually until all cravings are lost and Nirvana achieved. In Nirvana, personality—which for the Buddhists consists principally, if not exclusively, of cravings—becomes dissolved. The Buddhist view of reincarnation is generally life-negating. It emphasizes the absolute inevitability of suffering (*dukkha*) and the impossibility of ridding oneself of suffering without abolishing the desires which lead to it. Half measures will not suffice. One cannot control sensual desires by brave attempts at moderation. So long as any cravings persist they generate a tendency to rebirth in those realms that are believed to satisfy them.

¹I am concerned in this chapter with the beliefs of Theravada Buddhists. In some important respects, and some not so important, the beliefs of other Buddhist groups, such as the Tibetan Buddhists, differ from those of the Theravada Buddhists. Readers may find further details of the Theravada Buddhist concept of reincarnation in several short works by Guneratne (1971), Jayatilleke (1969), Nyanatiloka (1959b), Obeyesekere (1968), and Story (1964).

Only the attainment of Nirvana ends all such longings. The serious Buddhist therefore wishes to “get off the wheel of rebirth,” called by him *samsara*. He can make progress toward this goal in a variety of ways that earn merit and secure him a favorable rebirth; he advances also by doing his best to reduce greed, hate, and delusion, the three roots of all suffering and evil. He can move ahead more rapidly by joining the order of monks (*Sangha*), for whom the attainment of Nirvana is the only important goal. Along the path to Nirvana the aspirant finds himself variously assisted or impeded by the effects of the other personalities that preceded his in a causal chain of karma extending over innumerable previous lives.²

Buddhist ideas of karma in general resemble those of Hinduism, but there are some important differences which we should not gloss over. The Buddhist concept of karma is completely nondeterministic and free of the tendency to think of the future as already hardened into an inevitable order of events to which one must submit (Jayatilleke, 1969). In fairness to Hinduism, however, we should note that although some Hindu writings, notably the Bhagavad Gita, expound determinism, or seem to do so, this concept is not by any means universally held by Hindus (Radhakrishnan, 1937, p. 284).

We confront another difference between Buddhism and Hinduism when we consider the Buddhist concept of what it is that reincarnates. Theravada Buddhists do not believe in the soul, or *atman*, of Hinduism. Instead, they teach the concept of *anatta*, or no-soul (Buddhaghosa, 1964; Malalasekera, 1966; Nyanaponika, 1959). This emphasizes the impermanence (*anicca*) of everything, including our own mental states in what we familiarly call “personality,” “self,” or “ego.” Since Buddhists believe that no “ego” or “self” can be found by introspection (or otherwise), they deny its existence. Here Buddhism invites comparison with the philosophy of David Hume (Jacobson, 1966). Instead of an enduring personality there exists only a succession of transient states of consciousness, each one yielding rapidly to another. These successive moments of consciousness are energized by the desires of the unenlightened person who identifies himself with them, or rather identifies them with a “self” that he falsely thinks he is.

At death the cravings of the just deceased personality lead to a rebirth. This rebirth usually takes place on one of the numerous planes of existence that Buddhism envisages besides the terrestrial one.³

² The word *karma* refers to causes, literally actions, not to effects. The latter may be spoken of as the results of karma (Rahula, 1959, p. 32). Karma may have two kinds of results—external consequences and internal modifications in the doer himself. For example, an act of stealing may bring some externally administered retribution—in one life or another—and it may also increase the tendency to dishonesty. Thus karma and cravings are indissolubly linked. The more one desires something, the more one is likely to act so as to bring about unfavorable results of karma, if only that of being reborn once more.

³ Superior merit of the deceased personality may earn a rebirth as a *deva* (a type of discarnate entity) in a pleasant, even paradisaical realm, but one where spiritual progress is difficult to achieve. Alternatively, strong unfulfilled cravings may lead to existence as a *preta* (another type of discarnate entity). The English word *ghost* best renders the meaning of *preta* without being an exact fit. The concept of the *preta* corresponds somewhat to that of the Roman Catholic one of the soul caught in purgatory and also to that found among Western spiritualists of the “earthbound soul.” Readers may find

Ultimately the karmic causes set in motion by the deceased personality lead to a new terrestrial rebirth, either as a human or, in some circumstances, as a subhuman animal. Merit is said to determine the length of the life in the intermediate or nonterrestrial realm. The conditions of these new lives (nonterrestrial and terrestrial) derive from the balance of virtue and vice of the preceding lives in this particular causal chain. But, as mentioned above, Theravada Buddhists do not believe that one personality dies in one physical body and is reborn in another body as the same personality. Rather, the causal stream of one personality initiates the birth of a different personality that carries the residual cravings and summed merits and demerits of its predecessor personalities. To illustrate their denial of a continuing personality going from one life to another, Buddhists sometimes use the analogy of a candle burning low and its last flame being used to light a new candle. The candles are different, but the flame of the first provided the fire to light the second. To emphasize the doctrine of *anatta*, Buddhists prefer the term *rebirth* to *reincarnation*, which latter word for them implies that the same soul incarnates from one life to another.

Although Buddhism teaches the impermanence of human personality, it denies an identity, but not a continuity, between the lives linked by karmic effects. The new personality born in succession to a deceased one is “neither the same, nor another” (Rhys Davids, 1965). Relative identity and relative diversity are recognized in the two linked personalities just as we recognize these—when we think deeply enough—in the connections between the baby and the old man who develops out of the infant through the stages of childhood and early adulthood. The adult is also “neither the same, nor another” in relation to the child he was. Nagasena, in his reply to King Milinda from which the above passage was cited, develops this analogy with great persuasiveness.

The question of *anatta* is not without some practical bearing on that of karma, which forms as essential a part of the teaching of Buddhism as it does of Hinduism. The doctrine of *anatta* poses a difficulty which I feel myself with regard to the idea of being rewarded or punished in a later life for one's conduct in a previous one. If the “one” so rewarded or punished is not the same “one” who earned these results in the previous life, how can “he” possibly profit, or indeed why *should* he profit, from such experiences? And does not such a system seem anyhow unjust? To this a Buddhist would reply that a suffering person need not be the “same” person who earned the suffering in order to profit from the fact that he is suffering

further information about the status and conduct of pretas in the works by Gombrich (1971) and Obeyesekere (1973).

Pretas are believed capable of “possessing” humans, a concept we should remember when we consider alternative interpretations for cases of the reincarnation type. “Possession” of the subject remains a viable explanation for at least some cases of the type. The subject may be possessed by his idea of a particular preta, and the condition would then correspond to what Western psychiatry calls hysteria. Such an explanation would ignore or deny any evidence of paranormal knowledge in the cases. Their interpretation, however, should also allow for the possibility that occasionally a real preta may possess the subject and impose memories of its life on him so that he then suffers from pseudo memories or delusions of memory.

because of residual cravings that he must strive to abolish. A man may inadvertently get into an automobile driven by an intoxicated driver. Such a passenger is not responsible for the ensuing crash when the drunken driver goes off the road; but he *is* responsible for getting into the car in the first place. In the same manner, anyone who through unsatisfied cravings gets himself reborn is thereby responsible for whatever misfortunes assail him. The Buddhist axiom is: To avoid suffering, stay away from life.⁴

Buddhists believe in the possibility, indeed in the actuality under some circumstances, of rebirth in subhuman animal bodies. An attempt by Roos (1967) to deny animal rebirth as an essential part of the teaching of Buddhism was refuted by Story (1968). Story did not claim that evidence supports a belief in animal rebirth. He much more modestly confined his arguments to the questions of whether or not the idea of animal rebirth is a part of Buddhism, which he showed it to be, and whether or not it might be regarded as, at least in principle, a plausible concept.

Buddhism “officially” rejects the concept of caste, which has no place in its teachings. The Sinhalese, however, perhaps largely from the influence of India, developed caste distinctions, but these seem less important and on the whole less public than those in India.⁵ Although distinctions of caste have figured prominently in many Indian cases of the reincarnation type, they enter very little into Sinhalese ones.

Buddhism allows for the birth of a new personality to occur in a physical body of the sex opposite to that of the previous personality in the same causal series.

Buddhism specifies no fixed limit to the duration of existence in the non-terrestrial realms during the period of “intermission” between terrestrial lives. The balance of good and bad conduct in the preceding lives influences both the situation—as to whether it will be more or less congenial—of the intermediate existence and its duration. When a person’s merit runs out, he must initiate a new terrestrial life rather as a vacationer must leave a resort when he has spent what he had saved for his trip away. And just as the vacationer can do little to help the work of his office while he is away, so little or no spiritual progress occurs in the intermediate realms. One can usually advance in spiritual development only during a human existence.⁶

⁴ Gombrich (1975) has written a penetrating analysis of the concept of karma in Theravada Buddhism and pointed out some of the difficulties that arise in attempts to reconcile, on the one hand, the social teaching that good deeds are followed by favorable effects and, on the other hand, the essentially asocial position of the determined Buddhist meditator who aims at “getting off the wheel of rebirth” by persistent meditation. The latter has adopted what Gombrich calls an “autonomous ethic,” which amounts, bluntly stated, to the selfish pursuit of the meditator’s own liberation into Nirvana.

⁵ Yet caste differences affected the Sangha (order of monks) and became the basis for exclusions and a cause of sectarian fissures and the founding of new groups (*nikayas*) within the Sangha. For further information about caste in Sri Lanka, see Ryan (1953) and Gombrich (1971).

⁶ Theravada Buddhist doctrine does not require a rebirth in an “intermediate realm” between earthly lives. At least in principle, a new human (or subhuman animal) life could begin immediately after the death of the preceding related personality. It is commonly supposed, however, that in most cases some intermediate discarnate existence occurs between earthly lives.

Buddhism teaches that the karmic residues of the preceding personality begin to influence the next body in its causal series at the moment of conception. This belief has a bearing on the time of occurrence of "announcing dreams."⁷ If the karmic effects of the previous personality become associated with a new physical body at the moment of conception, we should not expect any communication (in a dream or otherwise) from the previous personality after the date of the subject's conception.

Like Hindus, Buddhists attach importance to the last thoughts before dying, believing that these determine the conditions of the next life (Buddhaghosa, 1964).

Also like Hindus, Buddhists rarely venture the open expression of wishes concerning the next life. The kind of hearty planning in which Tlingits engage for their next incarnations has no part in Buddhism or in the approach of Buddhists to the next life. Buddhists may indeed express some wish for a favorable rebirth, especially one that would offer more scope for spiritual advancement than the present one of the person having such a wish. However, even a meritorious desire of this kind indicates some attachment on the part of the wisher to earthly life. And when the only worthwhile goal is to stop being reborn, any wish for a particular kind of rebirth simply betrays and strengthens persistent attachments to life and delays progress toward Nirvana.

It would, however, be inaccurate to suggest that the typical Sinhalese Buddhist is immediately concerned with attaining Nirvana or has any hope of doing so before many lives have passed. So he is by no means above thinking, at least privately, about what he would like to encounter in his next birth. I have engaged Sinhalese villagers in quite frank discussions about such matters as where they would like to be reborn and whether they would like to change sex in their next lives. And they could contemplate various possibilities while preserving (and asserting) their first preference to stop being reborn altogether through the attainment of Nirvana.

Characteristics of Cases of the Reincarnation Type in Sri Lanka

My colleagues and I have now studied—with varying degrees of intensity—eighty cases of the reincarnation type in Sri Lanka. In 1973 I published an article in which I described the characteristics of the cases in Sri Lanka (Stevenson, 1973). At the time of preparing that article we had investigated only forty cases. I am now able to summarize the characteristics of a much larger series of Sri Lanka cases.

I have investigated cases mainly in the areas around Galle and Matara in the south, in and around Colombo in the west, and in and around Kandy and

⁷ I use the expression *announcing dream* to refer to a dream experienced by a pregnant woman, and sometimes by one of her close relatives or friends, in which, as it seems to the dreamer, a deceased person communicates his wish or intention to be reborn as the baby of the pregnant woman. For examples of announcing dreams, see my article summarizing the cases among the Tlingits of Alaska (Stevenson, 1966). The reports of several Turkish cases in the third volume of this series will include some additional examples.

Nuruwa Eliya in the central highlands. In the autumn of 1973 I went for the first time to Jaffna in the north of Sri Lanka and investigated several cases occurring there in Tamil families.⁸ My colleagues have also investigated other cases on the eastern coast of the country. In short, the reported cases occur all over Sri Lanka and seem to have no special geographical distribution.

The subjects of the cases come from a wide variety of socioeconomic classes. Some of them belong to the poorest of families, whereas others are the children of prosperous and educated persons holding responsible professional or governmental positions.

Of the eighty subjects forty-two were females and thirty-eight males.

Subject and related previous personality in some cases in Sri Lanka live in rather widely separated villages or towns, although in other cases the places concerned are within a few miles of each other.

The two personalities of a case are rarely members of the same family. In only three of the eighty cases were the two personalities concerned members of the same immediate family; in one other case they had a distant relationship. This contrasts markedly with the pattern among the Tlingits of Alaska, where a family relationship (usually on the mother's side) occurs in the majority of cases (Stevenson, 1966).

Among the eighty cases in Sri Lanka there have so far been six (7 per cent) in which the subject remembered a previous life as a member of the opposite sex. The case of Ruby Kusuma Silva, reported in this volume, is one of these. Another is that of Gnanatilleka Baddewithana (Stevenson, 1974a).

Although, as I mentioned earlier, Sinhalese Buddhists believe that humans may be reborn as subhuman animals, in fact very few subjects claim to remember previous lives as animals. I can recall only one subject in Sri Lanka who made such a claim. This is Warnasiri Adikari, a report of whose case is included in this volume. He remembered verifiable details of a previous life as a human being and also said that between two of his human lives he had lived as a hare that had been shot.

The cases in Sri Lanka include a large proportion (sixty-one out of eighty) in which it has not been possible to trace any deceased person corresponding to the subject's statements. In this feature the cases in Sri Lanka differ markedly from those in all other Asian countries. Only in the United States have I found a larger proportion of cases in which it has not been possible to find a deceased person the facts of whose life match the subject's statements. We have been able to do this in only eight of forty American cases with children as subjects. Several factors probably contribute to the inability to find a person fitting the subject's statements. In saying this, I assume that such a person did really exist and that the child was not narrating fantasies. When

⁸ The number of Tamil cases investigated remains small. After we have studied a larger number of them we may find some differences in them compared with Sinhalese cases. In the meantime, however, I shall include them with the Sinhalese cases and, in referring in what follows to "Sinhalese cases," will sacrifice accuracy for convenience.

we do not identify a specific person corresponding to the subject's statements, however, we cannot exclude the possibility that he has expressed his own imaginings rather than memories of real events. On the other hand, the general features of the cases in which no corresponding previous personality has been identified closely resemble those in which one has. This encourages me to think that both groups derive from the same type of experience.

The subject's inability to give sufficient, or sufficiently specific, information about the previous life seems the most obvious cause of failure to identify a related previous personality, assuming one existed. Few Sinhalese subjects mention the name of the previous personality whose life they claim to recall, and they are not much freer in stating the names of other people or places concerned in the previous lives. Without proper names of people and places it naturally becomes difficult to identify even provisionally the person about whom the subject seems to be talking. The case of Indika Guneratne reported in this volume provides an example in which we were able to make a firm identification of the related previous personality despite the paucity of proper names stated by the subject. But here we were helped by the applicability of one of Indika's statements about the previous life—ownership of elephants—to a very small group of people among whom a further search was then conducted in Matara, the city Indika had mentioned.

The American subjects of reincarnation cases give very few details *of any kind* about the previous lives they seem to remember. Thus their failure to give out proper names seems just part of a general impoverishment of their memories. But this explanation does not account for the same difficulty in remembering proper names that the subjects of Sri Lanka show. They often seem to recall as many other details of the previous lives as do subjects in other Asian countries and therefore appear to be blocked mainly with regard to the remembrance of proper names, especially personal ones. At one time I thought this deficiency might have some connection with Buddhism, which, as I have emphasized, inculcates detachment from terrestrial people and objects and denies the survival after death of any personality or soul as understood in other philosophical and religious systems. If you teach a person that he has no self, why should he bother to remember an ephemeral name others have given to his not-self? The Buddhist attitude in this respect is almost exactly opposite to that of the Tlingits. These two groups, living almost at opposite ends of the earth, seem also to have adopted extremes of belief concerning personal identity. Tlingits attach great importance to their personal identities. At rebirth a Tlingit should be correctly recognized as the person he was in his previous life and given the tribal name of that person. He can then assume all the credit for the great deeds not only of the immediately preceding previous personality but of all predecessors in this line who have also had this same tribal name, for he has been all of these people himself in previous lives. The newborn Tlingit personality should be promptly identified at, or soon after, his birth by announcing dreams and birthmarks, if any. If the surrounding elders of the infant bungle the recognition of the correct previous

personality, they deprive him of the glory accumulated in his previous lives.⁹ All this bother about present and previous identity seems quite repugnant to a devout Buddhist. He should not care who he has been or by what name he may have been known in a previous life. In keeping with this we find no instance of a Sinhalese subject asking, much less demanding, to be called by the name of the previous personality whose life he remembers as do many subjects in other cultures, especially those among the Alevis of Turkey and the Tlingits of Alaska.

Yet the failure of the Sinhalese subjects to state personal names of the previous lives they remember must have other causes than Buddhist disinterest in personal identity. If it depended solely on Buddhist influences, we should expect an equal deficiency in the statements of personal names among the subjects in Burma and Thailand, which are, like Sri Lanka, countries of Theravada Buddhism. On the contrary, we find in these countries, especially in Burma, that the subjects are extraordinarily fluent in the expression of personal names related to the previous lives they seem to remember. As a consequence, a deceased person who corresponds to the subject's statements has *not* been identified in only a tiny group of Burmese cases.¹⁰ Perhaps the contrasting customs in using names among Burmese and Sinhalese may account for the differences in the recall of previous names by the subjects of these two peoples. The Burmese use personal names very freely; the Sinhalese, on the other hand, use them most sparingly. Indeed, they seem almost to have a national phobia about calling anyone by his given name. They address other persons much more often by the name of a relationship—for example, son, brother-in-law, uncle, and so on. Even spouses rarely call each other by their given names, but use indirect references to call or speak with each other. Since memory depends to some extent on the frequency of occurrence of the image or sound to be remembered, the failure of the Sinhalese to use personal names in everyday life almost certainly contributes to the rarity of such names in the memories of the subjects of their cases.

The cases in Sri Lanka show a high incidence of significant differences between the circumstances of the subject's family and those of the related previous personality. If we consider both cases in which we have satisfactorily identified a previous personality corresponding to the subject's statements

⁹ We should distinguish clearly this attitude toward the fame of previous lives from the vicarious glow that some persons obtain from studying and proclaiming their biological ancestry. A story is told of how one of Napoleon's marshals (Lefebvre) dealt with that kind of vanity. Someone once asked him, the son of a butcher, who his ancestors were and he replied: "I am an ancestor!" The Tlingits claim not just to have had distinguished ancestors but to have *been* those ancestors themselves. This is in principle possible for them because of their belief that rebirth occurs in the same moiety on the mother's side, a belief, incidentally, that analysis of their reincarnation cases supports. It does not necessarily follow that a Tlingit was the *direct* descendant of the previous personality for whom he was named and whose life he may recall. He was more likely to be the son of the previous personality's sister or niece.

¹⁰ This statement applies only to cases in which both concerned personalities are Burmese. Among "international cases" of Burma, in which, for example, a Burmese subject claims that in his previous life he was a Japanese soldier or an American air force pilot killed during World War II, we have not identified a related previous personality in a single instance.

and those in which, although we have not done this, the subject's statements have been quite explicit about the life he remembers, we find that in twenty-nine of the eighty cases a difference between the two concerned personalities occurred in one or more of the following features: religion; sex; country of origin; and socioeconomic circumstances. This tendency for rather marked variations between the circumstances of the two personalities of a case may derive from Buddhism. The lauded detachment from personal identity makes it easy for a Buddhist to think of being reborn in circumstances quite different from those he is now in; and if wishes and expectations have some influence on results in reincarnation, then the Buddhist readiness to adapt may allow rebirth in a wide variety of conditions. It would be incorrect to say that Sinhalese children always accept docilely the situation to which birth has brought them, but I have a strong impression that, on the whole, Sinhalese subjects of these cases, if they remember a previous life in better socioeconomic circumstances than those of their (present) families, complain less about their situations than do similarly placed subjects of other cultures.

Another factor may contribute to the frequent migration, so to say, of the Sinhalese from the circumstances of one life to quite different circumstances in another. The geographical location of Sri Lanka has specially exposed it to conquests and settlement by foreigners with the result that the inhabitants today belong to a wide variety of national and religious groups. Since these diverse peoples associate freely with each other in one life, it should occasion no surprise if they mix together in later ones.

Sinhalese cases have few announcing dreams. Such as do occur—or those that have been presented for my information—commonly take the form of dreaming about animals, such as elephants, snakes, and parrots. The dreamers and their friends may evoke some indication of sex or other qualities of the child to be born from dreams of this type, but they obviously lack the specificity and clues to identity that an orthodox Tlingit would demand in an announcing dream and that we find in such dreams in other Buddhist countries, notably Burma. Few Sinhalese announcing dreams known to me include a clearly recognized human being appearing to the dreamer.

Birthmarks and deformities likewise occur rarely among Sinhalese cases. I know of only four subjects with definite birthmarks or deformities (5 per cent) among the eighty Sinhalese subjects whose cases we have so far analyzed. This incidence is much lower than that found among the Turkish and Tlingit cases, in each of which groups approximately 50 per cent of the subjects have birthmarks related to the previous personality's wounds or other marks (Stevenson, 1970). Here again the Sinhalese cases contrast with those of other Buddhist countries. The subjects of cases in both Thailand and Burma, especially the latter country, often have birthmarks and deformities. The lower incidence of birthmarks and deformities in Sinhalese cases may derive partly from the lower incidence of violent death among the identified previous personalities of the cases. But the incidence of such violent death (42 per cent) far exceeds that of the general population and is not far below that of some

other cultures in the cases of which birthmarks and deformities occur more frequently.¹¹

A significant difference occurs between the incidence of violent death in related previous personalities whose existence has been established beyond reasonable doubt and that of presumed previous personalities whose existence neither I nor anyone else has verified. I have already mentioned that 42 per cent of the *known* previous personalities in Sri Lanka cases died violently. The percentage of violent death for the presumed previous personality is even higher in cases for which no deceased person corresponding to the subject's statements could be traced. There are sixty-one such cases. In thirty-two (52 per cent) of these the subject made remarks explicitly stating, or implying, how he or she had died in the previous life that was apparently being remembered. Of these thirty-two subjects, however, twenty-nine (91 per cent) said that they had died violently. At least two explanations may account for the higher incidence of violent deaths in unidentified previous personalities as compared with those who have been traced. First, in unverified cases we may be dealing, as I have already suggested, with mere fantasies on the part of the subject. And if a child wishes to make his fantasy more impressive for himself and more realistic to anyone willing to listen to him he may think a violent death enhances the plausibility of his narration. (I would still, however, find it somewhat surprising that so many Sinhalese children would independently embellish their fantasies with such gory endings.) The second possible explanation supposes that these children are having memories of real previous lives just as are subjects whose statements we have verified. We have not been able to verify these sixty-one cases because the subjects have not furnished adequately specific proper names. But a violent death may be more memorable than the name one bore at the time of meeting it. A criminal being led to execution once remarked: "This is going to be a great lesson to me." How right he may have been. We can go even further. The high incidence of violent death in the previous personalities of these cases probably tells us nothing about who is and who is not reincarnated. If one person is reincarnated all may be, although our present data forbid any conclusion on that point. But among persons who do reincarnate, if any do, those who have died violently in their immediate previous lives may have a better chance of remembering such lives than those who die naturally.

As I mentioned above, we have identified a deceased person the facts of whose life correspond with the subject's statements in nineteen of the eighty cases. In one of these cases we have not independently verified the facts about the presumed previous personality, and we lack satisfactorily reliable data for the year of birth and age at death of the previous personalities in two other cases.

For sixteen cases with an identified previous personality and reasonably

¹¹ A table giving data on the incidence of violent death in the previous personalities of cases in eight different cultures will be published in the third volume of this series. A similar table is also included in Stevenson (1974b).

satisfactory data about the age at death of the previous personality the median age at death was twenty-eight years. The median year of birth of these sixteen concerned previous personalities was 1923. The life expectancy for a male born in Ceylon (as the country was then called) in 1920–22 was 32.72 years and for a female 30.67 years (*Statistical abstract of Ceylon*, 1965). Given such a small cohort, I do not think we should attribute any significance to the slightly lesser expectation of life among them compared with the general population.

Satisfactory data exist in seventeen cases for calculating the interval between the death of the concerned previous personality and the subject's birth. The median interval for these cases is eighteen months. This period falls between that found for cases among the Alevi of Turkey, which was nine months, and that found for those among the Tlingits of Alaska, which was forty-eight months (Stevenson, 1970).

Sinhalese subjects rarely claim to remember anything of the "intermission" period between the death of the previous personality and the subject's birth. The origins of this deficiency must lie outside Buddhism since subjects of Burma and Thailand rather often describe experiences that they claim to remember from the period between the deaths of the related previous personalities and their own births.

Notes on Sinhalese Names

In Sinhalese names, front initials often indicate the bearer's lineage and are followed by the given name or names. Thus, in the case of Disna Samarasinghe in this volume, R. M. Gardias and R. M. Romanis are full brothers, their relationship being indicated by the front initials *R. M.*

Women often preserve their own names after marriage. Thus T. N. Alice (also in the case of Disna Samarasinghe) is the wife of R. M. Gardias. Her husband's name does not figure in hers.

Custom in these matters varies greatly. For example, Disna's mother adopted her husband's name and is called Seelawathie Samarasinghe. I have tried to give each person's name according to his or her own usage.

For convenience I have sometimes referred to both parents of a subject or to an entire family by the father's name used in a plural form even when his wife does not use his name. For example, in the case of Gamini Jayasena, whose parents are G. Jayasena and P. K. Nandawathie, I have designated the family as the Jayasenas.

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1. The Case of Shamlinie Prema

Summary of the Case and Its Investigation

SHAMLINIE PREMA was born in Colombo on October 16, 1962. Her parents, G. S. Ranjith Prema and Sriya Abeyawardena, lived in the village of Gonagela, which is in southwestern Sri Lanka roughly halfway between Colombo and Galle and about 5 kilometers inland from Induruwa, on the western coast of the island. Shamlinie was the first child of the family. By 1973 they had three other children, all boys. Shamlinie's family lived in extremely modest economic circumstances mainly because of the irregular employment of her father, who was an agricultural worker.

When Shamlinie was just a few days old she began an incessant crying that went on day and night for several weeks. She nursed little and vomited often. Her parents consulted physicians, but their remedies had no effect. Then they went to an astrologer monk, who, from indications in Shamlinie's horoscope, suggested that perhaps she was suffering from a samsaric fear, that is, a fear carried over from the previous life related to the mode of dying. He prescribed the saying of mantrams in the presence of the child.¹ Shamlinie's parents took her to the Ven. Siriniwasa Nayaka, a monk of the Gonagela Temple, for this procedure, but as soon as she saw him, even before he began to say the mantrams, she calmed down and stopped crying. The Ven. Siriniwasa Nayaka later confirmed to me the parents' accounts of this episode, although he had no explanation of why the infant's crying had ceased when she came into his presence.

Shamlinie's parents next noticed that she resisted violently when she was bathed. She struggled so much that it took three persons to hold her for a bath. At six months she was taken on a bus and cried during the whole journey. On later occasions also she showed marked fear when she saw buses.

Shamlinie began speaking coherently when she was about two years old. Among her earliest words were "Galtudawa mother." She also said the words "Galtudawa Pema." On an occasion when she watched her younger brother nursing at his mother's breast, she said: "My mother at Galtudawa fed my younger brother in this way." Once when asked about her fear of buses she said: "I fell because of a bus." At this time Shamlinie was sometimes heard talking in her sleep and even shouting. She would say: "Mamma, mamma," and "Let us go to my mother's place; let's go, let's go." Between the ages of about two and three and a half she would sometimes also walk in her sleep. These were the months when she talked most about the previous life.

¹ Mantrams are words or phrases, often taken from scriptures, that are believed to have special effects— healing or protective—when spoken under certain circumstances.

As Shamlinie gained increasing use of words she gradually told her family more about a previous life she said she had lived at Galtudawa. She gave the names of her parents, one sister, and a school friend. (Part of the name of a girl friend of the person later identified as corresponding to Shamlinie's remarks was "Prema," which Shamlinie had pronounced without the *r* as "Pema.") She also described in some detail how she had gone to buy bread at a boutique one day and when walking along the road had been splashed by a bus so that she stepped back and fell into a paddy field and "went to sleep." (Her grandmother said she cried as she narrated how she had drowned in the previous life.) Above all, Shamlinie repeatedly demanded to be taken to Galtudawa and said she preferred her parents there to her family. On one occasion she left home and began walking down the street to go to Galtudawa on her own.

Shamlinie's parents had heard some years before of the drowning of a young girl, Hemaseelie Guneratne, who lived in the nearby village of Galtudawa. Both of them were distantly related to Hemaseelie's parents, and they were much moved by the tragedy but then forgot about it. Apparently it did not occur to them immediately that Shamlinie was talking about this particular girl. Although she had mentioned the name Hemaseelie, her parents did not know the name of the girl who had drowned or had forgotten it if they had known earlier. When Shamlinie was about two and a half or a little more (that is, about the middle of 1965), they decided that she probably was referring to the Guneratne girl who had drowned. (Hemaseelie Guneratne drowned on May 8, 1961,² and was just eleven years old at the time.) Her parents, however, took no steps to verify Shamlinie's statements in detail at that time. On the contrary, they tried to force her to stop talking about the previous life and threatening to run away by beating her. This seems to have had the opposite effect. At any rate, she continued to threaten to run away and to compare her parents disparagingly with those of the previous life. She also continued showing marked fears of buses and of bathing.

In May (approximately) 1966, an episode of apparent extrasensory perception on the part of Shamlinie which suggested telepathy with the Guneratne family contributed to her parents' dawning realization that she was remembering the life of Hemaseelie Guneratne. (I shall describe this incident in detail later.)

At about the same time as the above episode—I am not sure whether before or after—Shamlinie recognized Sriyawathie Guneratne, Hemaseelie's older sister, as she was walking past the house of one of Shamlinie's relatives (P. D. Nandawathie Wijesinghe) where she (Shamlinie) was visiting at the time. (See item 28, Table 1.) Sriyawathie subsequently came to visit Shamlinie at her home, and Shamlinie referred to her as her "sister from Galtudawa" and received her cordially. Sriyawathie seems to have spread word about Shamlinie's statements in her school, from where it eventually reached the

² Mr. Tissa Jayawardene of Alutgama verified this date for me. He translated the official death certificate, which also gave the age at death of Hemaseelie Guneratne. He also translated a copy of Shamlinie's birth certificate.

attention of the editor of a Sinhalese newspaper, *Dawasa*. The editor, whose wife came from Gonagela, sent a reporter to investigate the case. Shamlinie's parents were at first reluctant to go into the matter any further, but the Ven. Siriniwasa Nayaka persuaded them to cooperate. On June 3, 1966, therefore, Shamlinie's father took her on the road across the paddy fields (where Hemaseelie had drowned) to visit the Guneratne family in Galtudawa. Shamlinie made a partial recognition of Hemaseelie's mother, W. L. Podi Nona, but otherwise said little in Galtudawa. (The arrival of the reporter in Galtudawa ahead of Shamlinie and her father had caused a large crowd to gather there, and this may have inhibited the small child not yet four years old.)

The meeting of Shamlinie and her father with the Guneratnes did, however, lead to decisive verification of the statements Shamlinie had been making, as these were found to correspond very closely with facts in the life of Hemaseelie. The newspaper *Dawasa* then published an account of the case on June 5, 1966. A few days later, an English version of what had appeared in *Dawasa* was published in the *Sun*, an English language newspaper associated with *Dawasa*. I learned of the case from this report a few weeks later when I was in Sri Lanka to study other cases. I was able to investigate it for the first time in July 1966, that is, a little over six weeks after the two families had met. I thus had an opportunity to interview the principal informants when their memories were still fresh about the statements of Shamlinie and the meetings between the members of the two families concerned. I went to the area and spent two days interviewing members of both families. In 1968 I returned to the area and spent another day going over various details of the case and obtaining information about Shamlinie's further development in the two years since my previous visit. In November 1970, I visited both families again in order to check certain details and learn how Shamlinie was. In March 1973, I returned to the area once more for further interviews and later news of Shamlinie as she grew up.

Mr. Godwin Samararatne acted as interpreter for me on three of my four visits to the case and thus became thoroughly familiar with it. He was therefore well qualified to return again to Gonagela and Galtudawa in order to make inquiries about some details concerning which I thought our information deficient. He did this once in December 1969, and again in January 1974.

Persons Interviewed during the Investigation

In Gonagela I interviewed:

Shamlinie Prema

G. S. Ranjith Prema, Shamlinie's father

Sriya Abeyawardena, Shamlinie's mother

G. P. Luisa Nona, G. S. Ranjith Prema's mother and Shamlinie's grandmother

Premalatha Abeyaratne, Sriya Abeyawardena's cousin
 G. P. D. Amarasinghe, G. S. Ranjith Prema's cousin and proctor (district attorney) of Gonagela
 P. D. Nandawathie Wijesinghe, relative of G. S. Ranjith Prema
 Ven. Siriniwasa Nayaka Thera, monk of the Gonagela Temple
 M. A. Somapala, driver of car of the Gonagela Temple
 G. Kanaherarachi, Shamlinie's schoolteacher (who had also taught Hemaseelie Guneratne)
 H. D. Wimalawathie, neighbor of Shamlinie's parents and distant relative of the Guneratnes

In Galtudawa I interviewed:

W. L. Podi Nona, Hemaseelie's mother
 John Guneratne, Hemaseelie's father
 H. D. Premaratne Jayawardene, Hemaseelie's cousin
 Dilman Guneratne, Hemaseelie's older brother
 Somaweera Guneratne, Hemaseelie's older brother
 Sriyawathie Guneratne, Hemaseelie's older sister
 Henegedera D. Premalatha, friend of Hemaseelie
 H. D. Somawathie, Henegedera D. Premalatha's sister and friend of Hemaseelie
 G. D. Madurawathie, Henegedera D. Premalatha's stepmother and neighbor of the Guneratnes

In addition to the above interviews, Godwin Samararatne interviewed (in January 1970) W. D. Wijeratne, the reporter who sent in the account of the case that the newspaper *Dawasa* published on June 5, 1966.

Relevant Facts of Geography and Possibilities for Normal Means of Communication between the Two Families

Gonagela is a large village or small town. Galtudawa is a much smaller village located about 2 kilometers from Gonagela. They are separated by a section of flat paddy fields, and these are crossed by a slightly elevated road that joins the two places. The road goes over two bridges spanning canals running through the paddy fields. Hemaseelie Guneratne drowned near the first of these two canals.

Shamlinie's father, G. S. Ranjith Prema, was distantly related to Hemaseelie's father, John Guneratne, but the relationship was so remote that he could not specify it. Shamlinie's mother was also related to Hemaseelie's mother, but even more distantly. W. L. Podi Nona said she did not know Shamlinie's mother well. She had seen her "off and on." I took this to mean that they had a nodding acquaintance and would exchange a few words when they passed in the street. There was, therefore, some acquaintance between the two families, but no intimacy or detailed knowledge

of each other's affairs. G. S. Ranjith Prema said that until Shamlinie began to talk of the previous life he did not know the names of any of John Guneratne's family, not even that of his wife. And apparently neither he nor his wife even knew the name of the Guneratne daughter who had drowned in 1961, although they did hear about and discuss that tragedy when it happened and it had saddened them. G. S. Ranjith Prema said he did not think John Guneratne had ever been in his house. John Guneratne himself said he had gone once to the house of Shamlinie's parents before she was born, but not afterward. Questioned again about this visit, Shamlinie's father said he knew that John Guneratne had a friend in his neighborhood and he thought it possible that when visiting this friend John Guneratne had stopped in at his house, perhaps when he himself was absent. He could not recall any such visit, but thought one possible. He denied that he had ever been to the Guneratne house prior to the time he brought Shamlinie there on June 3, 1966. John Guneratne, however, thought that G. S. Ranjith Prema had visited them once before June 3, 1966. His wife, on the other hand, denied that G. S. Ranjith Prema had ever come before June 3, 1966, when he brought Shamlinie, and, when pressed about this point, John Guneratne could not recall a particular earlier visit by Shamlinie's father.³

As already mentioned, Shamlinie's mother was distantly related to Hemaseelie's, but they did not know each other well and saw each other only "off and on." Shamlinie's mother had never known Hemaseelie during her lifetime and, like her husband, was not sure that she had learned Hemaseelie's name when she heard of the drowning of a Guneratne girl in 1961.

G. P. Luisa Nona, Shamlinie's paternal grandmother, who lived some of the time with G. S. Ranjith Prema and some of the time with another son, had more familiarity with the Guneratne family than either her son or daughter-in-law. She was well enough acquainted with Hemaseelie's mother at least to talk with her at a weekly fair they both attended for a time. She had never been to the Guneratne house herself, she said, and could not recall any visit by the Guneratne family to her son's house. She had seen Hemaseelie sometimes on the road returning from school and once or twice with her mother at the fair. She had not gone to the Guneratne house to express her condolences after Hemaseelie's death. She said there was "much talk" in the community about the drowning when it occurred.

A distant relative of G. S. Ranjith Prema, P. D. Nandawathie Wijesinghe, was a first cousin of John Guneratne, Hemaseelie's father. (She was the

³ I believe some of the discrepancies in testimony about visits exchanged come from the greater informality of social occasions and a somewhat different meaning for the word *visit* in Asian villages as compared with the West. In Asia persons may go to visit a relative and briefly stop at another house on the way even though they have little or no acquaintance with this other family. Does that constitute a "visit" or not? The important point here is not how often the two families met, but how much information about each other's affairs they exchanged or otherwise acquired. I cannot answer this question with certainty, but the two families concerned in the present case seem to have had almost no knowledge of each other's personal affairs until the visit of June 3, 1966.

daughter of his maternal uncle.) She was not closely acquainted with either family. She visited her cousins, the Guneratnes, only on occasions of weddings or other ceremonial events. She had known Hemaseelie, but not at all well. She thought, in fact, that she had never seen her after her infancy. She lived away from Gonagela (in Kandy) for about twenty years, from 1943 to approximately 1964. (During this period she sometimes returned to Gonagela to visit.) When she moved back to Gonagela, Shamlinie was already talking about the previous life, and she learned about this three or four months after her return. P. D. Nandawathie Wijesinghe did, however, exchange visits with Shamlinie's parents, and it was from her house (which fronted on the main road of Gonagela) that Shamlinie recognized Hemaseelie's sister, Sriyawathie, as I have already mentioned. P. D. Nandawathie stimulated Shamlinie's recognition of Sriyawathie (see item 28, Table 1) out of her knowledge that Shamlinie was already talking about the previous life. On the evidence, then, mainly that of her absence from Gonagela rather than that of her ignorance about Hemaseelie, it seems unlikely that she transmitted information normally to Shamlinie.

Shamlinie's mother, Sriya Abeyawardena, apparently thought P. D. Nandawathie Wijesinghe had been well enough known to Hemaseelie so that Shamlinie might have been expected to recognize her as from the life of Hemaseelie. But Shamlinie's mother did not think she had actually done this.

In 1973 I learned of yet another person who knew both the Premas and Hemaseelie. This was H. D. Wimalawathie, a contemporary and distant relative of the Guneratnes who lived in a house behind that of Shamlinie's parents. (She was also related by marriage to G. S. Ranjith Prema.) She had visited the Guneratnes, and she thought, without being certain, that Hemaseelie might have visited her at her house and thereby come very near the house of Shamlinie's parents. She had known Hemaseelie well enough to attend her funeral. She stated that she had not spoken about Hemaseelie with Shamlinie's parents prior to Shamlinie's talking about the previous life.

In May 1966, Shamlinie insisted that her "Galtudawa mother" was ill in the hospital. (I shall describe this incident more fully later; see pp. 38-39.) Her parents knew nothing of this illness, but her father verified it and learned that W. L. Podi Nona had in fact been in the hospital in Gonagela for a week. He then paid a visit to her in the hospital. This occasion provided a contact between the two families before their meeting on June 3, 1966, but it occurred at least a year *after* Shamlinie had been talking in detail about the previous life. Shamlinie's recognition of Hemaseelie's older sister, Sriyawathie, which occurred in (about) May 1966, and Sriyawathie's subsequent visit to Shamlinie (for which I do not have an exact date) gave another opportunity for at least some members of the two families to meet before June 3, 1966.

I shall now summarize what I could learn of prior acquaintance between the two families. There is no doubt that they had some acquaintance with each other. And no less certainly Shamlinie's parents had some friends

and relatives who knew the Guneratnes better than they did. But I am satisfied that there was no intimacy or exchange of detailed information between the families about each other's affairs and that they could be fairly described as only casual acquaintances. The best evidence that Shamlinie's family knew little or nothing about the Guneratne family perhaps comes from the slowness with which they applied Shamlinie's statements to the Guneratne girl who had drowned in 1961. For example, as I mentioned earlier, when Shamlinie first began talking she referred to "Galtudawa Pema"; her grandmother asked who this was, and Shamlinie replied: "Kandegedera Pema who brings me sweets daily." This turned out later to be her mispronunciation (or misremembering) of "Henegedera Prema," the name of Hemaseelie's close school friend with whom she regularly bought and exchanged candy. (See item 12, Table 1.) I believe that if Shamlinie's parents had been familiar with Hemaseelie and her family and friends they would have known at once to whom Shamlinie was referring, even though she mispronounced the girl's name. Also bearing on this point is the fact that W. L. Podi Nona was in the hospital at Gonagela (in May 1966) for a week before Shamlinie's family knew anything about this; they probably would not even then have learned about it had not Shamlinie told them, apparently learning about it by extrasensory perception.

The Life and Death of Hemaseelie Guneratne

Hemaseelie died at the age of eleven. From the accounts of her I listened to, she was a pleasant, simple schoolgirl with few outstanding traits. She appears to have been definitely more interested in religion than the average Sinhalese child of her age and certainly was more so than the other children of her family. She went to a temple two or three times a day.

Her food habits were a little different from those of other members of her family in her fondness for bread (rather than rice) and for sweets. She was walking quite some distance to a shop in order to buy some bread on the morning of her death by drowning.

For clothes she preferred short-sleeved dresses and rather short skirts. She had frocks with one pocket in them, and others without pockets. She liked her dresses to be clean.

An older cousin, H. D. Premaratne Jayawardene, said that Hemaseelie was distinctive in her family in having a phobia of water, that is, with regard to immersion for bathing. He did not know of any traumatic experience she had undergone which could have accounted for this fear. Hemaseelie's mother, however, failed to support this observation and said that she had never noticed any fear of water on the part of her daughter. When I confronted Hemaseelie's cousin with this discrepancy, he modified his statement and said that Hemaseelie had not in fact been afraid to go in the water with other persons but perhaps had shown a fear of going swimming by herself.

The following account of Hemaseelie's death was largely furnished by John

Guneratne, her father, but other informants also gave some corroborating information; I am confident that the accident occurred as I shall describe it.

One morning (May 8, 1961) Hemaseelie wished to eat some plantains with bread. As there was no bread in the house, she took a bag and started walking to the boutique in Gonagela, about 2 kilometers away. This meant crossing the paddy fields on the slightly elevated road. She left the house about 6:30 A.M.

The paddy fields were flooded, and apparently so also was the road across them between Galtudawa and Gonagela. The road, as I saw for myself, was quite narrow. A bus approached while Hemaseelie was on it, and she stepped aside to avoid being hit. (Shamlinie said the bus splashed "her" in the face, and this may well have happened.) She stepped back too far, possibly temporarily blinded by the jet of water in her eyes, and slipped or fell into the flooded paddy field below the road. The bus did not stop, the driver presumably having passed by at the moment Hemaseelie fell.

Some children and a man were nearby, and it appears from their reports that Hemaseelie cried for help and raised her arms. The man was unwilling and the children were unable to go into the water. They went for help and called Hemaseelie's father. By the time he came, the body had sunk and probably drifted. They did not recover it until 8:00 A.M. They took the body to Gonagela Hospital, where the doctor pronounced Hemaseelie dead.

Hemaseelie's death affected her family profoundly. Her mother, W. L. Podi Nona, became sickly and has remained so ever since. She had not recovered from the loss of Hemaseelie by 1970. Her husband was even more deeply disturbed. He sank into a moderately deep depression and stopped working. He had not resumed working up to and during the time of my acquaintance with the Guneratnes. The family was entirely supported by the work of their three sons.

Statements and Recognitions Made by Shamlinie

In Table 1 I have listed all the statements and recognitions made by Shamlinie. I have grouped the statements (items 1-26) somewhat according to topic and have not attempted a chronological ordering of them. So far as I know, all except three of the statements were made by Shamlinie before the two families met to discuss the case at the time Shamlinie's father took her (on June 3, 1966) to the Guneratne house at Galtudawa. One exception is item 16, a statement made by Shamlinie in the presence of Hemaseelie's sister Sriyawathie, who visited Shamlinie after Shamlinie had recognized her when she was walking from school with her friends (item 28). The other two exceptions are items 13 and 14, statements reported by W. L. Podi Nona as made by Shamlinie on one of the later visits exchanged between the families.

Of the recognitions, that of H. D. Premaratne Jayawardene, Hemaseelie's cousin (item 27), occurred first, when Shamlinie was less than three years old. Little or no attention was paid to it at the time, and it did not lead to

a meeting of the two families. Shamlinie's next recognition was that of Hemaseelie's sister, Sriyawathie (item 28), which occurred in 1966. Items 29-31 occurred on the way to Galtudawa and at the Guneratne house on June 3, 1966, when Shamlinie's father took her there. Item 32 probably occurred in the autumn of 1967 when Henegedera D. Premalatha and her sister, Somawathie, visited Shamlinie in Gonagela.

Among the recognitions Shamlinie attempted and failed at, we should include her inability to recognize John Guneratne, Hemaseelie's father, at his house on June 3, 1966.

I have already mentioned that there was a crowd including strange newspaper reporters at the Guneratne house when Shamlinie and her father reached it. Moreover, Shamlinie's father kept her in his arms the whole time and had previously instructed the Guneratnes not to touch Shamlinie or show any affection to her. (Her parents had strong fears, nourished by gloomy warnings from her grandmother, that the Guneratnes might try to take her from them.) Under the circumstances it is not surprising that the Guneratnes said little or nothing to Shamlinie and that she said perhaps even less to them while at their house. In fact, apart from her indication of W. L. Podi Nona, Shamlinie's only other reported remark made at the Guneratne house was: "My older sister is there." This she whispered to her father.

On another occasion Shamlinie failed to recognize H. D. Somawathie when she did recognize Henegedera D. Premalatha, but the latter had been a close friend and classmate of Hemaseelie, while the former was older and not as well known to her.

I have not included in Table 1 two reports of directions Shamlinie gave by pointing but will mention these briefly here. On one occasion, Shamlinie went to the house of her mother's cousin (next door) and, pointing with her finger, said: "I fell there and died." As she said this she was indicating the direction of the paddy fields where Hemaseelie had drowned. This incident occurred before the visit to the Guneratnes, to reach whose house from Gonagela one has to cross the paddy fields. On the occasion of that visit her father asked her to show the way, and when the car reached the main road at Gonagela (from the side road on which Shamlinie's parents lived) Shamlinie pointed to the left and said (correctly): "We must go in this direction."

Shamlinie's Behavior Related to the Previous Life

Circumstances and Manner of Shamlinie's Speaking about the Previous Life. I have already mentioned that between the ages of about two and three Shamlinie was noticed to be talking in her sleep and making references to the previous life. For example, she would be heard sometimes to say in her sleep: "Let us go to my mother's place. Let's go." Her family noticed also that she showed a greater tendency to talk about the previous life in the early morning, just after waking up. Her grandmother, with whom Shamlinie slept much of the time,

TABLE 1. Summary of Statements and Recognitions Made by Shamlinie

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. Her mother was in Galtudawa.	G. S. Ranjith Prema, Shamlinie's father Sriya Abeyawardena, Shamlinie's mother	I visited the Guneratne family in the village of Galtudawa.	
2. Her mother's name was Podi Nona.	G. P. Luisa Nona, Shamlinie's paternal grandmother G. P. Luisa Nona	I interviewed W. L. Podi Nona, Hemaseelie's mother.	
3. [Her own name was] Hemaseelie.	G. S. Ranjith Prema	John Guneratne, Hemaseelie's father	Shamlinie definitely mentioned the name Hemaseelie, but my notes are not clear about whether she said this had been her own name in the previous life. Shamlinie's mother had not herself heard Shamlinie mention Hemaseelie's name, but said her husband told her he had heard Shamlinie say the name. Because of this doubt, I have put the first part of the statement in brackets.
4. Her father was called John.	G. S. Ranjith Prema G. P. Luisa Nona	I interviewed John Guneratne.	
5. He did not have a regular job, but sometimes he did a job.	Sriya Abeyawardena	John Guneratne W. L. Podi Nona G. D. Madurawathie, neighbor of the Guneratnes	Shamlinie used the present tense in making this remark. John Guneratne said he had worked regularly until Hemaseelie's death

but irregularly afterward. He appears to have become depressed and ill after her death. G. D. Madurawathie said he worked irregularly due to poor health even before Hemaseelie's death. However, before Hemaseelie's death he did have a regular job at a bakery, so Shamlinie's statement was correct only for the period after Hemaseelie's death.

Unverified

G. S. Ranjith Prema

6. Her mother was very fond of her, but her father was not.

Hemaseelie's mother entered much more than her husband into our interviews, especially in 1968. John Guneratne seemed rather listless and detached. His behavior accorded with his wife's report, to which he assented, that after Hemaseelie's death he was so affected that he became depressed and stopped work. This suggests that he was very fond of Hemaseelie, but he may not have expressed his affection so freely. In 1966 John Guneratne said Hemaseelie was equally affectionate with both parents.

Unverified

Sriya Abeyawardena

7. Her older sister liked her, but her other sister did not.

According to W. L. Podi Nona, her oldest daughter, Piyaseelie, was fonder of Hemaseelie than was her

NOTE: In this and similar tables, the *Informants* column lists the witnesses of what the subject did or said related to the previous life. The *Verification* column lists the informants for information verifying the accuracy of what the subject said or did with regard to the previous personality. In citing recognitions I have usually left the *Verification* column blank, since the person who was the informant for the recognition (nearly always himself a witness of this recognition) either knew that the recognition was correct at the time it occurred or later verified its accuracy. Whenever possible, I have asked a person who was recognized by the subject about the details of the recognition, including circumstances, other persons present, and whether there were leading questions put or simply requests to name the person to be recognized. I have included information on these matters under *Comments*, in the right-hand column. This column also contains some other information or explanatory material. Unless specifically noted to the contrary, the statements and recognitions made by the subject were verified as being correct or appropriate for the previous personality.

Table 1 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
7. (cont.)			other daughter, Sriyawathie. But this was not a confirmation that Sriyawathie did not also like Hemaseelie.
8. She had three older brothers, one younger brother, and two older sisters.	G. S. Ranjith Prema Sriya Abeyawardena	John Guneratne	
9. One older sister was called Sriyawathie.	G. S. Ranjith Prema	I interviewed Sriyawathie Guneratne, Hemaseelie's older sister.	
10. She went to school.	G. S. Ranjith Prema	John Guneratne Henegedera D. Premalatha, friend of Hemaseelie	
11. "Kandedegera Pema" [also referred to as "Galtudawa Pema"] was a friend.	Sriya Abeyawardena	Henegedera D. Premalatha	The correct name of this child was Henegedera D. Premalatha. Shamlinie had mispronounced the name. Henegedera D. Premalatha was a classmate of Hemaseelie in school.
12. "Kandedegera Pema" brought her sweets [candy] daily.	Sriya Abeyawardena	Henegedera D. Premalatha	This was not quite correct. The two girls bought sweets several times a week. One would buy them one time, the other another time. Henegedera D. Premalatha said Hemaseelie bought the sweets more often than she did.
13. Soma was a friend.	W. L. Podi Nona	H. D. Somawathie, friend of Hemaseelie	H. D. Somawathie, an older sister of Henegedera D. Premalatha, was

called Soma for short. She and Hemaseelie were acquainted, but Hemaseelie was closer to Henegedera D. Premalatha, who was nearer Hemaseelie's age and in her class at school.

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 14. She and Soma bought sweets together. | W. L. Podi Nona | H. D. Somawathie |
| 15. The river could be seen from the house. | G. S. Ranjith Prema
Sriyawathie Guneratne,
Hemaseelie's older sister
Sriya Abeyawardena | The river cannot be seen from the Guneratne house, but can be seen from the compound just in front of it. |
| 16. The house was on the top of a hill. | G. S. Ranjith Prema
Sriyawathie Guneratne | I visited the Guneratne house in Galtudawa several times. It is at the top of a rather high hill. |
| 17. There was a flower creeper in front of the house. | G. S. Ranjith Prema | W. L. Podi Nona |
| 18. There was a well at the house. | Sriya Abeyawardena | H. D. Premaratne Jayawardene,
Hemaseelie's cousin |
| 19. She had planted a <i>pera</i> tree at the house. | Sriya Abeyawardena | Sriyawathie Guneratne
H. D. Premaratne Jayawardene |
| | | This remark was made at the time of Sriyawathie's visit to Shamlinie's family when Shamlinie's mother asked her to describe how to get to her (former) house. Sriyawathie visited Shamlinie after she had recognized her (in about May 1966) and before she went to the Guneratne house in Galtudawa with her father.
Shamlinie's house is not on a hill. |
| | | I was taken partway down the hill toward the river and shown this well. |
| | | I was shown two <i>pera</i> trees near the house. (These are a type of local fruit tree.) The informants of the Guneratne family disagreed about |

TABLE 1 (cont.)

Item	Informants	Verification	Comments
19. (cont.)			which one Hemaseelie had planted but said she had planted one of them.
20. She had three new frocks.	Sriya Abeyawardena G. P. Luisa Nona G. S. Ranjith Prema	Sriyawathie Guneratne	
21. She had a bead necklace.	Premalatha Abeyaratne, Sriya Abeyawardena's cousin G. P. Luisa Nona Sriya Abeyawardena G. S. Ranjith Prema	Sriyawathie Guneratne	Shamlinie's parents did not say that Shamlinie had said the necklace was made of beads.
22. Although her [present] mother beat her, her [previous] mother never did so.	Sriya Abeyawardena	W. L. Podi Nona H. D. Premaratne Jayawardene	Hemaseelie's mother denied that they had ever beaten her. H. D. Premaratne Jayawardene confirmed this. Dilman Guneratne, Hemaseelie's brother, said it might have happened, although he had never seen Hemaseelie being beaten.
23. She went to buy bread at a boutique in the morning before going to school.	Sriya Abeyawardena G. S. Ranjith Prema G. P. Luisa Nona	John Guneratne	Shamlinie's mother and father gave concordant accounts of Shamlinie's drowning, but each included details omitted by the other. Shamlinie's mother's account was briefer. She, however, described Shamlinie's use of an onomatopoeic word, "dadabaddas", to describe the splash of the water as Hemaseelie

fell into the flooded paddy field.
G. P. Luisa Nona's account tallied with the others with slight variation in details.

The water was even over the bridge.

John Guneratne reached the scene after the drowning. Persons who had seen the accident but who had been unable to rescue Hemaseelie gave him these details.

John Guneratne, who was not present when his daughter drowned and so was repeating what he had learned from bystanders, said that Hemaseelie had called for help, but that no mention was made of her specifically saying: "Mother." Shamlinie did not mention any pain in the dying that she was recalling.

This seems to have been Shamlinie's first recognition of any member of the Guneratne family. As described by H. D. Premaratne Jayawardene: "One day Shamlinie was at a bus stop with her mother. I passed them. The girl addressed me as 'older brother.'" Shamlinie was about three years old at the time of this incident, which occurred before she had first visited Galtudawa.

Sriya Abeyawardena recalled that Shamlinie had recognized an "older brother" on the street when she was,

H. D. Premaratne Jayawardene

John Guneratne

Unverified

G. S. Ranjith Prema

Sriya Abeyawardena
G. S. Ranjith Prema
G. P. Luisa Nona

Sriya Abeyawardena
G. P. Luisa Nona

24. The road was flooded.

25. A bus splashed water on her and she fell into a paddy field.

26. She threw up her arms and called: "Mother." After that she fell into sleep.

H. D. Premaratne Jayawardene
Sriya Abeyawardena

27. Recognition of H. D. Premaratne Jayawardene, Hemaseelie's cousin

TABLE 1 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
27. (cont.)			<p>according to her, about two and a half. At the time she did not know whom Shamlinie was recognizing, but she later learned that the person was one of Hemaseelie's older "brothers." In fact, H. D. Premaratne Jayawardene was an older cousin, not a true brother, of Hemaseelie. But in the usage of Asia he qualified as a brother.</p>
28. Recognition of Sriyawathie, Hemaseelie's older sister	<p>Sriyawathie Guneratne P. D. Nandawathie Wijesinghe, relative of G. S. Ranjith Prema Sriya Abeyawardena</p>		<p>The two main accounts of this recognition differ slightly. P. D. Nandawathie Wijesinghe saw some girls passing along the street returning from school. She happened to recognize Sriyawathie among them, so she asked Shamlinie, who was visiting with her mother at the time, whether she knew any of the girls passing by. Shamlinie said: "One of them is my sister."</p>
			<p>P. D. Nandawathie Wijesinghe then said: "Which one are you referring to?" Shamlinie replied: "The one at the other end." Shamlinie then went and spoke to Sriyawathie, who, according to P. D. Nandawathie Wijesinghe, did not come into the house. Sriyawathie Guneratne said that she</p>

was returning from school one day and, passing the Wijesinghe house, she heard a child say: "There goes my older sister." She also heard the child say: "That one on the side is my sister." She went into the house, and the child looked at her but did not say anything more.

I think the discrepancy about whether or not Sriyawathie entered the house may be due to her having spoken with Shamlinie at or near the door of the house. Sriya Abeywardena's shorter account was concordant in general with the other two statements.

Shamlinie recognized Sriyawathie about a month before she and her father went to the Guneratne home in Galtudawa.

29. Recognition of the site of the drowning of Hemaseelie

G. S. Ranjith Prema
M. A. Somapala, driver of
car of the Gonagela Temple

This occurred on the way to the Galtudawa house of the Guneratnes for Shamlinie's first visit. According to G. S. Ranjith Prema, as the car was crossing the paddy fields and canals, Shamlinie spontaneously said: "This is where I drowned." She was with her father and the driver in the car. Neither her father nor the driver at that time knew the exact site at which Hemaseelie had drowned, but both verified this later.

M. A. Somapala, the driver, confirmed the account of Shamlinie's father but said the latter had asked her to show him

Table 1 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
29. (cont.)			<p>where the drowning had occurred. It seems, however, that G. S. Ranjith Prema only put this question to her <i>after</i> she had made her first remark spontaneously and because he was not sure to exactly which place she was referring. Even if Shamlinie's father had asked the question first, her recognition of the spot of the drowning would still have been somewhat impressive, since the road goes over the paddy fields for more than half a kilometer.</p>
30. Recognition of the Guneratne house at Galtudawa	G. S. Ranjith Prema		<p>Shamlinie had been on this road across the paddy fields when she was an infant, before she could speak. She was taken on a bus. She cried all the way (apparently because of her fear of buses) and showed no special reaction when they passed the place where Hemaseelie had drowned.</p> <p>G. S. Ranjith Prema said that no one had told Shamlinie they were taking her to the Guneratne house. But he had told her before they got into the car that they were going to the Galtudawa place, so she could easily have inferred that they had arrived there when they got out of the car. When they reached the house he asked Shamlinie where they were, and she said: "We are at Galtudawa mother's house."</p>

31. Recognition of W. L. Podi
Nona, Hemaseelie's mother

G. S. Ranjith Prema

There was a large crowd at the Guneratne house in Galtudawa when Shamlinie and her father reached it. Shamlinie's father held her in his arms the whole time. Shamlinie said: "My mother is there," and pointed with her chin. She did not give W. L. Podi Nona's name. This indication of recognition was not heard by the Guneratnes, and they did not think Shamlinie had recognized them. Perhaps they were standing too far away to hear the child speak. However, the value of Shamlinie's indication of "my mother" is much reduced by the fact that as they were getting into the car, Shamlinie had asked her father if they were going to Galtudawa (she had asked repeatedly to be taken there) and he had said: "Yes." W. L. Podi Nona said that on later occasions when she had seen Shamlinie, Shamlinie had called her "mother." This behavior contributed considerably to her belief that Shamlinie was Hemaseelie reborn.

32. Recognition of
Henegedera D. Premalatha,
friend of Hemaseelie

Henegedera D. Premalatha

Henegedera D. Premalatha went unannounced to visit Shamlinie with her sister, Somawathie, and Hemaseelie's sister Sriyawathie. Shamlinie recognized Henegedera D. Premalatha by saying: "That is my friend," but did not give her name and did not recognize Somawathie. I am not sure when this visit and recognition took place, but believe it probably occurred in the autumn of 1967.

particularly noticed this tendency, but her mother also commented on it.⁴

Shamlinie also referred to the previous life when something at her home displeased her. Once when her mother was beating her, she said: "Although you are beating me, my Galtudawa mother never beats me." Other comments about the previous life were stimulated by seeing her brother nursing, as already mentioned, or by food she was given that reminded her of food she remembered having in the previous life.

Shamlinie sometimes used the past tense in referring to the previous life and sometimes the present tense. I have given one example of her use of the present tense in the preceding paragraph. Another occurred when she first saw Sriyawathie, Hemaseelie's sister, along with several other girls walking along a street, and said: "One of them is my sister."

Shamlinie's Behavior toward the Guneratnes. From the time she was first talking in her sleep, Shamlinie expressed strong desires to be taken to her "Galtudawa mother." When reprimanded she would threaten to go there alone. At other times, when in a more friendly mood, she would propose a joint expedition with her mother and would agree that they would return together to Gonagela after the visit.

Once, Shamlinie actually started off down the road by herself in the direction of Galtudawa. She was found missing and brought back after she had gone just a few yards. When asked where she had been going, she said she wanted to go to Galtudawa.

After Shamlinie had recognized Sriyawathie, Hemaseelie's sister, on the street in Gonagela (item 28), Sriyawathie came to visit Shamlinie with two friends. Shamlinie hospitably invited Sriyawathie to be seated but seems to have ignored the other girls. She told her mother: "Galtudawa sister has come. Mother, prepare tea." When her mother fell in with these plans and prepared tea, Shamlinie served it to Sriyawathie and requested her mother to serve the other two girls.

Shamlinie's great longing to go to Galtudawa declined later, and in 1968, when she was five and a half, it was not so strong, although she was still asking to be taken there. John Guneratne and one of his daughters came to visit Shamlinie in the autumn of 1967 and she was glad to see them, although she grumbled that they had brought her no sweets.

Shamlinie's Phobias of Buses, Bathing, and the Site of Hemaseelie's Drowning. Shamlinie's fear of buses first manifested itself when she was six months old

⁴ I have observed a tendency in other cases for the subjects to talk more about the previous life in the periods just before going to sleep and upon awakening. I believe this may be related to the alteration in the state of consciousness that occurs in the hypnagogic and hypnopompic states and that permits ordinarily repressed contents to come to the surface. In other instances, however, such as that of Gamini Jayasena's preference for talking about the previous life in the morning, I think the special time of day for speaking arises from the fact that the father has left for work, the house is quiet, and the mother is free to listen.

and her parents took her on a bus trip of about 3 kilometers. She cried during the entire journey. Her mother said that she used to hide her face when she just saw a bus, and her father confirmed that she would become afraid at the mere sight of one when very young. After a while she was able to ride in a bus without crying, but she would still cling to her father during the journey. Once he asked her why she was afraid of buses and she said: "I fell because of a bus."

One day in 1966 Shamlinie went to see her mother's cousin, Premalatha Abeyaratne, who lived next door, and told her that her former mother was ill. (I shall describe this statement more fully later; see p. 39.) Shamlinie said: "Let's go by car to see her." Her "aunt" said: "I can't go by car. I'll go by bus." To this Shamlinie replied: "I don't like to go by bus."

In 1968, when Shamlinie was five and a half years old, her mother said that she was still afraid of buses. She was willing to travel in them but tried to avoid this, and when they came near she still moved back from them.

The other three children of the family (all younger than Shamlinie) showed no similar phobia of buses or of water.⁵ Shamlinie's phobia of buses did not generalize to other motor vehicles, such as automobiles.

Shamlinie's fear of bathing was just as intense as her fear of buses.⁶ As I mentioned earlier, when she was an infant she struggled so violently when bathed that it took three persons to hold her for a bath. She was not immersed for bathing, but had water poured over her, and this was sufficient to terrify her. This reaction also was not shown by any of her three younger brothers.

Shamlinie never gave any direct explanation of her fear of being bathed. When she was being bathed she simply said: "I am afraid." Her phobia of being immersed in water began to make sense to her family when she narrated her memories of how "she" had drowned in the previous life.

She began to get over the fear of being bathed when she was nearly three years old, and was considered to have fully recovered from it by the time she was four. So it persisted a shorter time than the phobia of buses.

Correspondences in Personality Traits between Shamlinie and Hemaseelie

The informants for the case reported two correspondences in food preferences between Shamlinie and Hemaseelie. Hemaseelie did not like to eat rice. (It will be recalled that on the day of her death she was willing to walk a long distance just in order to buy some bread to eat with plantains.) In this respect Hemaseelie differed from the other members of her family, who liked to eat rice. Shamlinie also showed a dislike for rice and was exceptional

⁵ For the description of a similar fear of large motor vehicles related to a fatal accident of a previous life, see the case of Sleimann Bouhamzy (I. Stevenson, 1974. *Twenty cases*).

⁶ For the description of a similar fear of bathing related to events of a previous life, see the case of Parmod Sharma (I. Stevenson, 1974. *Twenty cases*). Parmod's fear of bathing was related to therapeutic tub baths taken by Parmanand (the related previous personality) just before he died.

in this regard compared with two of her younger brothers, both of whom (as reported in 1966) liked rice.

Hemaseelie was unusually fond of sweets and was constantly buying them for herself and her friends. Her mother said she was fond of sweets more than her other daughters were. Shamlinie also was particularly fond of sweets.

Hemaseelie preferred dresses with pockets, although she had some frocks without pockets. Shamlinie's mother said that Shamlinie had a tendency to put things, including her hands, in the pockets of her dresses and had asked her mother for a dress with two pockets.⁷ In other respects, however, the two girls differed in their tastes for clothes. Hemaseelie liked clean clothes, but Shamlinie, according to her mother, was not particular about her clothes. And Hemaseelie preferred dresses with short sleeves and rather short skirts. Shamlinie did not care for short skirts. Thus, in clothes the preference for pockets on the dresses seems to be the only taste the two girls shared.

Both Hemaseelie and Shamlinie were, for their families, unusually religious. Hemaseelie's mother said that she went two or three times a day to a temple. And Shamlinie's mother said (in 1970) that she was a religious type of girl. Shamlinie led the other children in reciting Buddhist *gathas* (scriptural verses) and in offering flowers in the shrine room.

Shamlinie told me (in 1973) that arithmetic was her favorite subject at school and said she had received 90 per cent in a test in that subject. Two of Hemaseelie's friends, Henegedera D. Premalatha and her sister, H. D. Somawathie, mentioned that Hemaseelie was "very good" at arithmetic. I learned about this correspondence between the two girls after I had talked with their schoolteacher, G. Kanaherarachi. She had not mentioned it spontaneously (although she had said they both had an above average interest in religion), and I did not specifically enquire about their skills in arithmetic.

In Table 2 I have summarized the correspondences in the behavioral traits reported for Shamlinie and Hemaseelie. I have included in this table two items concerning taste in clothing in which the girls differed. I have also listed the two phobias shown by Shamlinie. Hemaseelie did not have such phobias, but they accorded with the circumstances of her death.

The Attitudes of Shamlinie's Parents and Other Observers toward the Case

During my 1966 investigation of this case, I never learned of anything suspicious about it. Both families seemed to me to be giving their testimony with candor and without exaggeration. Hemaseelie Guneratne had been an uncomplicated young schoolgirl who had drowned tragically in early life. Although her death was certainly sad, her life, unlike many others in these cases, contained nothing shameful to be suppressed nor anything specially notable to be pushed forward or amplified. Shamlinie's family obviously

⁷ For other illustrations of habits of clothing related to previous lives, see the cases of Disna Samarasinghe and Ruby Kusuma Silva (this volume).

TABLE 2. *Correspondences in Behavior between Shamlinie and Hemaseelie*

<i>Shamlinie</i>	<i>Hemaseelie</i>
1. Disliked rice	Preferred eating bread instead of rice
2. Unusually fond of sweets	Unusually fond of sweets
3. Not particular about cleanliness of clothes	Liked clean clothes
4. No special preference for length of skirt	Preferred short sleeves and short skirts
5. Interest in pockets on dresses	Preferred dresses with pockets
6. Unusually religious for her age	Unusually religious for her age
7. Fear of water	No unusual fear of water, but died of drowning
8. Fear of buses	Drowned when pushed off road by a bus and fell into a flooded paddy field
9. Excellent in arithmetic	Good in arithmetic

enjoyed the confidence of the Ven. Siriniwasa Nayaka, and he had been instrumental in persuading G. S. Ranjith Prema to cooperate with the reporter who came to investigate the case. He had himself heard Shamlinie talking about the previous life.

In 1968 I learned, however, that some of the villagers at Gonagela were saying that Shamlinie's father had made up the case. These allegations had so distressed W. L. Podi Nona that she had stopped visiting Shamlinie. She herself did not believe that the case was false and thought the gossip malevolently related to differences in politics. (Shamlinie's father belonged to a different political party from the majority of the other villagers in Gonagela.) W. L. Podi Nona was in fact more convinced in 1968 than she had been in 1966 that Shamlinie was her daughter Hemaseelie reborn. She seemed particularly impressed by Shamlinie's calling her "mother" when she went to visit her in Gonagela.

In Gonagela our group engaged some villagers at a café in a conversation about the case. They had obviously heard about it. One of them pronounced the case false, but when asked to say why he thought so he could provide no evidence for his assertion and fell back lamely on the statement that "rebirth is impossible." Fortified by this axiom, he had evidently concluded that the case must have been invented. The owner of the café said that in his opinion it was genuine.

I twice interviewed G. P. D. Amarasinghe, the proctor (approximately equivalent to district attorney) of Gonagela, about his observations of the case. He could not be a completely detached witness, since he was related to G. S. Ranjith Prema; but as an educated man and an important administrative official of the district, his testimony about what he had heard

concerning the case seemed worth recording. He affirmed that he had not found any reason to think of the case as other than genuine. He knew of no gain obtained by Shamlinie's parents for the case, nor did he believe that they were promoting it in the hope of such. He had not himself heard the adverse criticism of the case that came to my attention, nor had he heard any other unfavorable talk about it in the town. He said that villagers may engage in such criticism out of jealousy when they imagine that the parents of such a child benefit somehow from the case.

G. S. Ranjith Prema said that he had not wanted any publicity for the case. The Ven. Siriniwasa Nayaka had to persuade him to let an account of it be published in a newspaper. This occurred about a year after G. S. Ranjith Prema had identified the family Shamlinie had been talking about. In an interview conducted by Godwin Samararatne in January 1970, W. D. Wijeratne, the newspaper reporter who had written the report of the case, confirmed G. S. Ranjith Prema's account of his reluctance to have the case publicized. W. D. Wijeratne said that he had heard about the case (he did not say just when), but that he did not go to visit Shamlinie's family because he had also heard that G. S. Ranjith Prema was averse to publicity for it. When later he received a telegram from his editor asking him to send an account of the case, he consulted the Ven. Siriniwasa Nayaka and asked him to join him in persuading G. S. Ranjith Prema to let a report of the case be published.

I myself believe this case quite genuine. I could find neither a motive for fraud nor evidence of it. I can find no one who has or could have profited from its contrivance.⁸ If the case was invented, it must have involved seven persons in addition to Shamlinie's parents, because these persons all told me (some of them in the absence of Shamlinie's parents) that they had heard Shamlinie talking about the previous life. So either they were all lying or Shamlinie's parents had rehearsed her to repeat assigned answers to questions and to pretend to utter spontaneous remarks about the previous life. Such a conspiracy seems to me improbable.

*Some Instances of Extrasensory Perception
on the Part of Shamlinie*

Shamlinie's family told me of three incidents in which she gave them rather impressive evidence of extrasensory perception.

On the first occasion, Shamlinie (according to her father) said on awakening at 6:00 A.M.: "My Galtudawa mother is ill in the hospital. I want to go to see her." Shamlinie's mother remembered more details of what Shamlinie said on this occasion. She confirmed that Shamlinie had made her remarks early in

⁸ G. S. Ranjith Prema wrote in 1968 and asked to borrow money from me. He is, however, a person of very humble means and uncertain income. And the case had developed and was investigated long before he made this request. I found no other trace of his having sought any gain from the case, and I feel sure that this request arose just incidentally, because he saw in me a possible source of financial assistance. Most peasants of Asia (and many better-educated persons) believe that everyone in the United States is rich, and particularly any American who can travel to Asia.

the morning after waking up at 6:00 A.M. Shamlinie said, according to her: "My Galtudawa mother is in a hospital having a fever." Then Shamlinie added that the medicine given her "Galtudawa mother" was not having a beneficial effect, and she asked her mother to have her "Galtudawa mother" transferred to the Nagoda Hospital. (Nagoda is a larger town, not far from Gonagela, with a better hospital.)

This was the occasion mentioned earlier, when Shamlinie went next door and told her "aunt" (Premalatha Abeyaratne) that her former mother was ill and proposed that they go to see her—in a car. (I am not sure that she spoke to the "aunt" on the same day she mentioned the illness to her parents.)

Shamlinie's parents were not at this time in touch with the Guneratne family except for the rare casual meetings I have mentioned. (This incident probably happened in May 1966, some weeks before Shamlinie's father took her to Galtudawa for the first time; the estimates of just when the incident and related illness occurred differed in the testimony of Shamlinie's parents and W. L. Podi Nona.) Shamlinie's parents had no knowledge whatever that the "Galtudawa mother" was ill or in a hospital. Shamlinie's father initiated inquiries through a friend of John Guneratne and learned that W. L. Podi Nona was indeed in the hospital and had been there about a week at the time Shamlinie made her first remark about her being ill.

A second instance of possible extrasensory perception occurred when Shamlinie's father then decided to call at the hospital and make a brief visit to W. L. Podi Nona. He was quite positive that he had said nothing to Shamlinie about going to the hospital, but when he returned from it, she asked him if he had been there and whether "Galtudawa mother" was there. Shamlinie's mother also said that she had given her no hint that her father had gone to the hospital that morning.

W. L. Podi Nona furnished me with some facts of her illness. She had dengue fever and was in the Gonagela Hospital for two weeks. She was somewhat frightened during the illness, but not dissatisfied with the treatment. Her son, however, *was* dissatisfied, and on one or two occasions he suggested that they should move her to the (larger and better-equipped) hospital in Nagoda. Sriyawathie Guneratne said her mother had been gravely ill and in danger of dying. In the end she was not moved to Nagoda but recovered at Gonagela. However, the suggestion of moving her to Nagoda accorded with one detail of Shamlinie's statement about the illness of her "Galtudawa mother." I think it relevant to add that in 1970 W. L. Podi Nona told me that when she was in the hospital and her condition seemed critical, she had thought much about her children. She mentioned spontaneously that she had been thinking about Hemaseelie during this illness.

A third instance of apparent extrasensory perception on the part of Shamlinie occurred two days before my first visit to her family in July 1966. Her father brought home some sweets and hid them without telling the children. After Shamlinie awoke from her nap, she told her mother that her father had brought some sweets home.

After the above episodes Shamlinie gave no further evidence of extrasensory perception noted by her parents.

Comments on the Evidence of Paranormal Processes in the Case

I think I have already explained sufficiently why I believe the case is authentic and not fraudulent or in any way consciously worked up or exaggerated. And from my remarks earlier on what I could learn of the acquaintance between the two families prior to the visit of Shamlinie and her father to the Guneratne family at Galtudawa on June 3, 1966, the reader will know that I do not believe there was any intermediary between the two families who could have passed information about the Guneratne family by normal means to Shamlinie without the knowledge of her parents. (Let me remind the reader that Shamlinie's phobias of buses and bathing manifested themselves before she had even begun to speak, when she was less than a year old.) So I do not think cryptomnesia a plausible explanation of the case.

Extrasensory perception on the part of Shamlinie is in a different class as a possible explanation. In this case the subject has given some rather good evidence of extrasensory perception of events in the previous family. I refer to Shamlinie's awareness that W. L. Podi Nona was in the hospital with a fever and her suggestion that she should be moved to the Nagoda Hospital. Shamlinie also showed evidence of possible extrasensory perception on at least two other occasions. How then can we say in this case, if in any case, that the subject could not also have learned all the other details of the Guneratne family that she mentioned by extrasensory perception? Obviously we cannot say she could not have done this, and she may indeed have done so. However, if we are going to interpret the case as one of extrasensory perception among the living, we shall have to ask ourselves why Shamlinie exhibited this faculty (apart from the previous life memories) only on a few occasions and only when her father and W. L. Podi Nona were presumptive agents.

We have also to include in our explanation of the case Shamlinie's strong personation of Hemaseelie, or at least of a personality showing behavior similar to that of Hemaseelie. Moreover, Shamlinie showed reactions (phobias) that might be expected in a young girl who had been pushed off the road by a bus and drowned. We must include in our explanation also Shamlinie's intense longing to go to the "Galtudawa mother" and her preference for another family over her own for at least several years. All these aspects of the case, additional to the simple acquisition of cognitive information, make me think that it cannot be accounted for by extrasensory perception alone. There exist in this case, as in nearly all others of this type, deep factors of selection, of emotion, and of habit that must be understood if the case is to be fairly considered as a whole.

Shamlinie's Later Development

I have already mentioned that Shamlinie had largely recovered from her phobias and showed less desire to go to Galtudawa by the time she was five

years old. At about that time she stopped talking spontaneously about the previous life and seemed to be developing entirely normally.

After the initial investigations of 1966 and 1968 I met Shamlinie's parents next in November 1970. (Shamlinie herself was at school during the time I was in Gonagela, and so I did not meet her on that occasion.) I also talked with her schoolteacher, G. Kanaherarachi, who had also taught Hemaseelie. She commented on the fact that both Shamlinie and Hemaseelie were outstanding in their interest in religion; and both were only average in their academic performances.

Shamlinie (by this time eight years old) no longer talked spontaneously about the previous life, but as I did not see her I could not ask whether she had forgotten it or not. She was no longer having nightmares. In January 1970, however, G. S. Ranjith Prema had told Godwin Samararatne that Shamlinie still was somewhat troubled in her sleep: she would awake from sleep at night and sit on her bed; then after some time she would lie down and cry and then drift off to sleep again. Shamlinie's father did not mention these symptoms to me later in the year when I asked him about nightmares, and so I presume they had ceased by the time of my visit in November 1970. On the other hand, although she could no longer be described as having a phobia of buses, she still at times admonished her father about the dangers of buses when he was walking along a road used by them.

The Guneratnes and Shamlinie's family had maintained friendly relations, and W. L. Podi Nona had been to visit Shamlinie about a month before my visit to both families in November 1970.

In March 1973, I visited Shamlinie's family again, and this time she was at home with her parents. She was then ten and a half years old and in the sixth class of school. In her class the teachers did not assign ranked positions, but Shamlinie seemed to be doing well at school, particularly in arithmetic. In January 1974, Godwin Samararatne learned that Shamlinie had been placed fifth in a class of forty-three children in the "promotion test" of 1973. She was then in the seventh class.

Shamlinie had not begun to talk again about the previous life. Her father said she had not referred to it since about four years before my 1973 visit. This would place her last mention of the previous life around 1969, when she was seven years old. Earlier I had understood that she had stopped talking spontaneously about the previous life when she was about five. In response to a direct question Shamlinie said that she could remember nothing of the previous life. I tested this by asking her if she could give the names of Hemaseelie's friends and she could not.

Shamlinie still showed some traits corresponding with similar ones in Hemaseelie. Thus she had received at school 90/100 marks in arithmetic. She said that bread (not rice) and sweets were her favorite foods. And her mother said that she was more religious and more interested in Buddhism than other children of her age. She enjoyed reading a Buddhist textbook to her grandmother. No trace remained of her former fear of buses and water. She had given no further evidence of extrasensory perception.

Visits between the two families had continued somewhat irregularly. W. L. Podi Nona (whom I also visited again in March 1973) had been going over to Gonagela to visit Shamlinie every few months. She had been to see Shamlinie a few months before my visit. She said Shamlinie received her in a friendly manner and offered her tea when she visited. She went again (Godwin Samararatne learned in January 1974) to visit Shamlinie in the autumn of 1973. But Shamlinie had been to Galtudawa only once since her first visit there in 1966. W. L. Podi Nona attributed this to her parents' concern about the critical gossip which I mentioned earlier. Hemaseelie's schoolmates had stopped visiting Shamlinie when she ceased remembering the previous life.

Concerning the visits by W. L. Podi Nona, Shamlinie's father said Shamlinie seemed fond of her but also hesitant about showing affection to her, perhaps, he thought, because of inhibitions caused by the presence of her parents. But he also said that if the Guneratnes did not visit Shamlinie for a time, she did not enquire about them.

I have not met Shamlinie or her family since 1973. I have, however, received letters from Shamlinie's father with news of her. He has written to me at least once a year. At the end of 1975 Shamlinie was promoted to the ninth class of school. The extremely limited economic means of her parents made it difficult for them to keep her in school, but they have evidently determined to do all they can to educate her.

2. The Case of Gamini Jayasena

Summary of the Case and Its Investigation

GAMINI JAYASENA was born in Colombo on November 13, 1962. He was the first child of G. Jayasena and his wife, P. K. Nandawathie. Gamini's birth was postmature, the delivery occurring in the eleventh month of pregnancy by Caesarean section. By 1973 the family had five other children.

Both of Gamini's parents were educated through the equivalent in the United States of primary school and about two years of high school. Gamini's father was a junior employee of a bank in Sri Lanka. He started with the bank in 1954 at a very low level and was gradually advanced. A cousin of Gamini's mother, the Ven. Baddegama Wimalawansa, was a rather well known monk in Sri Lanka and the principal of a school in Colombo, Sri Lanka Vidyalaya. (He had a prominent part in the development of the case.)

Gamini started to talk when just under a year old. When he was about eighteen months old he began to refer to a previous life. One of his first remarks about it occurred when he saw his mother use a sewing machine and said: "There is a machine like that at our house." His mother asked him who used it and Gamini replied: "There is a sister." At about the same time and later he made other comments about the previous life. He talked about another mother and made a distinction between his (present) mother, whom he called by the Sinhalese word *amma*, and his "real mother," whom he called "mummy." He referred to an uncle called Charlie and a brother called Nimal, who, he said, had been bitten by a dog. He mentioned a well and falling into it. He spoke of a schoolbag in which he kept books, and a toy elephant he had bathed. Gamini later also spoke of a live elephant. Some confusion appears to have occurred with regard to Gamini's references to elephants. Gamini indicated a familiarity with electric light by showing how one could move something (presumably a switch) on a wall and the light would come on. (The house of his family did not have electricity.) He expressed a wish to go to his other home.

In addition to the foregoing and other statements, Gamini showed somewhat unusual behavior that suggested to his parents the influence of a previous life. In particular, he prayed in the posture adopted for kneeling by Christians rather than the one used by Buddhists (which the Jayasenas were) when they worship.¹ Once he found a wooden cross on the ground outside the house where the Jayasenas lived and asked his mother to hang it on the wall.

Gamini had not mentioned a family name or a place for the previous life to which he was referring, and his parents made no attempt to verify his remarks by tracing the family he was talking about until the spring of 1965,

¹ When Christians pray they often kneel but maintain the trunk erect in relation to the thighs. Buddhists, on the other hand, in their worship, allow the buttocks to go back and rest on the heels.

when he was two and a half years old. In April of that year his family took him on a bus trip to Matale, a town north of Kandy. At a place called Nittambuwe, near Veyangoda, the bus stopped briefly, and Gamini suddenly told a friend of the family, Sarath Athurapana, with whom he was sitting in the bus, that this was the place of his (previous) home. Sarath Athurapana told Gamini's parents about this remark, and they in turn told a cousin of Gamini's mother, the Ven. Wimalawansa, whom I mentioned above.

The Ven. Wimalawansa decided to investigate the case himself, and a few weeks later he took Gamini and his parents by car to Nittambuwe. They got out of the car at the place indicated by Gamini and advanced a little up the road toward some houses. Gamini pointed in their direction and said: "My 'mummy' lives there." The group, however, did not go farther. It seemed likely that if Gamini had been talking about a verifiable previous life, the previous personality had been a Christian. The Ven. Wimalawansa was reluctant to approach a Christian family with regard to a case of the rebirth type without making further preliminary inquiries. In addition, he was doubtful that they had found the correct house; Gamini had talked of bathing an elephant and there was no stream nearby where elephants could bathe. (Although Gamini's mother was quite clear that Gamini had referred to bathing a *toy* elephant, her cousin, the Ven. Wimalawansa, somehow expected to find live elephants at the place of the previous family; and, since elephants must have water for bathing, he therefore expected to find a substantial stream or river nearby.) So the party returned to Colombo that day without meeting the family Gamini wanted to take them to. It happened, however, that the Ven. Wimalawansa was recognized by villagers at some pottery *kades* (stalls) beside the road near Nittambuwe where the group with Gamini had stopped. They told a family living at the place indicated by Gamini about the party of people and the Buddhist monk who had been searching for a house.² This family then came into Colombo, where they called on the Ven. Wimalawansa at the school of which he was the principal. They introduced themselves as Mr. and Mrs. Lionel Senewiratne and said that one of their sons, Palitha, had died some years before. (Palitha died on July 28, 1960; he was eight years old at the time of his death. His family were Christians.) They asked to see Gamini but were told they could not do so yet. They brought a photograph of Palitha with them, and the Ven. Wimalawansa sent this photograph to Gamini's parents with the request that they report Gamini's reaction when he saw it. Gamini looked at the photograph and said: "That's my baby." Since Gamini himself was called "baby" in his family, his remark was taken to mean that he was saying the photograph was of himself.

On May 2, 1965, Gamini was brought again to Nittambuwe by the Ven. Wimalawansa for a visit to the Senewiratnes. The Senewiratnes knew about the visit in advance, and so did the neighboring villagers. A large crowd assembled for the occasion. Gamini made various recognitions of people and

² There were, so far as I know, only four houses reached by the small country road—really just a lane—that Gamini had indicated. At least two of the houses belonged to related families. So the villagers had no difficulty in identifying the house for which the strangers had probably been looking.

places which I shall particularize later. Subsequently on that occasion, and again on a later one, Gamini was taken to the school (St. Mary's College, Veyangoda) that Palitha had attended and the boardinghouse where he had lived during part of his school days. There he made other recognitions and comments related to the previous life. Nearly everything Gamini said before or at the time of his visit to Veyangoda was verified as accurate by the informants familiar with the life of Palitha.

In July 1965, Roversi Perera, who was an aunt of Palitha's mother and lived not far from the Senewiratnes, wrote out a report of the case from the information she had gathered.³ She had learned some details from the Senewiratnes and had accompanied Gamini on the visit to the school Palitha had attended. A copy of her report was sent to Francis Story, who made a rather extensive investigation of the case between May and July 1966. At the end of the latter month (July 1966) I was in Sri Lanka, and we continued the investigation together. We interviewed again some of the informants Francis Story had already talked with and sought out new ones. In March 1968, I returned to both Gamini's and Palitha's families to check various details and obtain information about the development of Gamini in the interval since my last interviews.

In March 1970, I visited Gamini again and talked once more with his mother. By this time the Jayasenas had moved to Dehiwala, another community within the area of Colombo. (Gamini's father was out of the house on that occasion, and so I did not see him then.) I also interviewed one new informant, M. S. Fernando, principal of the school, Mahanama College in Colombo, which Gamini attended.

In March 1973, I again visited Gamini and his family in Dehiwala and had a long talk with his parents about his further development and the fading of his memories of the previous life. During this same visit to Sri Lanka I also met Ariyawanse Weerakody, a teacher at Gamini's school, Mahanama College. He had formerly taught at St. Mary's College in Veyangoda, and Palitha had been a student of his there.

In December 1974, Godwin Samararatne paid another visit to Gamini's home on my behalf. Gamini and his father were away, but his mother, P. K. Nandawathie, furnished some further information about Gamini's development.

In March 1976, I visited Gamini and his family in Dehiwala and also had a further brief interview with Vinnis Senewiratne in Nittambuwe.

Persons Interviewed during the Investigation

In Nugegoda I interviewed:

Gamini Jayasena

G. Jayasena, Gamini's father

P. K. Nandawathie, Gamini's mother

³ There is an inconsequential discrepancy between the date (April 28, 1965) given by R. Perera in her report and that (May 2, 1965) given by the Senewiratnes for the first meeting between the two families.

Sarath Athurapana, friend and boarder in the
Jayasena household

In Colombo I interviewed:

Ven. Baddegama Wimalawansa Thera, Gamini's
maternal "uncle" (actually his mother's cousin)
and principal of Sri Lanka Vidyalaya

R. A. A. Perera, teacher at Sri Lanka Vidyalaya

M. S. Fernando, principal of Mahanama College

Ariyawanse Weerakody, teacher of Mahanama College and former
teacher of Palitha at St. Mary's College, Veyangoda

In Nittambuwe and Veyangoda I interviewed:

Vinnis Senewiratne, Palitha's mother

Nimal Senewiratne, Palitha's brother

Sivananda Senewiratne, Palitha's maternal uncle

J. E. Abeyasinghe, Vinnis Senewiratne's uncle and
Palitha's great-uncle

Charles E. Senewiratne ("Charlie Uncle"), great-
uncle and neighbor of Lionel Senewiratne, Palitha's
father

P. Jayasena (not related to Gamini's parents),
neighbor of Palitha's family

Roversi Perera, Vinnis Senewiratne's aunt and neighbor

D. E. Rajasekera, Palitha's teacher at St. Mary's College

R. D. Gunawardena, Palitha's teacher at St. Mary's College

R. M. S. Illangakoon, schoolmate of Palitha

W. H. Siridasa, shopkeeper of Veyangoda

P. Neris, shopkeeper of Horagolla

W. A. Alice Nona, owner of the boardinghouse where Palitha
stayed when attending St. Mary's College

In addition, Francis Story interviewed the following informants at Nittambuwe and Veyangoda:

Lionel Senewiratne, Palitha's father

P. C. H. Dias, neighbor of the Senewiratne family

Sunanda Amarasinghe, W. A. Alice Nona's daughter

Banda Mudalali, owner of a pottery shop

In Nugegoda Francis Story also interviewed:

Wimala Jayasena, Gamini's paternal aunt

S. A. S. Perera, friend of Gamini's parents

On the occasions of my visits to Nittambuwe, Lionel Senewiratne (Palitha's father) was either absent or ill, and so I never interviewed him myself. But Francis Story took detailed testimony from him which I have used in compiling this report. He had also interviewed other informants with whom I talked again. Altogether this case is therefore one of the most thoroughly studied as measured by "interview hours" with the informants.

*Relevant Facts of Geography and Possibilities for Normal Means of
Communication between the Two Families*

At the time the case developed, Gamini's family lived in Nugegoda, a small town on the outskirts of Colombo and about 8 kilometers from its center. Later, they moved to Dehiwala, another town on the outskirts of Colombo. Palitha Senewiratne's family lived in Nittambuwe, which is on the Colombo-Kandy road about 35 kilometers northeast of Colombo. The nearest railroad station to Nittambuwe is 7 kilometers away, at Veyangoda. St. Mary's College, attended by Palitha, and the boardinghouse where he stayed are at Veyangoda. So far as I have been able to ascertain, the two families had absolutely no prior acquaintance with each other before the development of the case and no friends in common. The possibility of their having had any prior acquaintance or mutual friends is made unlikely not only by the long distance between their homes, but also by their membership in different religious communities. The Jayasenas certainly did not know where to look for Gamini's "real mother" on the basis of the scanty information he had given them. No one expected that he would recognize the place of the previous life on the day when the bus stopped at Nittambuwe. If Gamini's family at that point had had any idea that this was really the place of the family he had been talking about, they probably would have gone directly to them. Instead, they turned the matter over to P. K. Nandawathie's cousin, the Ven. Wimalawansa. He approached meeting the Senewiratnes cautiously and without the benefit of any previous acquaintance with them.

In many cases of the reincarnation type in Asia and elsewhere, even though the two families of the case have no direct relationship, I have nevertheless, often after much effort, found some shared friends or connections. In the present case, however, I have not discovered the slightest trace of any such linking acquaintances or other connections between the two families concerned.

The Last Days and Fatal Illness of Palitha Senewiratne

Palitha was recognized as a rather frail child, but his parents had no special concern about his health until July 1960, when he was eight years old. He then returned from school on vacation. As he entered the house, instead of putting his schoolbag in the *almirah* (cupboard) as he usually did, he laid it on a chair and made the surprising remark: "I shall not be going to school again."

He seemed to be irritable, and his mother recognized later that this was because he was ill. He soon became seriously ill and died within a few days. I did not learn the exact nature of Palitha's fatal illness. His father told Francis Story that Palitha had vomited a great deal and that he was taken to the hospital in Wetupitewela, where he died on July 28, 1960, just a few days after the onset of his illness.

Palitha's rather cryptic remark about not returning again to school, combined with the unusual act of leaving his schoolbag on the chair instead of putting it away, suggested later that he had had some precognitive awareness of his forthcoming illness and death. At the time, however, his remark was not interpreted this way, and his parents had not taken it seriously. They had not noticed any other evidence of his having precognitive or other paranormal abilities.

Statements and Recognitions Made by Gamini

In Table 3 I have listed the more important statements and recognitions attributed to Gamini by the informants. I have listed the items in groups that are in chronological order, but I do not know the sequence in which the items occurred within each group. Items 1-22 occurred before any attempt at verification had been made. Item 23 includes two occasions: first, Gamini's recognition of the area of the previous life from the bus on which he was traveling with his parents and Sarath Athurapana and, second, his recognition of the road to the house on the visit when he was first taken back to the area by the Ven. Wimalawansa. Item 24 also occurred on this second visit to the area. Item 25 occurred after the above-mentioned second visit to the area but before the two families had met. Items 26-39 occurred during the third visit of Gamini's family to Nittambuwe, when they met the Senewiratne family for the first time. Items 40-46 occurred at Veyangoda, where Gamini was taken to visit the boardinghouse where Palitha had stayed and the school, St. Mary's College, which he had attended. This visit occurred after the first meeting of Gamini and his family with the Senewiratnes. Items 47-49 occurred when Gamini was taken to the Bandaranaike estate and shrine at Horagolla. I believe this visit took place after the above-mentioned visits to Nittambuwe and Veyangoda.

Gamini failed to recognize at all, or to recognize adequately, a number of persons known to Palitha. His recognition of Palitha's father is doubtful and certainly did not include mentioning his name. He failed to recognize "Charlie Uncle" by name, although Gamini was credited with staring at him for a rather long time as if an image for recognition was struggling to emerge into his consciousness. He may have recognized Palitha's brothers, but, if so, the evidence was spoiled by his being asked to show who they were. He then pointed to two of them in the crowd at the Senewiratne house; the question put this way must have almost forced the members of the crowd to look at Palitha's brothers, thus providing guidance to Gamini. Gamini also

failed to recognize W. A. Alice Nona, keeper of the boardinghouse at Veyangoda, but he did recognize her daughter, Sunanda Amarasinghe. He also failed to recognize R. D. Gunawardena, one of Palitha's schoolteachers at St. Mary's College whom he met.

Unlike most subjects of these cases, Gamini never mentioned the manner of death in the previous life.⁴

Gamini's Behavior Related to the Previous Life

Circumstances and Manner of Gamini's Speaking about the Previous Life. Gamini's parents noted that he was much more apt to talk about the previous life between the hours of nine and ten in the morning than at other times. His father would usually have left for work by then, and the favorite time may only have reflected the fact that his mother perhaps had more leisure to spend with him. This was the explanation that Gamini's mother seemed to favor when I reviewed this feature of the case with her in 1970. There may also be some connection between this favored time of day for talking and the fact that Palitha died between 9 and 10 A.M. Finally, at this (relatively) early hour of the day Gamini may not have been fully awake. It has been noted in other cases that the subject will tend to talk more about the previous life when just awakening from sleep in the morning or when going to sleep in the evening. It is as if in such cases the memories come to the surface as the attention is withdrawn from (or not fully given to) the affairs of the waking activities.⁵

As with other subjects of these cases, objects and events corresponding to those familiar to the previous personality would start Gamini talking about the previous life. When he saw a car, for example, he would talk of "Charlie Uncle," Palitha's uncle who owned a car.

Although Gamini spoke about the previous life spontaneously, he did not respond well to questions about it. Sarath Athurapana, the boarder who lived with the Jayasenas, said that Gamini would not reply if asked a direct question about the previous life; he would only speak when in the mood.

As have many other subjects of these cases, Gamini often used the present tense in talking about the previous life. For example, he said: "I have another 'mummy,'" "My 'mummy' wears a sari," and "The schoolbag I had is still on the chair." (This last remark seems to combine a sense of past and present.)

Gamini's parents noticed that he used different words in referring to the two

⁴ Many subjects of these cases also mention some event or events that occurred not long before the death of the related previous personality. In this connection I think it worth noting that a schoolbag figured prominently in Gamini's statements and in his wish to return to the home of the previous personality. Palitha, just before his fatal illness and a few days before his death, had come home from school and, rather dramatically, had put down his schoolbag with the remark, previously quoted, that he would not be going back to school.

⁵ For other examples of subjects showing a tendency to talk about the previous life more at one time of day than another, see the cases of Kumkum Verma (first volume of this series), Shamlinie Prema (this volume), and Ratana Wongsombat (fourth volume).

TABLE 3. Summary of Statements and Recognitions Made by Gamini

Item	Informants	Verification	Comments
1. He had another "mummy."	P. K. Nandawathie, Gamini's mother	Vinnis Senewiratne, Palitha's mother J. E. Abeyasinghe, Palitha's great-uncle	Gamini sometimes referred to the mother of the previous life as his "real mother." He also called her "mummy," using the English word, but used the Sinhalese word <i>amma</i> for his own mother. Vinnis Senewiratne said that Palitha used to call her "amma," but that Gamini called her "mummy" when he came to visit her. J. E. Abeyasinghe also said that Palitha had not addressed his mother as "mummy." Gamini may have adopted this word to help himself keep the two women distinct in his mind. This conjecture receives some support from a statement of the Ven. Wimalawansa, who said Gamini referred to his mother as "our mother" but to the previous mother as "my mother."
2. His "mummy" was much bigger than his [present] mother.	P. K. Nandawathie	Verified by me on meeting the two mothers concerned	P. K. Nandawathie is a smallish woman; Vinnis Senewiratne is of average size for a Sinhalese woman.
3. His "mummy" wore a sari.	P. K. Nandawathie	Verified by me on meeting Vinnis Senewiratne	P. K. Nandawathie ordinarily wore a coat over a dress or over a blouse and skirt. Gamini made remarks like this one when he saw his mother wearing a sari.
4. There was someone called Nimal there.	P. K. Nandawathie	Nimal Senewiratne, Palitha's brother	I met and interviewed Palitha's younger brother, Nimal, in 1966.

5. Nimal had bitten him. P. K. Nandawathie Vinnis Senewiratne Nimal Senewiratne Nimal was Palitha's brother, four years younger than Palitha. Gamini first said Nimal had bitten him on the right side of the chest at the site of a birthmark below the right nipple. Vinnis Senewiratne stated that Nimal had bitten Palitha on the back. Nimal said he had bitten Palitha on the arm. Nimal was only four when Palitha died and his memory of the event may have been poor. Since Palitha and Nimal quarreled considerably, it is quite probable that Nimal bit Palitha more than once and vice versa.
6. He had a schoolbag. P. K. Nandawathie Sarath Athurapana, friend of the Jayasenas who boarded with them Vinnis Senewiratne This schoolbag was sometimes mentioned as a "suitcase," possibly through doubts about the correct English word in translation.
7. The schoolbag was still on the chair. P. K. Nandawathie Vinnis Senewiratne Palitha had put his schoolbag down on a chair on returning home from school for the last time. (See text for further details.)
8. In the bag were books, biscuits, and some flowers. P. K. Nandawathie Vinnis Senewiratne Lionel Senewiratne, Palitha's father The Senewiratnes recalled that the schoolbag contained books but did not mention other contents. (See, however, item 38, concerning the toy elephant.)
9. He had a toy elephant. Sarath Athurapana P. K. Nandawathie Vinnis Senewiratne J. E. Abeyasinghe Both Sarath Athurapana and P. K. Nandawathie heard Gamini refer to a toy elephant, but, because Gamini talked of bathing this elephant (see

TABLE 3 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
9. (cont.)			next item), the Ven. Wimalawansa thought he was referring to a live elephant.
10. He bathed the toy elephant in the well.	P. K. Nandawathie	Vinnis Senewiratne	Somehow, Gamini's allusions to bathing an elephant in the well influenced the Ven. Wimalawansa to overlook the fact that Gamini was referring to a <i>toy</i> elephant, and he expected to find a stream or large body of water near the previous house. This mistake led the Ven. Wimalawansa, on the occasion of the first visit to Nittambuwe, to doubt that they were in the area of the right house because there was no stream nearby. Actually Palitha bathed his toy elephant in a well of the Senewiratne property. (See item 29 for recognition of this well.) Gamini also referred later to a real elephant seen at Horagolla. (See item 47.)
11. He had better clothes in that life.	P. K. Nandawathie	Verified by me on comparing the relative wealth of the two families	Gamini's family had very modest means and lived in a rented house. Palitha's family, although by no means wealthy, had considerable landed property. One of Palitha's uncles, "Charlie Uncle," had an electric plant for his house and a motor car, and his son had a motorcycle. Palitha's family were able to afford to send him to a church school.

12. He had fallen into a well.
P. K. Nandawathie
G. Jayasena, Gamini's father
13. You could turn the light on at the wall.
G. Jayasena
14. "Charlie Uncle" had an automobile.
P. K. Nandawathie
15. "Charlie Uncle" drove him to school in the car.
P. K. Nandawathie
16. "Charlie Uncle's" family had a red motorcycle.
P. K. Nandawathie
17. There was a sewing machine at the house where he lived.
P. K. Nandawathie
Wimala Jayasena, Gamini's paternal aunt
- Vinnis Senewiratne
- I visited the home of Charles E. Senewiratne ("Charlie Uncle"), Lionel Senewiratne's great-uncle, and saw the electric light fixtures there.
- Charles E. Senewiratne
- Incorrect
- Charles E. Senewiratne
- W. A. Alice Nona, owner of boardinghouse where Palitha stayed when attending St. Mary's College in Veyangoda
- Palitha had fallen into a well when the family lived at Pasyala.
- The home of Palitha's parents did not have electric light (nor did that of Gamini's parents); Gamini was perhaps referring to the electricity in the home of Palitha's uncle, about a quarter of a mile away on property adjoining that of Palitha's parents.
- Gamini's remarks about "Charlie Uncle's" automobile were stimulated by his seeing automobiles.
- P. K. Nandawathie said that Lionel Senewiratne's family had confirmed the accuracy of this detail to her, but to me it was denied by informants of the Senewiratne family, including Charles E. Senewiratne himself.
- I saw the red motorcycle belonging to Charles E. Senewiratne's son at their house in 1966.
- W. A. Alice Nona stated that she bought a sewing machine for her daughter *after* Palitha's death. She denied that she owned a sewing machine during his lifetime. Vinnis Senewiratne said that there had been a sewing machine at the boardinghouse during Palitha's lifetime, and it is possible that W. A. Alice Nona was incorrect about the date of purchase of the sewing machine.

TABLE 3 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
17. (cont.)			Wimala Jayasena said Gamini had said the sewing machine belonged to his "sister." (See next item.)
18. He had a sister.	P. K. Nandawathie	W. A. Alice Nona	Palitha had no real sister, but he called Sunanda Amarasinghe, the daughter of W. A. Alice Nona, "akka," which is the Sinhalese word for "older sister." She was recognized by Gamini. (See item 44.)
19. The sister used to look after him.	P. K. Nandawathie	W. A. Alice Nona	
20. He had once been gored by a cow.	P. K. Nandawathie Sarath Athurapana	Vinnis Senewiratne	In 1966 Vinnis Senewiratne could not remember that Palitha had been gored by a cow, but in 1968 she did recall such an episode, although in response to a leading question. According to Sarath Athurapana, Gamini made this remark at Nitambuwe, where he pointed at a particular cow and said he (as Palitha) had been gored by it. P. K. Nandawathie agreed that Gamini had pointed at a cow and said she had gored him, but also said Gamini had previously said a cow had gored him. The English word <i>gore</i> may be too strong in this and the next item.
21. Nimal had been gored by a cow.	G. Jayasena	Vinnis Senewiratne	Gamini's father denied that Gamini had said that he (as Palitha) had been gored by a cow, and said

Gamini had mentioned that Nimal (Palitha's brother) had been gored by a cow. (See item 20.) It seems likely that he and Sarath Athurapana heard different remarks of Gamini. The word *gore* may be too strong. Palitha's mother said Nimal had been "pushed" by a cow.

22. His father used to break olive trees and give him some branches.

Ven. Baddegama Wimalawansa,
P. K. Nandawathie's cousin

Unverified

The Ven. Wimalawansa was a secondhand informant for this item, which he said Gamini had told his mother. P. K. Nandawathie did not remember (in 1968) that Gamini had mentioned olives before they went to Nittambuwe. She had then been surprised that Gamini had there used the word *olive* (Sinhalese: *verulu*), which she and her husband thought he would never have heard from them. There were no olive trees in the vicinity of their house.

It is possible that the Ven. Wimalawansa's memory for this item was better than his cousin's, because he mentioned that he was incredulous about olives growing near a house when he heard of Gamini's remark and was quite impressed when they found an olive tree actually at the Senewiratnes' house in Nittambuwe.

23. Recognition of the road to the house of the previous family

Sarath Athurapana
Ven. Wimalawansa
R. A. A. Perera, teacher at
Sri Lanka Vidyalaya
P. K. Nandawathie

In this item I am considering two separate occasions of Gamini's recognizing the area of the Senewiratne house. On the first, Gamini re-marked on the location of his

TABLE 3 (cont.)

Item	Informants	Verification	Comments
23. (cont.)			<p>previous house from a bus that had stopped near the lane leading from the highway to the house. On the second occasion he was in a car with his mother, the Ven. Wimalawansa, and R. A. A. Perera. The car was driven past the lane entrance. Gamini pointed it out as they went by. When they stopped the car, Gamini walked back to the lane entrance and up toward a house. None of the party had ever been there before. Gamini indicated the road ahead and said, according to R. A. A. Perera in 1966: "My 'mummy' lives there." In 1970 R. A. A. Perera remembered Gamini as saying: "This is the way to my house." And the Ven. Wimalawansa (in 1966) remembered Gamini as pointing to a house and saying: "That is my house." Possibly he made all these remarks at about the same time. Gamini's mother said that he went up to the gate of the house and said: "'Daddy' is not there." It was the first time he had used the word <i>daddy</i>, which the Jayasenas did not use in their family. The group did not go into the house on this occasion but returned to Nugegoda.</p>
24. Recognition of the road to the house of "Charlie Uncle"	R. A. A. Perera		<p>Gamini, walking up the lane toward the Senewiratne house, turned left about halfway up,</p>

advanced toward a farm, and then returned, saying: "Charlie Uncle is not there." He had in fact gone in the direction of "Charlie Uncle's" house, which was at the end of this lane to the left. How Gamini could have known or surmised that "Charlie Uncle" was absent after going only part way to the house is unclear. Possibly he went far enough to notice that "Charlie Uncle's" car was not at the house.

25. Recognition of a
photograph of Palitha

P. K. Nandawathie
G. Jayasena

When Gamini was shown the photograph of Palitha he said: "Mage baba" (English: "My baby"). Gamini in his family was called "baby" at that time, and his comment about the photograph was interpreted as meaning he thought the photograph was of himself. Gamini (at this age) made the same remark when shown photographs of himself.

26. Recognition of Vinnis
Senewiratne, Palitha's mother

Ven. Wimalawansa
Vinnis Senewiratne

The Senewiratnes and their neighbors knew that Gamini and his family were coming to visit on this particular day, and a large crowd had assembled. When the Ven. Wimalawansa told Gamini to give the gift of sweets he had brought to his "mummy," Gamini went to Vinnis Senewiratne and put (or threw) them at her feet. However, her identity would have been revealed by the eager glances of the bystanders watching the boy responding to the Ven. Wimalawansa's remark.

TABLE 3 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
27. Recognition of Nimal and Ranjith, Palitha's brothers	Vinnis Senewiratne		Palitha's mother asked Gamini to point out his (previous) brothers. Gamini indicated Nimal and Ranjith, two boys (who were in fact Palitha's brothers) standing in the group. He did not call them by name. As with the recognition of Palitha's mother, Gamini may well have been guided by the glances of bystanders in response to such a direct instruction.
28. The roof of the Senewiratne house was formerly not "shiny."	Lionel Senewiratne Vinnis Senewiratne	Lionel Senewiratne Vinnis Senewiratne	During the lifetime of Palitha the Senewiratne house had a roof covered with thatch. After his death the roof was changed to one of corrugated iron, which Gamini noticed as being different. Francis Story interviewed Palitha's parents together, without noting who was the first informant for this item. Both were present and contributing to the information given.
29. Recognition of well where Palitha had bathed himself and also his toy elephant	R. A. A. Perera P. K. Nandawathie Sarath Athurapana	Lionel Senewiratne Vinnis Senewiratne	This well was at the Senewiratne house in Nittambuwe. Palitha had once fallen into a different well at Pasyala. (See item 12.) His mother denied that he had fallen into a well at Nittambuwe. According to two informants, Sarath Athurapana and J. E. Abeyasinghe, Gamini said he had fallen into this particular well at the Senewiratne home. I think they probably misheard or got the state-

ment mixed with his earlier reference to falling in a well. It is possible that Palitha had fallen into the well at the Nittambuwe house without his mother knowing or remembering that he had done so, but this seems unlikely.

P. K. Nandawathie said that Gamini walked to the well across an area where weeds were growing and that Vinnis Senewiratne told her a path had been there during Palitha's lifetime, but it had since been abandoned. I did not verify this independently. The body of water referred to here was variously described—in translation—as a pond, well, and stream. It seemed to me, when I saw it, to be a small pond or large well, but not a stream. Gamini's mother said he used the word *pokuna*, which means "pond," but which may sometimes be used to refer to a well.

30. Nimal had once been bitten by a dog.

Nimal Senewiratne
J. E. Abeyasinghe

Nimal Senewiratne

Nimal Senewiratne showed us the scars of the dog bite.

J. E. Abeyasinghe recalled that Palitha had been exceedingly angry at the dog that had bitten Nimal and had wanted to kill the dog.

31. Recognition of paddy fields that belonged to Palitha's family

J. E. Abeyasinghe
Vinnis Senewiratne

On his first visit to the Senewiratnes, Gamini pointed to the paddy fields near the house and said, according to Vinnis Senewiratne: "Those paddy fields are ours." J. E. Abeyasinghe

TABLE 3 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
31. (cont.)			<p>remembered Gamini saying: "All these paddy fields belong to me." This latter remark is not so boastful as it may seem. Small children often do not distinguish family property from what would be more narrowly considered their own belongings. (For other remarks of a possessive nature made by subjects with regard to the property of the previous family, see the cases of Jagdish Chandra and Sunil Dutt Saxena in the first volume of this series.) Since the paddy fields were near the house, there was nothing remarkable about connecting them with the Senewiratnes. The item has importance because of its demonstration of Gamini's identification with the Senewiratnes and their property.</p>
32. Recognition of a cow that had (supposedly) gored Palitha	Sarath Athurapana P. K. Nandawathie		<p>Gamini indicated a cow during one of his early visits to Nittambuwe. He said it was the one that had gored him. Whether this particular cow had gored Palitha was not verified. Indeed, I am not certain that <i>any</i> cow had gored Palitha. Sarath Athurapana said the cow Gamini pointed to was on the Senewiratnes' land, but he did not ascertain that it belonged to them.</p>

33. Recognition of olive tree at the Senewiratne house

Vinnis Senewiratne

From inside the house, Gamini said: "There used to be an olive tree." When asked to point it out, he went out of the house and found it (at the back) without anyone showing him the way. Gamini said he (Palitha) had climbed the olive tree, which Palitha had in fact done.

34. He had planted rubber trees.

P. K. Nandawathie
Sarath Athurapana
P. Jayasena, neighbor of the Senewiratnes

Vinnis Senewiratne

35. He had brought rubber plant seeds from school.

P. K. Nandawathie

P. K. Nandawathie

This item was not independently verified. Palitha's mother verified it to Gamini's mother.

36. Recognition of a guava tree Palitha had planted

P. K. Nandawathie
Vinnis Senewiratne
Sarath Athurapana
P. Jayasena

37. Recognition of another photograph of Palitha

Vinnis Senewiratne
Lionel Senewiratne

The Ven. Wimalawansa showed a photograph to Gamini, saying: "Do you know who this is?" Gamini said: "It is myself." The photograph showed Palitha and two other children. This recognition has much less value than that of item 25, because Gamini would have preserved, from seeing the first photograph, an impression of Palitha's appearance.

38. His toy elephant was in the schoolbag.

R. A. A. Perera

R. A. A. Perera

This item was not independently verified. R. A. A. Perera said that Palitha's mother had confirmed

TABLE 3 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
38. (cont.)			to him that Palitha kept the toy elephant (items 9 and 10) in his schoolbag (items 6, 7, and 8). Gamini made this remark at the Senewiratne house. Palitha's parents did not spontaneously mention that he had kept the toy elephant in his schoolbag, and I did not question them specifically about this.
39. He had gone to school from a house.	Vinnis Senewiratne	Vinnis Senewiratne	Gamini made this remark spontaneously. He was apparently referring to the boardinghouse in Veyangoda from which Palitha had attended St. Mary's College nearby.
40. Recognition of classroom in which Palitha had been taught	J. E. Abeyasinghe P. Jayasena		When taken to St. Mary's College, Gamini ran to a bench in a classroom and sat on it. Palitha's teacher said that that was the very bench Palitha had sat on in class.
41. Recognition of pew Palitha had sat on in church at the school	J. E. Abeyasinghe		I was unable to obtain additional confirmation of the recognitions of this and the preceding item. Of the two teachers of Palitha whom I interviewed at St. Mary's College, one had not been at the school when Gamini visited and the other was not a witness of these recognitions.
42. Recognition of boarding-house where Palitha had stayed when attending St. Mary's College	Ven. Wimalawansa Vinnis Senewiratne		When taken near the area of the house, Gamini found his way there unaided. As he approached it he ran. The door was closed and he ran

around the house. There was no one at home. He said: "Sister is not there," thus giving a clear indication of whom he expected to find. In fact, the residents of the house were away at a wedding party. Since the car stopped not far from the house, there is nothing remarkable about Gamini's recognition of the house by itself. The witnesses gave somewhat different statements about the distance between the place where the car stopped and the house. But Gamini's eagerness to enter an absolutely strange house is noteworthy.

43. There used to be an olive tree at the boardinghouse.

W. A. Alice Nona
Sunanda Amarasinghe, W. A.
Alice Nona's daughter

W. A. Alice Nona

This olive tree had been cut down after Palitha's death.

44. Recognition of Sunanda Amarasinghe, Palitha's "sister"

Sunanda Amarasinghe
W. A. Alice Nona

In May 1966, W. A. Alice Nona, talking with F. Story, denied (or did not recall) that Gamini had recognized her daughter Sunanda as "sister," or in any other way, although her daughter said he had done so. Gamini addressed her as "akka," the Sinhalese word for older sister. Sunanda

Amarasinghe said that she thought her mother had not heard Gamini recognize her thus. In July 1966, W. A. Alice Nona told me that Gamini *had* recognized Sunanda in this way. Possibly her memory had been stimulated (or corrupted) by an interim conversation with her daughter.

TABLE 3 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
45. Recognition of boutique where Palitha had bought sweets	W. H. Siridasa, owner of boutique near boardinghouse in Veyangoda		Gamini at first walked past the boutique, then stopped, looked around, and came back. The boutique had been rebuilt since Palitha's death. This may be considered as evidence that Gamini was not being guided to the boutique. On the other hand, it was somewhat isolated, and if one were looking for a sweets boutique one could hardly miss it.
46. Recognition of sweets preferred by Palitha	W. H. Siridasa		Vinnis Senewiratne said that Gamini recognized the boutique on the way to the boardinghouse, apparently from the automobile. In that case his recognition of it when walking would be unremarkable, since presumably he was told in the car whether he was correct. However, Palitha's mother said she had not known that Palitha frequented this boutique.
47. At Horagolla there was an elephant.	P. K. Nandawathie	Vinnis Senewiratne	When Gamini came to the sweets shop, he pointed out the favorite sweet of Palitha, <i>sinibola</i> . At the time I visited this boutique there were five different kinds of sweets, as well as a variety of chocolate bars, on display.
			The estate of the Bandaranaike family is at Horagolla. Part of the

estate has been developed as a public shrine, called a *Samadhi*, in honor of the late S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, prime minister of Sri Lanka, who was assassinated in 1959. Palitha went to Horagolla rather often and would certainly have heard of the elephants and monkeys that were kept there. (See next two items.) Gamini made these remarks and recognitions when he was taken to Horagolla (which is near Nittambuwe) during one of his visits to the Senewiratnes.

48. Recognition of hut at Horagolla where a baby elephant lived

Vinnis Senewiratne

The elephant was not at the hut at the time of Gamini's visit to Horagolla. At Horagolla there had been a baby and an adult elephant.

49. At Horagolla there were monkeys tied to a tree.

P. K. Nandawathie

Vinnis Senewiratne
P. Neris, shopkeeper of Horagolla

Monkeys were also kept at Horagolla. I did not learn whether they were tied to a tree or kept otherwise, perhaps in cages.

sets of parents he had in mind. Thus, he referred to the previous parents as "daddy" and "mummy." He referred to his own father and mother respectively as "tatha" and "amma." Palitha had not called his parents "daddy" and "mummy," but had also used the Sinhalese terms. Gamini's mother did not think he could ever have heard the word *daddy* before he used it himself. This may be questioned, but there is no reason to doubt that that word, as well as the word *mummy*, was not current in Gamini's family. These terms would almost certainly have been familiar to Palitha, even though not used by him, since he had attended a Christian school in Veyangoda where there was much English spoken. I conjecture that perhaps Gamini adopted these expressions as a means of distinguishing the two sets of parents in his own mind. According to Roversi Perera, Gamini also made a somewhat unflattering distinction between his "real mother," that is, the previous mother, and his (present) mother, P. K. Nandawathie. R. A. A. Perera, who was probably a secondhand informant for this, said that Gamini used to ask his younger sister: "Have you another 'mummy,' like me?" The Ven. Wimalawansa said Gamini referred to his mother as "our mother," but to the previous mother as "my mother." Similarly, Gamini, according to his father, referred to the previous house as "my house," but to that of his family as "our house."

Gamini showed strong emotion, at least in the beginning, when he talked about the previous life. After he first spotted the area where Palitha had lived, he cried more or less continuously for about ten days. He kept saying that he wanted to go to his (previous) mother's house. As mentioned earlier, his mother eventually took him to her relative, the Ven. Wimalawansa, for advice about how to handle him. At this time Gamini had also been asking for the schoolbag that he said he had. The Ven. Wimalawansa advised his parents to buy him a schoolbag, and this was done. But Gamini said he did not want that one, but the one he had had before.

Despite the intensity of some of his memories of the previous life and the strength of the accompanying emotions, Gamini did not remember Palitha's name (at least when Gamini was a small child) and never asked to be called by any name other than Gamini. As I have already mentioned, few Sinhalese subjects remember the names of the previous personalities they talk about, but they nevertheless seem to show as much identification with the related previous personalities as do subjects in other cultures.

Gamini's Attitudes toward Members of Palitha's Family. Gamini's attitudes toward the different members of Palitha's family corresponded, according to the informants, quite closely with those Palitha had shown toward these same persons. Palitha was very close to his mother and much more attached to her than to his father. His father admitted that Palitha rarely spoke to him although they did engage in some planting activities together. Palitha and Nimal quarreled a great deal—in the opinion of their mother, more so than other brothers of their age. Before Gamini was taken to meet the Senewiratnes

he talked of his "mummy" at length and of his "sister" at the boardinghouse, but he never mentioned a father. He seems first to have used the word *daddy* when he and his family were approaching the Senewiratne house at Nittambuwe. At that moment, going to the gate, he said: "'Daddy' is not there." (See item 23, Table 3.)⁶ Whenever he was given sweets he would go out of the house with them and say he was going to give them to his mother of the previous life. He also referred to Nimal, mentioning that Nimal had bitten him and also that Nimal had been gored by a cow.

When Gamini was taken to the Senewiratnes, he showed attitudes toward them which would have been characteristic of Palitha. At the time of his first visit to them he said he wanted to take "his mother" a present. (There was no mention of a proposal to take gifts to other members of the family.) Upon arriving at the house, he greeted Palitha's mother affectionately and was happy to be with her. Toward Palitha's father, on the contrary, he showed antagonism. He cried when Palitha's father tried to take his hand and resented his efforts to come near him. He did not reply when Palitha's father spoke to him. Gamini also at first was aloof with Nimal and would not talk with him. He said he was still angry at Nimal for having bitten him. (Gamini, his father observed, had a tendency to hold grudges.) Palitha's mother said (in 1968) that according to her observations, Gamini was playing in a friendly way with Nimal at recent meetings. (Gamini was then still visiting the Senewiratnes about twice a year.)

According to his father, Gamini, between the ages of two and three, was "always talking of his previous home." When he was angry he said that he wanted to go there. His eagerness to visit the other family gave rise to some anxiety that he might go away and stay with them. In 1968 Gamini (at age six) still wished to visit them but showed less pressure to do so and talked less about the previous life. Some fading of memories seemed to be setting in, as is usual at the age he had then reached. He had just begun school that year and was enjoying it.

As to what Gamini preferred about the previous home compared with his own, the answer seems to be at least partly the greater wealth, exemplified by the land, automobile, and electricity which that family had and his family lacked. In this comparison I am including the property and possessions of "Charlie Uncle," whose land (of which Palitha no doubt had the free run) adjoined that of Palitha's parents; but even without "Charlie Uncle's" estate, Palitha's parents were better off economically than Gamini's during the lifetime of Lionel Senewiratne.

Gamini seems also to have longed for his "mummy." I am sure that Vinnis Senewiratne loved Palitha, and equally certain that P. K. Nandawathie loved Gamini. Furthermore, although Palitha and his father had strained relations,

⁶ For another example of a subject's selective forgetting of someone close to the previous personality, but with whom the previous personality was unhappy, see the case of Ratana Wongsombat (in the fourth volume of this series). We cannot be confident in some of these instances that the person in question is actually forgotten; he may be remembered but simply not mentioned.

Gamini's father loved him. On summing up the accounts of affection, therefore, one can find no reason for Gamini to select the life of Palitha as one where he would be more appreciated.

Other Behavior of Gamini Related to the Previous Life. Under this heading I shall first mention Gamini's conduct with regard to religion. He showed a definite resistance toward Buddhist habits of religious practice and an inclination toward Christian ones. First, in worshiping, he kneeled with his trunk upright in the Christian posture for praying instead of allowing his buttocks to rest on his heels as Buddhists do in much of their worship. Second, observers noticed that Gamini was reluctant to prostrate himself before monks as Buddhists do when they visit a monk and later when they take leave of him. (Buddhists hold their monks in great reverence as persons who have taken vows to follow the Buddha's teachings and who are devoting a major part of their endeavor to the practices he advised.) Since Gamini's mother's cousin, the Ven. Wimalawansa, was close to the family, many opportunities occurred for Gamini to show appropriate deference to him. He said that Gamini sometimes worshiped him (that is, prostrated himself before him) and sometimes did not. Gamini's mother also noticed that when they visited her cousin, Gamini sat on a chair of ordinary height, an act Buddhists consider irreverent and even rude. (It is customary for Buddhist laymen in the presence of a Buddhist monk to sit on the floor or on very low chairs made for such occasions, so as to be at a lower level than the monk.) Third, Gamini showed strong resistance to worshiping in the Buddhist temples. His father said: "In the temple you cannot get him to worship." And his mother said: "He never worships there [in the Buddhist temples], although I take him." Fourth, on one occasion Gamini found a wooden cross on the ground, brought it in, and asked his mother to put it on the wall. This occurred before the Jayasenas knew that the previous family was Christian.

In 1968 Gamini's mother said that he was no longer backward in worship at the Buddhist temples; his resistance to Buddhism thus had lessened by the age of six.

It is appropriate to describe Gamini's food habits next, because they showed certain peculiarities which probably to some extent were related to his attitudes toward Buddhism and Christianity. But first I shall mention that Palitha, at the age of five, and contrary to the practice of his family (who were meat eaters), gave up eating meat (that is, beef and mutton) and eggs, but continued to eat fish and also fowl curry, which he liked. W. A. Alice Nona said that Palitha ate meat at her boardinghouse, but his mother recalled that she (W. A. Alice Nona) had complained to her about Palitha's not eating meat. A suspicion is left that Palitha only conformed to W. A. Alice Nona's wishes to appease her, and continued not to eat meat in his own home, where he was allowed to omit it. On one occasion when Palitha's mother asked him to eat meat, he did so and vomited afterward. (His brother Nimal also had an aversion to meat other than mutton.)

Turning now to Gamini, it is noteworthy that his parents observed that although he also disliked meat, he relished fowl curry. Gamini's family are also meat eaters.⁷ In 1968 Gamini's aversion to meat was continuing. Gamini's mother also remarked that when she was pregnant with Gamini (but not with her other three children) she experienced a marked distaste for meat.⁸

Gamini showed some other interests which Palitha had expressed. Both children were fond of elephants. Palitha had a toy elephant which he bathed in the well at the house.⁹ Gamini talked about the toy elephant he said he had and in other respects showed an interest in elephants.

Several items in Table 3 refer to trees that Palitha planted himself or climbed. He had a considerable interest in planting and a few days before his death had planted some chili seeds. Gamini's parents had observed that he liked to plant vegetables.

Gamini had a habit of tucking his shirt into his pants, as do some schoolboys, instead of leaving it outside. Other children in his class at school (at age six in 1968) did not do this. This habit corresponded to the dress habits of some of the schoolboys at St. Mary's College, which Palitha had attended. Some of them tucked their shirts into their pants, although others did not. Palitha's mother, Vinnis Senewiratne, told me that Palitha always wore his shirt tucked into his pants.

Gamini and Palitha also showed some similarity in their levels of general activity. P. K. Nandawathie said that Gamini was more active than her other children and Palitha's parents considered him to have been an unusually active boy.

In Table 4 I have listed in summary form the correspondences noted between the behavior of Gamini and related behavior or experiences of Palitha. None of these traits is specific for either child. Most of those observed in Gamini, however, impressed his parents as being unusual with regard to expectations for the behavior of a child of their family. (Gamini was the oldest child, and so at first there was not as much basis for comparison with other siblings as in families in which the subject is born after several older siblings with whom his development and behavior can be compared. But by 1970 he had three younger siblings.) Despite the lack of specificity of the traits for which the two boys showed similarities, I think it will be agreed that

⁷ Christians eat meat without compunction. The relationship between meat eating and Buddhism is complex. Some Buddhists hold that the Buddha's teaching against killing animals precludes the eating of any animal that was alive and had to be killed to be eaten. They are thus strict vegetarians and even avoid eggs which contain the embryo or *Anlage* of a living animal. Other Buddhists point to the fact that the Buddha did not proscribe meat eating as such and that the harm to spiritual development comes from killing animals, not from eating meat. Therefore, if someone else does the killing, a Buddhist of this inclination may eat the meat if he is certain that the animal providing it was not slaughtered especially for him; the pious Buddhist should thus not be responsible for the killing of the animal.

⁸ For other examples of altered appetites during pregnancy apparently related to the habits of the previous personality and the subject, see the cases of Sujith Lakmal Jayaratne (this volume) and Bongkuch Promsin (in the fourth volume of this series).

⁹ Elephants need to be bathed often and are kept near large streams, rivers, or other abundant sources of water so that they can be bathed easily. It would be part of a child's play to carry out the procedure of bathing a toy elephant.

TABLE 4. *Correspondences in Behavior between Gamini and Palitha*

<i>Gamini</i>	<i>Palitha</i>
1. Inclination to worship in the Christian manner and resistance to Buddhism	Brought up a Christian; attended a Christian school
2. Aversion to meat up to the age of about seven and a half	Gave up eating meat at age five although living in a meat-eating family
3. Fond of fowl curry	Continued eating fowl curry after he gave up eating other meat
4. Showed antagonism toward Palitha's father and brother Nimal; showed affection toward Palitha's mother	Was close to his mother, was unfriendly with his father, and quarreled much with his brother
5. Fond of elephants	Had a toy elephant
6. Fond of planting seeds	Planted tree and vegetable seeds
7. Tucked shirt into trousers	Tucked shirt into trousers
8. Considered by his mother to be more active than her other children	Considered by his parents an unusually active boy

Gamini's behavior corresponded in a number of important respects to that of Palitha. I learned of no behavioral trait in which Gamini's behavior seemed discordant with what Palitha showed or might have been expected to show.

Evidence of Extrasensory Perception on the Part of Gamini

Gamini showed some evidence of extrasensory perception with the previous family. On one occasion he said the mother of the previous life would come the next day, and Vinnis Senewiratne did come to visit as he had predicted. Gamini also showed a remarkable interest in the letters received by the Jayasenas from the Senewiratnes, and before he could read he seemed to know when a letter from them had arrived. However, he might have recognized a characteristic of the handwriting on the letters even when he could not actually read the words. His mother said that he had not shown any other evidence of extrasensory perception apart from the memories of the previous life.

The Attitudes of the Families Concerned in the Case

The attitudes of both families concerned in this case were inevitably influenced by the fact that the subject and his family were Buddhists while the previous personality and his family were Christians. (Palitha's mother, Vinnis Senewiratne, was raised as a Christian but became a Buddhist later in life. Palitha's father and uncle ["Charlie Uncle"] were Christians, and Palitha was raised a Christian and attended a Christian school, St. Mary's College in Veyangoda.)

It is easier to conjecture an influence on the two families from this religious difference than to assess the extent to which it may have biased the testimony. I think it fair to say that orthodox Christians can never easily admit the possibility of reincarnation as an explanation for a case with which they come in contact. Conflicts between belief and evidence almost inevitably arise. And I think this is particularly true in Sri Lanka, where for centuries the colonial rulers—Portuguese, Dutch, and English—advanced Christians in education, power, and wealth at the expense of the Buddhists and members of other religions of the island. In my experience, attitudes against reincarnation seem somewhat more hardened among Christians of Sri Lanka than among those living elsewhere. I have heard of a number of cases in Sri Lanka of the reincarnation type with the subject a Christian, but it has been exceedingly difficult to trace these, and so far I have succeeded in actually investigating only one such case. It seems likely that the others are suppressed, but rumors of their existence emerge and reach me through persons helping me in Sri Lanka.

In any event, however, the Senewiratnes cooperated fully in the investigation of this case, and any opposition they may have felt on religious grounds did not appear on the surface. The number of items stated by Gamini that were verified by them as correct testifies to their having smothered little or nothing of such evidence as they could furnish. Perhaps they belonged to the tiny group of persons for whom evidence is more important than doctrine. Or possibly the prospect of some assurance concerning the survival after death of their son influenced them to collaborate in the investigation. They might thus have acted in a sense like grieving relatives of a deceased person who look for a message from that person through a medium. If this motive entered into their helpful attitude it might have slanted their testimony in the other direction, but I did not find anything to suggest this. They seemed quite capable of not confirming the accuracy of a statement attributed to Gamini, such as that Palitha had been driven to school in a car. And they made no attempt to exaggerate or amplify the various recognitions Gamini made in Nittambuwe or to conceal that he had failed in some of these.

Palitha's father, mother, and uncle openly stated their convictions that reincarnation was the best interpretation of the case. Vinnis Senewiratne said that for her the reincarnation of her son seemed "the only explanation" of the case. Francis Story recorded the following conversation with Charles E. Senewiratne ("Charlie Uncle"):

Q: What do you think of this rebirth case?

A: I believe Gamini is Palitha.

Q: You are a Christian, are you not?

A: Yes, our family is Christian. But I still believe this child is Palitha reborn.

Ariyawanse Weerakody quoted Lionel Senewiratne, Palitha's father, as telling him: "As Christians we are not supposed to believe this nonsense, but he [Gamini] has recognized all of us and I think he is definitely our son reborn."

Ariyawanse Weerakody also said (in 1973) that two teachers at St. Mary's College, one of whom had earlier been one of our informants there, had told him that although they were convinced of the genuineness of the case, they were afraid to say so openly for fear of being censured by a priest who had said, according to one of them, that "it [the case] was the work of the devil."

For the Jayasenas the difficulty might have been on the other side, that of acknowledging that they had a child who claimed to have been a Christian in his previous life. (Gamini did not make this claim overtly; it came out in his behavior and in the later identification of the previous personality whose life corresponded with his statements.) For earnest Buddhists, such as the Jayasenas were, a child of this type in their family implies nothing creditable. But neither is it shameful in any way. Buddhists consider that a particular child is born into one family rather than another because both the child and his parents have brought about this new relationship by their actions in previous lives. It is, they may say, really an old relationship. The parents may not themselves have any memories of having been with the child before—most do not—but they nevertheless believe that some previous connection has brought about a new one. This attitude differs markedly from that of most Western parents, who regard any particular child they have in their family as simply the outcome of a lottery over which they have not had and could not have any influence whatever apart from measures they might take to maintain or improve the health of the mother during her pregnancy.

Gamini's parents were prepared by their knowledge of Buddhism and of the case of Gnanatilleka (I. Stevenson. 1974. *Twenty cases*), which received widespread newspaper publicity in Sri Lanka, to accept what he was saying about a previous life as representing real memories of one. Apart from this bias toward acceptance of the case at face value, I could find no evidence that religious interests had influenced their attitude toward the case or reporting of its details. Gamini's parents seem to have adopted a rather neutral stance. Certainly they never sought any publicity for the case. To the best of my knowledge no account of it has appeared in a newspaper. (A short account of the case of Gamini's brother, Sarath Devapriya, which I shall mention below, was published in a newspaper.)

Comments on the Evidence of Paranormal Processes in the Case

The denial by the two families concerned in the case that they had any acquaintance with each other before its development is made more credible, if it needs to be, by the fact that they belonged to different religions and lived in different regions of Sri Lanka. Such religious separation would provide a barrier, although by no means an impervious one, to contact between the two families. I feel satisfied myself with the testimony of the members of the two families that they had no prior contact with each other, and I therefore believe Gamini had no normal means of gaining access to the knowledge he had of the life of Palitha Senewiratne. Yet I think it undeniable that he

did have such knowledge and that the information shown by Gamini related to Palitha so exactly that there can be no reasonable question concerning the fit of the data to Palitha and to no other child. Furthermore, Gamini's behavior (summarized in Table 4) corresponded closely in several respects to behavior actually shown by Palitha or to be expected of him.

Gamini's Later Development

When I saw Gamini in 1970, he was almost exactly eight years old. Already by 1968 he had begun to speak less about the previous life, and his memories had evidently become further attenuated by 1970. I asked him a few questions and found that he could no longer give the name of Palitha's brother, Nimal, although Nimal had figured rather prominently in his memories when younger. On the other hand, M. S. Fernando, principal of Gamini's school, told me that he had talked with Gamini about eight months earlier concerning the previous life, and Gamini had mentioned various details which suggested little fading of memories at that time.

Gamini had not lost interest in the Senewiratnes. However, visits between the two families had become less frequent than they had been earlier, and none had been exchanged for a year, that is, since the autumn of 1969. At that time the Senewiratnes had visited the Jayasenas at Dehiwala, where they had moved from Nugegoda in 1968.

Gamini was attending school at Mahanama College in Colombo and was in the third class. He had recently been ranked first in his class. M. S. Fernando said, however, that his performance at school was somewhat cyclical and he did not expect Gamini to receive such a high ranking in his class at the next evaluation. He said that Gamini seemed to be distracted and to daydream in class.

Gamini had begun to eat meat in the summer of 1970, thus falling in line with the rest of the family. He still showed the habit of tucking his shirt into his short pants when he went out of the house; he wore his shirt outside his pants when he was at home. The continuation of this habit was, however, no longer remarkable, since by this time Gamini was attending a school where the boys wore their shirts tucked into their pants.

Gamini was still a tepid Buddhist. His mother said that he worshiped normally, meaning like other Buddhist boys of his age, at the temple. But the Ven. Wimalawansa told me (also in 1970) that when he had last seen Gamini (seven months earlier) it had been necessary to "force" him to worship the Ven. Wimalawansa in the manner usual for Buddhists. Gamini's mother also said that he liked to celebrate Christmas, talked about Santa Claus, and expected to receive gifts at that time. All this would be most unusual for a Buddhist child in Sri Lanka.

In 1970 the Jayasenas had four children altogether, three boys and one girl. One of the other boys, Sarath Devapriya (born May 31, 1964), remembered some details of a previous life. But he had not given sufficiently specific

information to permit tracing anyone corresponding to his statements. Nor, I may add, did Gamini. The previous family he talked about was discovered quite by accident when a bus Gamini was traveling on stopped near the Senewiratnes' house and he recognized the area as familiar to him from the previous life. If this had not happened, Gamini might later have given more identifying details that would have led eventually to the Senewiratnes, but we cannot be certain of this, especially when we have found in Sri Lanka such a large number of cases in which we have not been able to find a person corresponding to the subject's statements.

In March 1973 I visited Gamini and his family again in their home in Dehiwala. On this occasion Gamini's father participated in our review of his further development. Gamini was then a little less than eleven and a half years old and in the sixth class at school. The teachers did not rank the students, but his parents believed Gamini's performance of only borderline quality. (G. Jayasena wrote me a letter dated July 12, 1973, in which he thanked me for some copies of photographs I had sent; he mentioned that Gamini was doing poorly at school then.)

Gamini's father said that he rarely spoke any longer about the previous life and seemed to do so only when provoked. Then he would sometimes threaten to go to Nittambuwe, remarking testily that he would travel directly there from school instead of returning home. He did not make this threat every time he became angry. Gamini's mother said that when she beat him, which I do not think happened often, he would still compare her unfavorably with the "other mother."

Gamini's parents expressed considerable concern about cycles of unusual behavior and physical symptoms that Gamini showed every autumn. From about September to December he would become stubborn and socially withdrawn; he would eat less, lose weight, and complain of headaches; he did poorly at school. As he seemed at such times "lost in thought," his parents believed he was thinking more about the previous life, even though he said little or nothing about it. Gamini's mother said that the symptoms of this cycle that occurred during the period from September 1972 to January 1973 had been milder than in previous years. Apart from these strange phases of ill health and apparent depression, Gamini had good health.

Gamini had given no further evidence—it had been little enough before—of any capacity for extrasensory perception.

Concerning his former unusual behavior apparently related to the previous life, Gamini's parents said that his observances of Buddhist practices had become quite normal. He had continued to eat meat with the rest of the family, and no trace of his former aversion to it remained. He still showed an interest in gardening, more so than his younger brother Sarath Devapriya. This trait could perhaps be considered the last visible evidence of unusual behavior related to the previous life—except for his continuing attachment to the Senewiratne family.

Lionel Senewiratne died in 1971 or possibly 1970. Gamini himself had

first noticed this news in a Sinhalese newspaper. He showed no strong emotion, but his father said he appeared a little sad.

Gamini and the remaining Senewiratnes still exchanged visits. Palitha's mother came to Dehiwala in December 1971. Then Gamini went to visit her in Nittambuwe in July 1972. If no visit from either family would occur for about six months, Gamini would try to initiate one. He seemed happy to be in Nittambuwe and angry when brought away.

I talked with Gamini about the persistence of his memories of the previous life. He said he remembered some details and had forgotten others. He sometimes thought about the previous life spontaneously but could not give an example of a stimulus for doing so.

Since Ariyawanse Weerakody had had the unusual experience of teaching both Palitha Senewiratne and Gamini, I naturally asked him if he had observed any similarities between the boys. But he said candidly that although he had known Palitha rather well, he had taught him in the lower classes only and had seen little of him when he was older. And he had only taught Gamini for the period beginning in September 1972. He had not noticed any particular similarity between the two boys. He sometimes called Gamini "Palitha" in the class and noted that Gamini responded to this name. This appeared a little strange, since Gamini had not seemed earlier to remember the name Palitha. But perhaps from his numerous meetings with the Senewiratnes the name had become activated in his mind to the point where it could excite a response.

As already mentioned, Godwin Samararatne met Gamini's mother (but not Gamini himself) in December 1974. He learned that Gamini had been promoted to the eighth class, but that he had been ranked in the bottom fifth of a class of forty-eight children. For reasons that remain obscure, Gamini's attendance at school had been poor. His periodical phases of ill health and depression had decreased.

Nimal Senewiratne, Palitha's brother, was at this time the member of his family mainly maintaining contact with Gamini, and he had been visiting Gamini about every three months. Gamini had visited Nittambuwe again in December 1973, but seemed not to feel quite so welcome as before and said on leaving that he would not return. No one had asked him to clarify this remark, a neglect which harmonized with the sensible policy of Gamini's parents of neither promoting nor discouraging his relationship with the Senewiratnes.

In March 1976, I visited Gamini and his family again in Dehiwala. (I also paid a short visit to Vinnis Senewiratne, who had remarried but was still living in Nittambuwe.) Gamini was then fourteen years old and in the ninth class of his school, still the Mahanama College. His performance at school continued to be poor and this was a matter of concern to his parents. His father reproached Gamini with lack of application to his studies, not with deficient ability. Gamini was still having autumnal spells of unusual behavior. His father emphasized disobedience and restlessness as symptoms of these in recent years. Gamini's parents had not sought medical consultation about these phases of unusual behavior. Gamini's health was otherwise good.

He had continued to exchange visits with the Senewiratnes. Thus Vinnis Senewiratne had visited Gamini in the spring of 1975, and again in October 1975. Her son Nimal had also visited Gamini in the first part of 1975. Gamini had gone to visit Mrs. Senewiratne at Nittambuwe in the early autumn of 1975. There had therefore been at least four meetings between Gamini and members of the Senewiratne family in the year between March 1975 and March 1976.

When Gamini had been younger his parents had not discouraged him from talking about the previous life. However, in 1974 Gamini's father had chastised him for returning late from school and Gamini had then again threatened to go to Nittambuwe. His father was afraid that he might go there and not return. So he then began to discourage Gamini from talking about the previous life, but did not proscribe social exchanges between Gamini and the Senewiratnes. He thought that Gamini was attracted to the more prosperous circumstances and greater freedom of the life in Nittambuwe as compared with what his family could offer him.

I did not query Gamini extensively about memories of the previous life, but from the few questions that I asked I could infer that he still remembered some details of the previous life and had forgotten others. It seemed likely, however, that what he then remembered derived not from "original" imaged memories, but from memories of what he had been told he had earlier remembered or from information normally acquired during his meetings with the Senewiratnes.

Comments on the Fading of Gamini's Memories. In 1973 and again in 1976 Gamini seemed in an intermediate state with regard to both the preservation of imaged memories and adjustment to his own family. I think it likely that the sustained, if infrequent, meetings with the Senewiratnes had led in his case to a longer preservation of the memories than occurs in most of the subjects of these cases. The visits to and from the other family almost certainly also tended to promote Gamini's discontent with his family and situation. As new siblings came one after the other, the Jayasenas' small house became increasingly crowded. And it was itself somewhat squashed into a suburban area filled with other houses close by. In contrast, the larger house of the Senewiratnes in Nittambuwe lay on spacious grounds. The even more ample house of "Charlie Uncle" stood on an equally large or larger terrain just adjoining Palitha's home. The contrast between the two situations would impress anyone, and particularly a young boy, so that one feels surprise at how well Gamini had adjusted rather than any reproach for his not adapting more rapidly to his family.

3. The Case of Disna Samarasinghe

Summary of the Case and Its Investigation

DISNA N. K. SAMARASINGHE was born in the village of Udubogawa, near Galagedera (about 32 kilometers from Kandy), on April 26, 1959. She was the second living child and older daughter in a family with four living children. Her parents were A. S. Samarasinghe, a merchant of Udubogawa, and his wife, Seelawathie Samarasinghe, a teacher in a nearby school at Minigamuwa.

Disna began to speak when she was about one and a half years old. When she was about three years old her mother was washing clothes one day when Disna suddenly said that she had washed clothes herself at her home in Wettewa. When Disna's mother asked her where Wettewa was, she correctly indicated the direction of Wettewa, which is a village about 5 kilometers from Udubogawa. In response to further questions from her mother, Disna said that at Wettewa she had cooked alone, eaten alone, and lived alone. Then over the next weeks and months she gave additional details of the life she claimed to have lived in Wettewa. She said that at the house where she lived there was also one "Mahattaya"¹ and "a woman." For the latter person, Disna used the Sinhalese word *amma*, which strictly means "mother." It turned out later that she was using the word in a contemptuous fashion to refer to "that mother" of her (previous) son's children, a person she did not approve of. The person referred to by Disna as Mahattaya was later identified as R. M. Gardias, whose mother, Tilakacharige Babanona, died at the age of (approximately) seventy-two, on January 15, 1958, fifteen months before the birth of Disna. The deceased woman, who was generally known as Babanona, usually addressed R. M. Gardias as "loku puta," which means simply "older child," a common form of address among the Sinhalese between persons related in this way. When, however, Babanona spoke of her son to other people, she referred to him as Mahattaya, and other persons also regularly called him by this name. He was in fact an overseer for workers on a rubber plantation and secretary of the local cooperative of the area.

To resume Disna's statements, she continued to tell her mother details of the life she claimed she had led at Wettewa. Especially when she saw her mother doing some household chore, such as cooking or washing, she would comment on having done it herself, perhaps better. And indeed Disna showed a remarkable precocity about some such household chores, a matter to which we will return later. She also talked about the children of "that woman," saying, for example: "That woman has some children who are so black I wouldn't like to carry them in my arms."

¹ *Mahattaya* is a term of respect often given to older men, especially if they hold some supervisory position.

Disna never expressed any desire to visit Wettewa; on the contrary, she said she did *not* wish to go there, alleging that Mahattaya had mistreated "her" in the previous life. According to Disna, Mahattaya had favored his wife over his mother. She said that he had given presents of cosmetics and perfumes to his wife, but had been restrictive and even cruel to "her" (his mother). Disna claimed that Mahattaya had kept a cane with which he sometimes beat "her" if "she" did not do what he asked.

Disna's reluctance to visit the family of the previous life stands in contrast to the behavior of many children in cases of this type who put mounting pressure on their parents to take them to the other family and sometimes threaten to run away or actually do so if they are not taken.² Eventually, however, curiosity in Disna's mother overcame Disna's disinclination to visit Wettewa. Disna finally agreed to go after being assured that her mother would not leave her there.

Disna and her mother, accompanied by three other persons, went on foot to Wettewa on April 23, 1964. Disna showed the way to a shortcut through paddy fields which cut about half a mile off the route following the main road. Disna's mother and other companions did not know where she was leading them except that they were going in the general direction of Wettewa. As they came out of the paddy fields by this path which Disna had selected, she pointed to a house and said: "That is the house." Disna did not just pick the first one they came to; they had already passed several other houses on the way. The group went toward the house and, as they approached, noticed a woman standing in the compound. Disna's mother asked Disna who that was, and she replied: "That's the mother." They then approached the house, and, as Disna was thirsty, they asked for some water. The woman invited the group into the house and they entered. Disna, it was noted, entered the house not by its main entrance but by a side entrance. This side entrance was not visible from the road, but Disna seemed thoroughly familiar with it. (It turned out to be the entrance to the house regularly used by Babanona since it gave access to the areas she used for washing; she rarely went out on the main road.) Inside the house the party introduced themselves to T. N. Alice, the woman who had invited them in. They learned that she was the wife of R. M. ("Mahattaya") Gardias. They told T. N. Alice why they had come, and she assumed rather quickly that Disna was having memories related to the life of her mother-in-law, Babanona. She sent for her husband, who shortly came, and the group then discussed Disna's statements and their verification. Disna

² For examples of subjects who showed strong desires to return to the previous family, see the cases of Prakash Varshnay, Parmod Sharma (I. Stevenson, 1974. *Twenty cases*), Bishen Chand Kapoor (in the first volume of this series), and Warnasiri Adikari (this volume). For examples of subjects who, on the contrary, showed indifference or positive reluctance with regard to visiting the previous family, see the cases of Lalitha Abeyawardena (this volume) and Suleyman Andary (third volume). I have found in every case I have studied that the attitude of the subject corresponded with what can be learned or reasonably conjectured about the happiness of the related previous personality in his family. The subject may, however, exhibit a mixed attitude on the question of visiting the previous family. A girl subject, for example, may want to see the previous children, but may have no interest in the previous husband or a positive repugnance for him. She is then naturally ambivalent about a visit to the previous town or village.

made various remarks about objects in the house, and these, together with the statements made by Disna which her mother narrated to the Gardias family, convinced them that Disna was in fact Babanona reborn.

Three days later, on April 26, Disna's parents, accompanied by P. K. Perera (a newspaper reporter), took her on another visit to Wettewa and then also to a nearby place called Medagoda, where Babanona had also lived. At Medagoda Disna made several recognitions about which I shall give details later.

After these initial meetings between the two families, various members of Babanona's family and friends visited Disna to hear her talk about the previous life or perhaps be recognized by her. In fact, Disna clearly recognized only two of these people, as described later.

Disna had spoken about having married "a lad from Walpollatene" (another place of the area). From this and some of her other remarks, a customer of her father's shop, D. M. William Kankanama, who had lived at Walpollatene, said that he had known a family there who corresponded to Disna's statements.

Disna's mother wrote out (not later than June 1964) a rather detailed report of Disna's main statements, of their first visit to Wettewa, and of other early meetings with members of Babanona's family. This written record accorded very well with the testimony given during later investigations.

P. K. Perera, who had accompanied Disna on her first visit to Medagoda, sent an account of the case to a Sinhalese daily newspaper, *Janatha*. After this, H. S. S. Nissanka, a schoolteacher and part-time journalist, learned about the case and went to the area, where he interviewed some of the persons concerned in the case. He then published a report of it in the *Ceylon Observer* of May 17, 1964. In this way the case came to the attention of Francis Story, who informed me about it and who himself began its investigation in the following year.

Francis Story started the study of the case in May 1965, when he visited the area of Galagedera and spent two full days gathering testimony. The investigation was then dropped until March 1968, when Francis Story and I together spent another two days working on the case. On this second occasion we interviewed again nearly all the witnesses previously interviewed in 1965 and additionally took testimony from a number of new ones such as Babanona's daughter, R. M. Nonnohamy, who lived near the town of Rambukkana, about 32 kilometers from Wettewa, and U. A. Bacho Hamy, a former neighbor of Babanona in the village of Medagoda.

In November 1970, I took up the investigation of the case once more and (again with Francis Story) returned to Udubogawa and Medagoda for the further checking of details. At that time I was able also to meet and interview D. M. William Kankanama, who was one of only two persons I could learn about who had had some acquaintance with both families concerned prior to the development of the case.

In March 1973, I returned to the area of the case mainly to see Disna again

and learn how she had developed in the meantime. But while I was at the house of Disna's family, I checked on some further details with her mother. I also met for the first time Disna's paternal grandmother and obtained her testimony on some points; and I had a second interview with D. M. William Kankanama, who lived not far away. Since I was in the vicinity of Medagoda, I stopped also for brief further interviews with R. M. Gardias and his wife, T. N. Alice.

In March 1976, I met Disna and her family once again in Udubogawa.

In addition to the information obtained in the interviews mentioned above, I have also had available a translation of the written record made by Disna's mother and some other information gathered by P. K. Perera and H. S. S. Nissanka, who had earlier studied the case.

Persons Interviewed during the Investigation

In Udubogawa the following persons were interviewed:

Disna Samarasinghe

Seelawathie Samarasinghe, Disna's mother

A. S. Samarasinghe, Disna's father

Kirthilatha Samarasinghe, A. S. Samarasinghe's younger sister

(interviewed by F. Story in 1965)

A. G. Hemawathie, A. S. Samarasinghe's cousin

(interviewed by F. Story in 1965)

Ukku Samarasinghe, Disna's paternal grandmother

(interviewed in 1973)

D. M. William Kankanama, friend of Babanona

(interviewed in 1970 and 1973)

A. S. Sumanadasa, friend of the Samarasinghes

(interviewed by F. Story in 1965)

P. K. Perera, newspaper reporter who had sent an account of the case to *Janatha*, a Sinhalese daily newspaper

(interviewed by F. Story in 1965)

In Wettewa the following person was interviewed:

Ven. Embanwelle Somasara Thera, head monk of the temple at Wettewa

In Medagoda the following persons were interviewed:

R. M. ("Mahattaya") Gardias, Babanona's older son

T. N. Alice, R. M. Gardias' wife

R. M. Romanis, Babanona's younger son

K. D. Nandawathie, R. M. Romanis' wife

R. M. Ranasinghe, R. M. Romanis' older son and Babanona's grandson

R. M. Wimalasinghe, R. M. Romanis' younger son and Babanona's grandson

U. A. Bacho Hamy, friend and neighbor of Babanona
 H. M. Senewiratne, headman and former shop salesman of the village
 (interviewed by F. Story in 1965)

In Rambukkana the following persons were interviewed:

R. M. Nonnohamy, Babanona's daughter and H. M. Tikira's wife
 G. Y. Simon, R. M. Nonnohamy's son and Babanona's grandson

Except as noted, I talked with all the above-mentioned persons in 1968. Francis Story had previously interviewed many of them in 1965. In addition, he also interviewed that year (as noted) several other informants whom I did not later meet. In 1970 we talked again with several of the informants.

In addition to the above interviews, Godwin Samararatne, who acted as an interpreter for most of my interviews and those of Francis Story, went alone to the area of the case (no fewer than six times between 1968 and 1975) in order to make inquiries about details concerning which I felt a need for more precise information.

In 1965 R. M. Gardias and his wife, T. N. Alice, were still living in Wettewa, where Francis Story interviewed them. By 1968 they had moved to Medagoda, where I talked with them in 1968, 1970, and 1973.

*Relevant Facts of Geography and Possibilities for Normal Means
 of Communication between the Two Families*

As already mentioned, Wettewa is a village about 5 kilometers from Udubogawa, where Disna and her family lived. The village of Medagoda, where both R. M. ("Mahattaya") Gardias and his brother, R. M. Romanis, lived (after 1968) is about 2 kilometers farther down the road from Udubogawa.³ Babanona was born and grew up in Medagoda and returned there in later adulthood before she moved to Wettewa to stay with her older son. This last change came about because her younger son, R. M. Romanis, with whom she had been living in Medagoda, moved to another village called Hurulluwewa, some considerable distance away. Babanona, then an elderly person rather set in her habits, did not wish to move so far away. So she lived by herself for two years in Medagoda. Then she became somewhat infirm and went to stay with her older son, R. M. ("Mahattaya") Gardias, in nearby Wettewa. She lived there with his family for six months before she died. The house occupied by Babanona in Medagoda figures in some of the statements and recognitions made by Disna.

Babanona's body was buried on a slope behind the house in which she lived alone in Medagoda, about halfway between this house and the house

³ For Western readers I will again mention that many Sinhalese people write and state their family names or initials first and give personal names afterward. Thus R. M. Gardias and R. M. Romanis are brothers with the same family name indicated by the initials *R. M.* Female names are also somewhat inconsistent by Western standards. A wife does not always take her husband's name after marriage. Thus the wife of R. M. Gardias is known as T. N. Alice and not as Alice Gardias, as she would be in the West.

in Wettewa (of R. M. Gardias) in which she died. This burial site, which is near an anthill, is not visible from the site of the house in Wettewa.

The villages of the two principal families concerned in this case lie rather close together, closer indeed than the average distance for such villages in Sinhalese cases. Considered from the point of view of travel and communication, however, they are considerably more separated than they may seem to Western readers from the actual distance between them. Neither of the families concerned in this case possessed an automobile, but buses ran along the main road between the villages. There would ordinarily be little intercourse between inhabitants of the different villages who were not related or friends.

Two other places concerned in the case are Walpollatene (about 2 kilometers from Medagoda), where Babanona lived for some years, and Rambukkana (32 kilometers from Medagoda), where Babanona's daughter married.

Francis Story and I questioned the principal informants in each family about the extent of their knowledge of the other family before the development of the case and the first meeting of the two families. The testimony of different witnesses was quite concordant as to the extent of the acquaintance between the families. They recognized each other on the road as they occasionally passed, but they did not know each other's names and had never had any social contact, much less been in each other's houses. The plausibility of the denials of prior acquaintance between the two families gains some additional strength from the fact that they came from different castes. Disna's family belonged to a higher caste not likely to socialize with members of the caste of Babanona's family.⁴ It seems, however, that distinctions of caste entered little or not at all into the absence of social relationships between the two families concerned in the case. In the first place, if the two families had no more than the "nodding acquaintance" which I think they had before the development of the case, then they probably would not even have known that they belonged to different castes. And, second, each of Disna's parents (in separate interviews in 1974) told Godwin Samararatne that caste distinctions were not observed rigidly in Udubogawa and did not account for the lack of substantial acquaintance between their family and Babanona's.

I did learn of two acquaintances shared by the two families. One of these, the Ven. Embanwelle Somasara, chief monk of the temple at Wettewa, had known Babanona well and had some acquaintance with the Samarasinghe family. However, according to Disna's mother, the Ven. Embanwelle Somasara had never been inside their house prior to Disna's recalling the previous life. Subsequently he went to visit them at their home twice in connection with

⁴ Buddhism does not recognize caste distinctions, this being one of the departures of the Buddha's teaching from the religious and social doctrines prevailing in his time and later in India. In fact, however, Sinhalese Buddhists have been influenced by a number of Hindu practices, including caste. Caste, therefore, has existed in Sri Lanka for centuries, and it still has considerable strength among certain Sinhalese Buddhists. For further information about caste in Sri Lanka, see R. F. Gombrich. 1971. *Precept and practice: Traditional Buddhism in the rural highlands of Ceylon*. New York and London: Oxford University Press; and B. Ryan. 1953. *Caste in modern Ceylon*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

the case, which interested him somewhat. Disna had also never been taken to the temple at Wettewa before the development of the case. It follows from these facts that the Ven. Embanwelle Somasara could not have been a channel for normal transmission of information about Babanona to Disna.

The other person who knew both Babanona and the Samarasinghes was D. M. William Kankanama. (The name Kankanama is not a family name but a title, meaning roughly "field foreman," that became attached to him.) In the years 1928–29 he had lived in Walpollatene, where, as I have explained, Babanona resided for a time. In Walpollatene they had been neighbors and close friends, and he kept in touch with her after they both moved away from there. In about 1935 he himself moved to the Wettewa-Udubogawa area and lived on the Trafford Hill [Tea] Estate, about half a kilometer from the Samarasinghes' shop in Udubogawa.

In later life also, D. M. William Kankanama continued to visit Babanona and her family. He visited her sons, R. M. Gardias and R. M. Romanis, in Medagoda and Wettewa, and he sometimes (perhaps once a month) met R. M. Gardias in Galagedera, a large district town of the area. D. M. William Kankanama had been a young man (of twenty-two, he said) and Babanona had also been young (eighteen, he said), fair, and pretty when he had known her in Walpollatene. It seemed to me that he had been fond of her when they were young and continued to feel a high regard for her later. He said quite frankly that when he went to Wettewa (before Babanona died), he did so primarily to visit Babanona and not R. M. Gardias, with whom she lived. She evidently felt warmly toward him also and complained to him, as a confidant, about her mistreatment by her son. He seemed rather well informed about Babanona's life and to some extent a repository of information about her.

The important question then was the extent of his contacts with Disna and her family before Disna began talking about the previous life. He said that he had patronized A. S. Samarasinghe's general store in Udubogawa ever since he had moved to the district. (The store had been in existence many years, having been owned previously by A. S. Samarasinghe's father.) He said that he had never talked to the Samarasinghes about Babanona and her son R. M. Gardias before the development of the case. He also denied ever having had any conversations with Disna. He had seen her in the shop from time to time and had merely said "Hello," as would any adult to a small child. Later, but only after Disna's first visit to Wettewa and to the house there of R. M. Gardias, he had discussed the case with the Samarasinghes and had verified the accuracy of some of Disna's references, for example, to places called Walpollatene, Medagoda, and Wettewa. Although an elderly man when he gave his testimony, I thought that D. M. William Kankanama's memory was adequately accurate, especially since the more important events he was recalling—that is, his contacts with Disna—had occurred only within a few years of my interview with him in 1970. Disna's parents confirmed his statements. They said he had been in their shop, but never in their house, and that he had never spoken in their presence about Babanona before Disna had begun expressing

her memories of the previous life. I have therefore concluded that he also was not an intermediary for normal transmission of information about Babanona to Disna. (He does, however, make the almost ideal "psychometric object" for those who believe that the subjects of these cases have extraordinary powers of extrasensory perception and gain all the information they show about the related previous personalities through its processes.)

Disna's mother was a schoolteacher; she resumed teaching within two months of Disna's birth, leaving the care of Disna to her mother-in-law. It occurred to me that perhaps Disna's grandmother would know Babanona's family better than Disna's parents, but Disna's father said that this was not the case and that his mother had no contact whatever with Babanona's family.

Without distrusting his candor, I thought that perhaps he did not know all about his mother's acquaintances and that the matter was important enough to take up directly with her. So in 1973 I met with Disna's paternal grandmother, Ukku Samarasinghe. She had been born in another village, but had lived for more than fifty years in Udubogawa. The village had no temple until about 1958, and she had attended the temple in Wettewa. She had no recollection of knowing Babanona or any of her family. She did not know about whom Disna was talking before Disna and her mother first went to Wettewa; even after Babanona was identified as the person Disna was referring to, Ukku Samarasinghe still could not place her as someone she had known. Although she had known the monks at the temple in Wettewa, she did not remember the name of the Ven. Embanwelle Somasara. Because Ukku Samarasinghe had gone to the temple at Wettewa, it is possible that she was there at some time when Babanona was also there. This could happen without the two women knowing each other except perhaps to give a smile of recognition from some previous similar occasion. Ukku Samarasinghe suggested that her own mother-in-law (Disna's father's paternal grandmother) might have known Babanona, since they were of approximately the same generation. But she had died before Disna started to talk about the previous life.

I think I should mention P. K. Perera at this point also. As I stated earlier, he was a journalist of the area who accompanied Disna and her parents on the second visit to the area of Wettewa and Medagoda. He was thus an independent witness of Disna's recognitions on this occasion. I did not interview him, but he told Francis Story in 1965 that he knew Disna's family. At the same time he denied any prior knowledge of Babanona's family. This seemed plausible because of class distinctions, since he and the Samarasinghes were on the same level and the families of Babanona's sons were definitely inferior socially. On the other hand, as a local journalist, P. K. Perera would be expected to be in touch with the people of the area on all levels; in view of this, Francis Story had some reservations about his claim not to have known Babanona's family before the development of the case. But it seems doubtful that he had any considerable acquaintance with the members of her family such as he had with Disna's family.

The Life, Death, and Character of Babanona

Tilakacharige Babanona was born in Naramulla, near Medagoda.⁵ She was a Kandyan of fair skin and considerable beauty. Against her parents' wishes she married Andiris Appuhamy, a dark man from the coastal plain of the south. He came from Devundera, not far from Matara. He had moved north and was working in the area of Medagoda when he met Babanona and they married without her parents' permission. They lived first in Medagoda, and Babanona's two sons, R. M. Gardias (born May 8, 1906) and R. M. Romanis, were born there. Babanona had at least one other child, a daughter, R. M. Nonnohamy, but I do not know exactly when or where she was born. In the 1920s Babanona and her family moved to Walpollatene, about 2 kilometers away. While there she and her husband separated. I did not learn the cause of their disharmony. According to secondhand information her husband left the house and went to live with another woman. One informant said he left her because she was a spendthrift. He may have used this excuse, but the charge seems quite implausible and incompatible with other concordant testimony from several informants who said that Babanona's attitude toward money was at best frugal and at worst miserly. Her son R. M. Gardias said that she loaned money with interest, an improbable occupation for a spendthrift. She had the habit of secreting amounts of money in hiding places that she sometimes forgot.

Babanona never remarried. After separating from her husband she moved back to Medagoda, where she spent most of the rest of her life. She seems to have lived for many of her older years with one or the other of her children, who by this time had become adults.

She was intensely religious, observed the Buddhist precepts carefully, and went on several pilgrimages to Buddhist centers such as Anuradhapura and Sri Pada (Adam's Peak).

R. M. Gardias chose his own wife and married T. N. Alice without his parents' consent. This annoyed Babanona, who, like many other parents, had pardoned herself for the fault that she censured in her child; she did not visit her son and daughter-in-law for a year after their marriage. When their children were born Babanona refused to carry them. Disna said unblushingly that it was because they were too dark, but I have not obtained a verification of this reason from Babanona's family. Both R. M. Gardias and T. N. Alice confirmed that Babanona had not carried their children when they were small. Unfortunately, in the early phases of the investigation I failed to enquire about their knowledge or conjectures regarding Babanona's behavior in this matter. Later, in 1974, R. M. Gardias told Godwin Samararatne that his mother did not carry his children because she disapproved of his marriage to T. N. Alice. In turn, Babanona's rejection of her son's marriage arose from its occurrence without her consent and possibly also from Babanona's disapproval of T. N. Alice's dark complexion.

⁵ Since Naramulla is a small place less than half a kilometer from Medagoda it will simplify understanding if I refer hereafter to Medagoda only.

Toward the end of her life Babanona lived for a time in Medagoda with her second son, R. M. Romanis, but when he moved to Hurulluwewa (as mentioned above), she did not wish to leave Medagoda and so stayed on there by herself, living alone. Then she became feeble and moved in with her older son, R. M. Gardias, who lived with his wife and children in Wettewa.

Her earlier disapproval of her son's marriage and her attitude toward his children could have impaired relations with her daughter-in-law when she finally came to live with her. But according to the testimony of R. M. Gardias, this did not happen. He described her as unnecessarily sensitive about possible intruders or burglars. He said there was "a little trouble" about this matter. He added that his mother had offered to move out of their house, but he told her not to do so, and she remained until her death. He assured me that she was not jealous of his purchases for his wife and took her medicine without difficulty. And his wife, T. N. Alice, had earlier extolled the virtues of Babanona to Seelawathie Samarasinghe on the occasion of Disna's first visit to Wettewa. We may suppose that R. M. Gardias and T. N. Alice wished to smooth out the wrinkles of their relationship with Babanona. The Ven. Embanwelle Somasara was a more detached witness of it. He said that R. M. Gardias had handled his mother sternly. R. M. Gardias himself told Seelawathie Samarasinghe that Babanona had not taken her medicine regularly and that he had threatened to beat *himself*, not her, if she did not do so.⁶

Babanona became increasingly frail and died about six months after moving in with R. M. Gardias. Toward the end she had become quite weak and walked only with the aid of a stick. R. M. Gardias said that she suffered from "paralysis," and I assume therefore that she may have had a cerebral hemorrhage or thrombosis (stroke). She was bedridden for the last month of her life and died at Wettewa on January 15, 1968. I did not learn of any specific cause of death additional to the surmise mentioned above. Babanona was buried at Medagoda in a hill behind the house of her younger son. I obtained widely discrepant statements about her age at death, ranging between sixty-five and eighty-five. The last figure is almost certainly too high. An average of estimates would place her age at death between seventy and seventy-five years. This accords with the figure we arrive at if we accept R. M. Gardias' statement that he was born in 1906 and suppose that his mother had her first son when she was about twenty years old. If so, she was born in 1886 and was about seventy-two years old when she died.

The character of Babanona in later life was not particularly distinctive from that of many other elderly Sinhalese women. She remained intensely religious, devoting much time to meditation and other merit-making activities. She had a book on meditation and "read it day and night." The Ven. Embanwelle Somasara questioned how much she understood of this book, which may have increased her piety more than her knowledge. When she

⁶ I have deferred a fuller discussion of this last topic until after the presentation of what Disna said about it.

could no longer attend ceremonies in the temple, she listened to the *bana* preaching over the radio.⁷

I have already mentioned that Babanona's character had thrift and stinginess mixed, but both these traits might have arisen from the sense of insecurity many old people obliged to live with relatives can develop. And her son said she gave generously to Buddhist causes. In the homes of her sons she did her own cooking and stayed somewhat apart from the main activities of the households. (This makes reasonably accurate Disna's statement [item 20, Table 5] that in Wettewa she had "lived alone.")

She had a quick temper, but this and other faults never outweighed her virtues for those who knew her. One of T. N. Alice's daughters, whom Babanona would not carry as a baby, had grown up and forgivingly cared for Babanona. The best testimony to her lovability came in the tears of R. M. Gardias and T. N. Alice when they first met Disna and learned of her claim to be Babanona reborn.

Statements and Recognitions Made by Disna

In Table 5 I have listed all of Disna's statements and recognitions related to the previous life. I have grouped the statements together first (items 1-38) and then the recognitions (items 39-54).

In arranging the first block of statements, which were all, so far as I know, made by Disna before the two families met, I have placed them in a rough chronological order from the earlier part of Babanona's life in Walpollatene to her death. Items 1-35 are in this group. I have followed these with another small group of statements which Disna made after the two families had met for the first time. Of these, items 36 and 37 occurred when Disna met the Ven. Embanwelle Somasara. Item 38 occurred during one of Disna's visits to Medagoda not long after the first visit to Wettewa.

For what Disna said about the previous life before the two families met, I have relied principally on the testimony of Seelawathie Samarasinghe, Disna's mother. The notes she wrote out (in about June 1964) soon after the two families had first met provide the earliest written record of the case other than newspaper reports. In Table 5, however, I have not distinguished between Seelawathie Samarasinghe's notes and her later oral testimony.

I have omitted from the list of itemized statements a few made by Disna about the previous life that seemed to be too general in possible references to add any important weight to the case. They were the kinds of statement that one might make about any elderly woman in Sri Lanka. Most of the statements listed I considered either characteristic of Babanona or specific for her.

Although Disna mentioned several names of places connected with the previous life, she did not give the names of any persons. The expression

⁷ Such preaching consists of the exegesis of passages in the sayings attributed to the Buddha.

TABLE 5. *Summary of Statements and Recognitions Made by Disna*

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. She married by her own consent.	Seelawathie Samarasinghe, Disna's mother	R. M. Nonnohamy, Babanona's daughter	Babanona married without her parents' approval, therefore "by her own consent." Usually marriages in Sri Lanka are arranged by parents, and children acquiesce. Children may, however, marry on their own. If a child chooses someone from another community or caste, the parents may withhold approval.
2. She married "a lad from Walpollatene."	Seelawathie Samarasinghe	Incorrect	Babanona married a man from the "low country" of the southern coast of Sri Lanka. Just why this offended her parents is not clear, unless it violated Kandyan traditions of the superiority of the highland over the "low country" people.
			Babanona's husband, Andiris Appuhamy, came from Devundera, near Matara in southern Sri Lanka. Their son R. M. Gardias said that his father, at the time of his marriage to his mother, was working at a place called Narawatte. But he also worked then or later at Walpollatene and for some years he and Babanona lived at Walpollatene. The testimony of D. M. William Kankanama on these points accorded in the main with that of R. M. Gardias. Since Babanona and her husband were living at Walpollatene when he left

her, Disna's error may be regarded as a statement influenced by association.

3. She had lived at Walpollatene.

Seelawathie Samarasinghe

R. M. Ranasinghe, R. M. Romanis' older son and Babanona's grandson

Babanona lived at Walpollatene (not far from Medagoda) before moving back to Medagoda. Seelawathie Samarasinghe stated in 1965 that Disna had referred to a home in Walpollatene, but in 1968 she was not sure that Disna had actually said she (Babanona) had lived there.

4. Her family had owned a boutique at Walpollatene.

Seelawathie Samarasinghe

Incorrect

This statement was not recorded until 1970, and Seelawathie Samarasinghe may have misremembered the name of the place Disna had given for the location of the boutique. The facts are, according to R. M. Gardias, that he had had boutiques (in which Babanona had assisted him); however, they were located in Galagedera and Weliwetiya, not in Walpollatene.

5. Someone who went to school at Walpollatene used to visit, fetch water and rice for her, and gather a vegetable called "drumsticks."

Seelawathie Samarasinghe

R. M. Ranasinghe

R. M. Ranasinghe had been a student at Walpollatene when Babanona lived there and had visited her and performed the mentioned services. He was her favorite grandson and she liked him better than her sons. Disna did not remember the name of R. M. Ranasinghe but referred to him by the kindnesses he had shown to Babanona.

TABLE 5 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
6. She used to watch a "Tiger Dance."	Seelawathie Samarasinghe	R. M. Gardias, Babanona's older son	Disna gave her mother a demonstration of the "Tiger Dance." This is a dance performed by men and found only in the extreme south of Sri Lanka, that is, in the district from which Babanona's husband came. Babanona would have seen him perform it.
7. She had lived with her younger son.	A. S. Samarasinghe, Disna's father	R. M. Romanis, Babanona's younger son	Babanona had lived with R. M. Romanis and his family in Medagoda before this son moved to another village, Hurulluwewa. Babanona then lived alone for two years.
8. There was a smithy at this house [that is, in Medagoda].	A. S. Samarasinghe Kirthilatha Samarasinghe, Disna's paternal aunt	I saw a blacksmith's shop across the road from the house of R. M. Romanis in Medagoda.	Disna actually referred to "a place where iron is worked."
9. When living with her younger son, she had done her own cooking.	A. S. Samarasinghe	R. M. Romanis	Babanona did much of her own cooking almost until the time of her death. She particularly cooked certain soft foods such as gram (a pea-like vegetable), which she prepared for herself.
10. Some money was buried in a cigarette tin near the fireplace in the house at Medagoda.	Seelawathie Samarasinghe A. S. Samarasinghe	K. D. Nandawathie, R. M. Romanis' wife and Babanona's daughter-in-law	A. S. Samarasinghe did not say that Disna had mentioned the location of the house where she (in the previous life) had hidden the money. About three months after

Babanona's death, the house in which she had lived in Medagoda was repaired. A cigarette tin containing money was found near the hearth. The family was surprised to find the tin and money, no one knowing that it had been buried there. They assumed Babanona had placed it there, since she had the habit of hiding money.

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|--|---|
| <p>11. She had gone to Rambukkana by train and car to visit relatives.</p> | <p>Seelawathie Samarasinghe</p> | <p>R. M. Romanis
R. M. Nonnohamy</p> | <p>Babanona's daughter, R. M. Nonnohamy, had married H. M. Tikira, a man from Rambukkana, about 32 kilometers from Medagoda and Wettewa. Babanona would usually visit her daughter by taking a bus to Kandy and from there a train to Rambukkana. In emergencies she went to Rambukkana by car.</p> |
| <p>12. She took sweets made of flour when she went to Rambukkana.</p> | <p>Seelawathie Samarasinghe</p> | <p>R. M. Nonnohamy</p> | <p>Babanona brought the sweets she had made for her grandchildren.</p> |
| <p>13. She used to plant several kinds of yams.</p> | <p>Seelawathie Samarasinghe</p> | <p>R. M. Romanis</p> | <p>R. M. Romanis said his mother cultivated yams and did other light gardening. He did not mention "several kinds of yams."</p> |
| <p>14. She did not buy coconuts, but had coconuts plucked from the trees.</p> | <p>Seelawathie Samarasinghe</p> | <p>T. N. Alice, R. M. Gardias' wife and Babanona's daughter-in-law</p> | <p>Families owning coconut trees will sometimes hire pluckers to go up the trees and pluck the coconuts; they take their wages in coconuts.</p> |
| <p>15. She used to buy rice with a ration book.</p> | <p>Seelawathie Samarasinghe</p> | <p>T. N. Alice</p> | <p>Ration books were used in Sri Lanka during Babanona's time, and</p> |

TABLE 5 (*cont.*)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
15. (<i>cont.</i>)			they still (1977) are. They enable everyone to obtain a minimal quantity of rice at a fixed price.
16. She used to weave coconut leaves for the roof.	Seelawathie Samarasinghe	R. M. Romanis	Disna made this remark soon after she began to speak and at the same time showed her mother how to weave coconut leaves to make matting for a roof. Babanona was skilled at weaving coconut leaves.
17. She had a son called Mahattaya.	Seelawathie Samarasinghe A. S. Samarasinghe	R. M. Gardias	Disna first referred to Mahattaya when she was about two and a half. At first she would not say who he was. When her mother asked her she just replied: "Mahattaya is Mahattaya. Mahattaya is stern; that is why I cannot go there [to Wettewa]." It was only when Disna was about four years old that she said that Mahattaya was "her" son. R. M. Gardias was generally known by the familiar name of Mahattaya. Babanona referred to her son by this name in talking about him to other persons.
18. When she became ill she moved to her older son's house.	Seelawathie Samarasinghe	R. M. Gardias	When Babanona became infirm she moved in with her older son, R. M. Gardias, at Wettewa.
19. She lived at Wettewa.	Seelawathie Samarasinghe Ven. Embanwelle Somasara,	R. M. Gardias	The Ven. Embanwelle Somasara stated that Disna said she "came

chief monk of the temple at Wettewa, village where Babanona had died

from the adjacent village," which would be correct for Wettewa in relationship to Udubogawa. Babanona had lived the last six months of her life with her older son (R. M. Gardias) and daughter-in-law at their house in Wettewa.

20. She cooked for herself and "lived alone" there.

R. M. Gardias

Seelawathie Samarasinghe

It was not strictly true that Babanona lived alone while there with her older son and daughter-in-law. Yet she did most of her own cooking and she slept by herself. Disna's reference to "living alone" may have partly expressed Babanona's loneliness and sense of isolation from other members of the household. It is also possible that she confused memories of the life at Wettewa (the last six months of Babanona's life) and the life at Medagoda, when Babanona did in fact live completely alone for two years. (See Comment for item 9.)

21. There was also "a woman" or "a mother" at Wettewa.

R. M. Gardias
T. N. Alice

Seelawathie Samarasinghe

T. N. Alice was the wife of R. M. Gardias and mother of his children. Disna's expressions indicated dislike and contempt.

22. The children of "that woman" were very dark-skinned.

One son of this family whom Godwin Samararatne met was definitely darker in complexion than Disna.

Seelawathie Samarasinghe

T. N. Alice is herself distinctly darker than members of the Samarasinghe family, who are relatively light in complexion.

23. She would not carry such dark-skinned children.

R. M. Gardias
T. N. Alice

R. M. Gardias and T. N. Alice both verified this ungrandmotherly behavior on the part of Babanona

TABLE 5 (cont.)

Item	Informants	Verification	Comments
23. (cont.)			<p>but did not say that it derived from color prejudice. Disna's acknowledgment of the motive is thus unverified.</p>
24. There was an avocado pear tree at the house, but it died.	A. S. Samarasinghe	R. M. Gardias	<p>Disna was reminded of the avocado pear tree of the previous life by seeing one in the Samarasinghes' compound. In 1968 R. M. Gardias and T. N. Alice both said there had never been an avocado pear tree at the house in Wettewa, but in 1970 R. M. Gardias said there had been one. It had not died during Babanona's lifetime, but was cut down afterward.</p>
25. Mahattaya could play the <i>rabana</i> .	Seelawathie Samarasinghe	R. M. Gardias	<p>The rabana is a kind of drum much used in Ceylon. Both Babanona and her son could play the rabana.</p>
26. Mahattaya had beaten her with a cane.	Seelawathie Samarasinghe	<p>R. M. Gardias Ven. Embanwelle Somasara D. M. William Kankanama, friend of Babanona</p>	<p>R. M. Gardias denied he had beaten his mother with a cane but said he had sometimes threatened to beat <i>himself</i> when she did not take medicine as she should. The Ven. Embanwelle Somasara, who knew Babanona quite well, said that he thought R. M. Gardias had been somewhat harsh with his mother, but did not think that he had actually beaten her. D. M. William Kankanama said</p>

that Babanona had complained to him of mistreatment by her son R. M. Gardias and had said he had beaten her.

27. She bathed in the morning. Seelawathie Samarasinghe K. D. Nandawathie Babanona was very particular about cleanliness and bathed regularly at the same time each morning. D. M. William Kankanama said that Babanona bathed in the afternoon, giving the rather precise time of 3-4 p.m. However, I cannot believe that he, a friend, but not living in the household, would know as much about this matter as Babanona's daughter-in-law, with whom she lived for some time.
28. The well she used for bathing was covered over by fallen branches from overhanging trees. Seelawathie Samarasinghe R. M. Gardias When the well became covered over, Babanona began bathing in the nearby stream. (See also item 41.)
29. Spices used to prepare curry are called *thunapaha*. A. S. Samarasinghe R. M. Gardias *Thunapaha* is a low country word for spices used in curry. The Kandyan word for these spices current around the area where Disna lived is *sarakku*. Babanona would probably have learned to use the low country word from her husband, who came from that area. R. M. Gardias and his family used the word *thunapaha*.
30. There were rubber rollers at the home. A. S. Samarasinghe R. M. Gardias R. M. Gardias was an overseer of workers on a rubber plantation. He had some rollers used in the processing of rubber in his house. Not many persons would have such

TABLE 5 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
30. (cont.)			rollers in their homes, and so the item concerns a rather unusual detail.
31. When at Wettewa she had no teeth and had to crush gram with her hand before eating it.	Seelawathie Samarasinghe	T. N. Alice	Babanona had not lost <i>all</i> her teeth, but some. T. N. Alice was not certain that Babanona had had to crush or grind gram before eating it, but knew that she had to crush betel and areca nuts before chewing them. Gram is a pulse. Persons having difficulty in chewing may crush the gram and then cook it into a soft mushy substance.
32. She used to listen to bana preaching on the radio.	Seelawathie Samarasinghe	T. N. Alice R. M. Gardias	In Sri Lanka, as elsewhere, pious old ladies often listen to preaching on the radio, especially if they can no longer go to the temple.
33. She had used a walking stick.	Seelawathie Samarasinghe	R. M. Gardias T. N. Alice	When Disna was asked why "she" had to use a walking stick, she said "she" would otherwise have fallen. Babanona used a walking stick only at the very end of her life.
34. Some of her belongings were stolen after her death.	Seelawathie Samarasinghe	T. N. Alice R. M. Gardias	A discrepancy in the testimony occurred here. R. M. Gardias in 1965 said that a lamp and other objects belonging to Babanona had been stolen <i>after</i> her death. Seelawathie Samarasinghe's notes of 1964 cited T. N. Alice as having

said this also. In 1968, however, R. M. Gardias said he thought that the objects were stolen *during* the lifetime of Babanona.

35. There was an anthill near her grave. In 1968 I inspected the grave, and the anthill was about two feet away. Seelawathie Samarasinghe P. K. Perera, newspaper reporter Kirthilatha Samarasinghe Ven. Embanwelle Somasara
36. She had a book on meditation. When Disna met the Ven. Embanwelle Somasara (some time after her first visit to Wettewa, where she had just noticed and recognized him in the distance), she said to him: "I had a book. I do not have one now and I want one." She said the book was for *bhawana* (English: "meditation"). He then prompted and asked if it was about *satipatthana*, and Disna replied that it was. Babanona had had such a book, which she assiduously read—or looked at, since it is doubtful whether she could have understood much of it. Satipatthana is the Buddhist system of mindfulness as delineated in the Satipatthana Sutta of the Pali Canon. The Ven. Embanwelle Somasara said he would give Disna a book and did so.

TABLE 5 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
37. The chief monk was at her bed when she died.	Ven. Embanwelle Somasara	Ven. Embanwelle Somasara	When Disna talked with the Ven. Embanwelle Somasara she commented on the fact that he had performed a religious ceremony as Babanona was dying.
38. There were two jambu trees in the compound of her friend.	U. A. Bacho Hamy, friend and neighbor of Babanona	These jambu trees in the compound of U. A. Bacho Hamy were shown to me in 1968.	U. A. Bacho Hamy was a second-hand informant for this item. She said Disna's parents told her Disna had spoken about the two jambu trees.
39. Indication of the direction of Wettewa from Udubogawa	Seelawathie Samarasinghe		U. A. Bacho Hamy was a neighbor and good friend of Babanona when she lived in Medagoda. The two women would often meet and talk in the area between their houses, where these two trees were found.
40. Recognition of shortcut to Wettewa through paddy fields	Seelawathie Samarasinghe		Disna correctly pointed in the direction of Wettewa when her mother asked where it was located.
41. Recognition of place where Babanona used to bathe	T. N. Alice A. S. Sumanadasa, friend of the Samarasinghes		Disna showed the way through the shortcut on the occasion of her first visit with her mother to Wettewa. This shortcut was quite unknown to Disna's mother.
			This bathing place was in a stream near the house in Wettewa. Disna recognized the bathing place as she and her mother approached the house at Wettewa on their first visit there. (See also item 28.)

42. Recognition of the house
at Wettewa

Seelawathie Samarasinghe
A. S. Sumanadasa

On the occasion of Disna's first visit to Wettewa, when the party emerged from the paddy fields at the end of the shortcut on the main road, they were opposite the home of R. M. Gardias. Disna pointed to it saying: "That is the house." A. S. Sumanadasa, however, said that when members of the party saw this house someone asked Disna: "Is that the house?" Her remark may thus have been stimulated by this leading question, although the witnesses agreed that no member of the party in fact knew which the correct house was.

43. Recognition of T. N.
Alice, wife of R. M. Gardias

Seelawathie Samarasinghe

As they approached the house, they saw a middle-aged woman in the compound, and Disna said: "That is the mother." T. N. Alice apparently did not hear Disna's remark.

44. Recognition of the side
door of the house at Wettewa

T. N. Alice
A. S. Sumanadasa

On the occasion of the first visit to Wettewa, Disna led the party into the house, using a side door not visible from the road. This was the door habitually used by Babanona since it was closest to the area where she bathed.

45. Recognition of the bed
where Babanona had slept
and died

Seelawathie Samarasinghe
T. N. Alice
Kirthilatha Samarasinghe

A spontaneous recognition which took place on the occasion of the first visit to Wettewa. Disna walked around the house and when she came to this bed said: "This is where I died."

TABLE 5 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
46. Recognition of Babanona's bathing stone	R. M. Gardias		Disna recognized a stone used in scrubbing by Babanona. It was lying on a shelf in the house.
47. Recognition of a pot Babanona used for carrying water	Seelawathie Samarasinghe T. N. Alice A. S. Sumanadasa Kirthilatha Samarasinghe		The testimony is somewhat discrepant for this item. It seems that perhaps Disna was shown the pot and asked if she recognized it under circumstances which could have suggested an affirmative response from her. Disna said she used the pot to fetch water.
48. Recognition of a rice dish Babanona had used for serving	Seelawathie Samarasinghe T. N. Alice		Another spontaneous recognition at the time of the first visit to Wettewa. Disna pointed to a big plate and said: "This is mine. I used it to serve rice."
49. Recognition of the radio used by Babanona for listening to preaching	Seelawathie Samarasinghe A. S. Sumanadasa		When Disna saw this radio in the house at Wettewa, she said that "she" had listened to the bana preaching on it. Bana preaching consists of the exegesis of Buddhist texts and commentaries.
50. Recognition of a rabana owned by Babanona	Seelawathie Samarasinghe A. S. Sumanadasa T. N. Alice		On the occasion of the first visit to Wettewa, Disna said of a rabana (drum) in the house: "That is ours. I used to play it. So did Mahattaya." Discrepancies occurred in the testimony concerning just

what Disna had said about this drum and about a remark attributed to her concerning the fact that the drum had been damaged.

This recognition occurred on a visit of Disna, her parents, and P. K. Perera to Wettewa and Medagoda three days after Disna's first visit to Wettewa. From the house at Wettewa, Disna pointed to the hill where Babanona's grave was located.

When Disna met U. A. Bacho Hamy, the latter asked her: "Do you know me?" Disna said: "Yes, you are one of my friends." But she did not complete the recognition by giving U. A. Bacho Hamy's name. (See also item 38.)

H. M. Senewiratne came to visit Disna with two friends. Disna's father asked her: "Who was it who served you with provisions?" Disna thereupon pointed to H. M. Senewiratne. He then asked her: "Where have you met me?" She replied: "Why, you gave me rice. You measured the rice due on my ration book and gave it to me." H. M. Senewiratne had in fact worked as a salesman in a boutique for provisions owned by his brother, and Babanona had been a customer in this boutique.

51. Recognition of the site of Babanona's grave

P. K. Perera
R. M. Gardias
T. N. Alice

52. Recognition of U. A. Bacho Hamy, one of Babanona's friends

U. A. Bacho Hamy

53. Recognition of H. M. Senewiratne, an acquaintance of Babanona

Seelawathie Samarasinghe
H. M. Senewiratne, headman
and former shop salesman of
Medagoda

TABLE 5 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
54. Recognition of Babanona's grandson who had spilled her green gram	A. S. Samarasinghe Seelawathie Samarasinghe		<p>Disna, according to her father in 1968, made this remark one day when she saw a boy going by in the road. She said spontaneously as he was passing: "Do you know that child? This is the boy who stole my green gram." The boy in question, R. M. Wimalasinghe (R. M. Romanis' younger son), could not himself recall the episode to which Disna referred. It happened when he was a mere infant and when Babanona was staying with his parents. Nor could he later recall that Disna had made her remark in his hearing, although he heard about it later from her family. In 1973 Seelawathie Samarasinghe gave essentially the same account of the episode, but added that Disna had called the boy "mungata kolla" (English: "gram boy").</p> <p>K. D. Nandawathie (R. M. Romanis' wife and R. M. Wimalasinghe's mother), who was an eyewitness of the incident, described it to me. Babanona had left some green gram to cook on the fireplace while she bathed. Her infant grandson, R. M. Wimalasinghe, ate and spilled some of the gram. K. D. Nandawathie</p>

was outside chopping wood when this happened. When she came into the kitchen she heard Babanona shouting angrily about what the child had done. Because gram can be made soft, it was one of the few foods Babanona could eat in her old age after she had lost some of her teeth. On the day of this unfortunate episode, Babanona had to eat bread instead.

Mahattaya provides only a partial exception to this, since it is not a proper name but a kind of title or honorific. Disna never seems to have mentioned the word *Babanona*. But I shall later give evidence of her sensitivity about this name.

Disna was credited with a number of recognitions under conditions which in my opinion permitted her to infer facts about the objects or persons recognized. Thus as she and her mother were walking between Udubogawa and Wettewa on the occasion of their first visit to Wettewa, she correctly indicated the school at Wettewa and the chief monk, the Ven. Embanwelle Somasara. The latter was standing at the temple about to leave on a visit when Disna saw and correctly identified him. (He confirmed hearing Disna say as she went by: "That is the chief monk.") But knowing that she was in Wettewa, Disna might easily have inferred enough to make these recognitions. Her recognition of "the mother," namely, the wife of R. M. Gardias, seems to me in quite a different class (item 43, Table 5). In this instance, Disna was standing some distance away and indicated a woman in the compound of the house she had pointed to as the right house. No one in the party knew who this woman was; she might have been a neighbor or stranger. This recognition, however, was not completely independent of that of the house, since, given the knowledge that the house was the correct one, Disna might have inferred that the woman standing in the compound was the owner and therefore the wife of Mahattaya. R. M. Gardias was sent for, and, a little later, when he came alone, Disna could easily have inferred that he was the husband of "that woman." Therefore, she gets no credit for having recognized Mahattaya, as she is reported to have done. Accordingly, of the seven places or persons apparently recognized by Disna at the beginning of the first visit to Wettewa: school, monk, shortcut on road, house at Wettewa, bathing place, wife of Mahattaya, and Mahattaya himself, I consider only the shortcut, the house, the bathing place, and the wife as being significant and perhaps indicative of a paranormal knowledge. And the recognition of the wife was not independent of that of the house.

P. K. Perera said that on the way to the house Babanona had lived in at Medagoda "Disna stopped by a footpath and looked along it, but there was some paddy spread out there, obstructing the way. R. M. Gardias said that was the path his mother used to take." This may count perhaps as a partial recognition, but I have not listed it in Table 5.

We should note also that Disna failed to recognize the house at Medagoda where Babanona had lived, and that she failed to recognize, at least satisfactorily, Babanona's younger son, R. M. Romanis, or her daughter, R. M. Nonnohamy. She also failed to recognize R. M. Ranasinghe, one of R. M. Romanis' sons. This was a little surprising, since she included him among the pleasant memories of the previous life. He had grown a moustache in the approximately six and one half years between his grandmother's death and his first meeting with Disna, and this may have made recognizing him more difficult. She recognized R. M. Romanis' other son, R. M. Wimalasinghe,

not by name but by recalling an event of his infancy which had greatly annoyed Babanona (item 54).

Disna's Statements about Events Occurring after Babanona's Death and before Her Birth. Readers will have noted that in Table 5 two items relate to events that happened after the death of Babanona. These are her statements that Babanona's body had been buried near an anthill (item 35) and her indication, by pointing, of the site of Babanona's grave (item 51). Disna had correctly shown (from the house in Wettewa) the direction of the burial site, and when I examined the spot in 1968 I found that it was a few feet away from an anthill. There was no marker or other indication of the site above ground. Babanona had not selected the site for her burial before her death; her family did so after she died. They buried her body on some family property on the Medagoda side of a rather high hill separating Medagoda and Wettewa.

Disna also said that robbers took some of Babanona's things after her death, but R. M. Gardias gave variant testimony on two different occasions about whether a robbery of the house in which some of Babanona's things had been stolen occurred before or after her death. Disna said she saw these things, the burial site and the robbery, "as in a dream." She claimed to have witnessed the burial of "her" body.

Disna made other remarks about dying and some experiences after death which deserve inclusion in this report. When she saw her grandmother die, she was reminded, she said, of her own death in the past life. There was an ache in her throat, and then she stopped breathing. She added that the person who dies is "lifted up" even though the body is buried; the person flies like a bird. Disna further described meeting a "king" (after death) whose clothes were never taken off, never dirty, and never washed.⁸ These clothes were reddish. The king wore beautiful pointed shoes. She herself wore golden clothes which were also never taken off, dirty, or washed. The king's home was made of glass and had beautiful red beds on which one could sleep, but did not sit. When asked what she did in this "place," Disna said she played about. She sometimes felt hunger and could then have appear whatever food she wanted by thinking about it; but the sight of the food appeased the hunger and there was no need to eat. There was no cooking there, the food simply appearing on wish, as described. Disna said she preferred that "place" to her (present) home and was naturally asked therefore why she had come to her home. She replied that the king asked her to come and brought her to her (present) home. She did not say why she (or he) had selected this particular home from other possibilities. "Others are taken to other homes," she stated. When Disna was asked how one got to the "place" she had described, she

⁸ There has been no Sinhalese or Tamil king in Sri Lanka since the British deposed the king of Kandy in 1815 and annexed his territories. Between 1815 and the attainment of independence in 1948, Sri Lanka, then Ceylon, was part of the British Empire and the official kings were British. Disna's use of the word *king* (Sinhalese: *raja*) in this context means a governor or person in charge of the "place" she was trying to describe.

brought her palms together (in a gesture of Buddhist worship) and said: "If you do this, you can go there." Disna's father asked her if he could go there if he stole from people and assaulted them. Without hesitating Disna replied: "One cannot go there by these evil actions. . . . You can get there by doing good deeds." When asked why they could not go there now, she said that one could go there only after death. Disna outlined her eschatology when just a little over five years of age.

Disna's Behavior Related to the Previous Life

Circumstances and Manner of Disna's Speaking about the Previous Life. Many of Disna's statements about the previous life seemed stimulated by her noticing some household activity, such as cooking or washing, which apparently reminded her of what she remembered doing in the previous life. Seelawathie Samarasinghe stated that once when the family had boiled green gram for breakfast, Disna remarked: "When I was at Wettewa I had to crush them [the gram] to eat." When asked why she had to do this, Disna said that she had no teeth to bite and had to crush them (the gram) with her hand before eating. Disna felt free to give her mother advice on how to cook.

In narrating memories of the previous life she claimed to have lived, Disna did not complain of being in a small body as have some of the other subjects of these cases. She did, however, on several occasions refer to events as having occurred "when I was an old woman."

Disna's mother said that she tended to talk about the previous life in the evening after dinner more than at other times. She attributed this to the fact that this was the time of day when the family gathered together. They had lunch separately and during the day Disna's father was at his shop and her mother teaching at school.

In some of Disna's remarks one can discern memories of the infirmities of an old woman, as in her comments about losing "her" teeth and using a stick for walking. Disna said that without the stick for walking "she" would have fallen. She gave her mother a demonstration of how "she" had used a walking stick in the previous life; according to her mother her demonstration was typical of the way an old woman would walk with a stick. She referred also on numerous occasions to wearing clothes which "extended down to her wrists," that is, the long-sleeved jackets commonly worn by elderly Sinhalese ladies like Babanona, but not by small girls.

As with many other subjects of these cases, Disna's memories were stimulated by her visits to the places of the previous life and her meetings with persons connected with Babanona.

Disna's Attitudes toward Persons Connected with Babanona. As I have already mentioned, Disna showed a disinclination to visit Wettewa and a strong antagonism toward Mahattaya, attitudes which contrast with those of most other

subjects of these cases, whose memories usually seem to attract them to the previous family and place of residence.

Disna complained that Mahattaya had beaten "her" and had unfairly favored his wife over "her." I could not learn from any firsthand witness that R. M. Gardias had in fact beaten his mother, and he himself denied he had done so. P. K. Perera said that some persons (he did not say who) had told him that R. M. Gardias had beaten his mother and had "forced medicine down her throat." The Ven. Embanwelle Somasara, who might be regarded as adequately independent and informed on this point, said that R. M. Gardias had been restrictive and harsh toward his mother, but that he had probably not beaten her. On the other hand, D. M. William Kankanama, who went to visit Babanona in her old age when she was living at Wettewa, said that she had complained to him that her son had beaten her. R. M. Gardias admitted to Seelawathie Samarasinghe that he had kept a stick with which he sometimes threatened to beat *himself*, not her, when she would not take her medicine properly.⁹

The combination of her son's rather severe conduct and the other evidences of "in-law" trouble which I learned about make it likely that Babanona was less than happily domiciled with her son and daughter-in-law when she was with them in Wettewa during the last six months of her life. (I say this in spite of the contrary opinion of R. M. Gardias and his wife mentioned above.) Under the circumstances, it was appropriate for Disna to wish *not* to be reminded of the life in Wettewa, and this was what her behavior showed. Other children or her parents sometimes teased her by calling her Babanona and this upset her. She beat her siblings if they teased her thus. When her father playfully called her Babanona in my presence in 1968 she burst into tears. At this time Disna was nine years old. Her mother said she was then no longer talking spontaneously about the previous life, but would do so reluctantly if questioned. If they reminded her of the previous life, she would tell them not to do so. She made it perfectly clear that she preferred her present existence immensely to the one she recalled having lived at Wettewa.

Disna remained unreconciled toward R. M. Gardias at least to 1968. In the summer of that year the Samarasinghes heard that R. M. Gardias had sold some land for a substantial price. Her parents told Disna about this and in fun suggested she might receive a portion of the money he had obtained. Disna replied: "I do not need his money. He was very harsh to me."

Disna's attitude toward R. M. Gardias contrasted with her conduct in the presence of the Ven. Embanwelle Somasara, the chief monk of the temple at Wettewa. When he came to the Samarasinghes' shop in Udubogawa—this was one of the visits he made to the Samarasinghes after she had talked about

⁹ H. S. S. Nissanka, in his account of the case published in the *Ceylon Observer*, May 17, 1964, said that R. M. Gardias had admitted to him that one day he had threatened his mother with a stick if she did not take her medicine. R. M. Gardias may have later thought it better, when talking with me, to dilute the confession previously made to H. S. S. Nissanka. The point is of some importance as bearing on Disna's fear of and antagonism toward Mahattaya, and her reluctance to visit Wettewa.

the previous life and had been herself to Wettewa—she worshiped him spontaneously.¹⁰ Although the Ven. Embanwelle Somasara said Disna did this without prompting, by this time she was five or six years old and would almost certainly have seen other children (and adults) prostrating themselves in worship before Buddhist monks. More remarkable was the fact that Disna pounded and prepared some areca nuts and betel which she gave to the Ven. Embanwelle Somasara. Babanona had been in the habit of bringing betel to him.

With regard to some other members of Babanona's family Disna preserved a "long memory." Thus she seemed to retain a sense of gratitude toward Babanona's grandson R. M. Ranasinghe, who as a boy had done odd chores for her. Disna described how he would come to visit Babanona and she would say to him: "Come, son, take a seat." Disna did not recognize R. M. Ranasinghe when he went to visit her as the two families were beginning to meet. But Disna's mother said that Disna was "unusually kind" to R. M. Ranasinghe.

On the other side of feelings, she had not forgotten how R. M. Wimalasinghe, when a small infant, had spilled and eaten some of the gram that Babanona had been cooking. R. M. Gardias said that when his sister-in-law, K. D. Nandawathie, and her son R. M. Wimalasinghe (the culprit in this episode) went to visit Disna she would not even speak with them. Afterward, in talking to her family, Disna justified her incivility on the grounds that R. M. Wimalasinghe had spilled and eaten Babanona's gram. (I did not learn about this frosty reception of R. M. Wimalasinghe from Disna's parents.) Disna had already recognized him and had told them about his grave offense when she saw him passing along the road in Udubogawa. (See item 54, Table 5.) Disna evidently remembered the episode with vivid clarity. Once, in June 1964, when K. D. Nandawathie, R. M. Wimalasinghe's mother, was narrating it to Disna's mother, Disna listened, agreed to the truth of what Wimalasinghe's mother had described, and then said smilingly: "That boy was covered in soot."¹¹ (She may have made this remark, recounted in Seelawathie Samarasinghe's notebook, on the occasion mentioned above when she would not speak to R. M. Wimalasinghe or his mother.)

Other Behavior of Disna Related to the Previous Life. Disna's parents said that they had observed in her a number of behavioral traits that seemed unusual in a girl of her age and that corresponded to similar traits reported for Babanona or were harmonious with what was known of her situation and character.

¹⁰ For further discussion and examples of the worship of Buddhist monks by laymen, see the reports of the cases of Gamini Jayasena and Wijanama Kithsiri (this volume).

¹¹ R. M. Wimalasinghe was born about 1942, and if he was about three (probably an upper age) when this episode occurred, it happened in 1945. This would be thirteen years before Babanona's death and about nineteen before Disna communicated her memory of it. For other examples of subjects remembering events occurring many years before the deaths of related previous personalities, see the cases of Kumkum Verma (in the first volume of this series), Lalitha Abeyawardena, and Sujith Lakmal Jayaratne (this volume).

Disna's strong interest in religion resembled that of Babanona, who was a notably devout person. Babanona, at least in her later years, was a pious lady who practiced meditation regularly and read (to the extent that she could do so) in a Buddhist book of meditation. When she grew too weak to visit the temple in Wettewa, she would listen to the bana preaching on the radio, sitting before it on the floor with her hands held together in the posture of worship.

Disna showed an interest in religion at a very early age. When she was about two years old she listened with attention to the bana preaching on the radio, sitting or kneeling and putting her palms together in the attitude of worship. Neither her parents nor her siblings did this, and it is most unlikely that Disna could have seen anyone behave like this before she herself did so. Certainly there were no models for such behavior in her immediate family. Disna stated that when she was an old woman in the previous life she had listened to the bana preaching on the radio. She had continued to be much more interested in religion than her three siblings. In 1968 she had a toy Buddhist shrine where she worshiped, lit a lamp, and offered flowers as do Buddhists in regular temples. The other children tried to break up Disna's shrine, but she persisted with it. I mentioned earlier that Babanona had a book on meditation which she read (or looked at) assiduously. On one occasion when Disna met the Ven. Embanwelle Somasara she said to him: "I had a book. I do not have one now and I want one." Further discussion brought out the fact that she was referring to the book on meditation owned by Babanona (item 36, Table 5). The Ven. Embanwelle Somasara said that he would give her a book and he did so. Disna's behavior with regard to religious practices was altogether quite exceptional in her family.

Disna showed a remarkable precocity with regard to competence in certain household tasks. She was particularly skillful at a very early age in cooking. She played at cooking with small pots and pans. She criticized her mother's cooking of rice and, her father said, did so with some justification since Disna could cook better than his wife. Disna talked much about cooking also and evidently found it a topic of great interest. In 1968 Disna's mother said she was still playing at cooking with small pot and pans. Her younger sister did not play at cooking when she was the age at which Disna did this. In connection with Disna's interest in cooking and precocious competence at it, I may note that Babanona was exceptionally good at cooking; she cooked for herself as long as she could do so, until shortly before her death.

Disna also exhibited an untaught ability to weave coconut leaves about the time she first began to speak of the previous life, namely, at about three years of age. She said that she had done this in the previous life. Disna's mother was quite certain that she had not seen anyone in their family or elsewhere weave coconut leaves. Babanona, according to her son, R. M. Romanis, was a skillful weaver of coconut leaves.

Disna showed a noteworthy possessiveness with regard to her belongings. She did not believe in sharing and was inclined to take more than she gave

to others. She might grumble if not given adequate gifts. She put money she received in a box kept for this purpose. This trait accords with the noticeable parsimoniousness of Babanona. (The consensus of the witnesses was that Babanona was not particularly possessive except about money.) Babanona was inclined to hoard and hide her money, ostensibly to avoid solicitation of loans from persons who never repaid her. I have mentioned one cache of money made by Babanona. (See item 10, Table 5.) When her family found this money, they suspected that Babanona had hidden it. The hoarding and hiding of money are not uncommon in elderly persons of Sri Lanka, who often feel insecure vis-à-vis the younger persons with whom they live. But the possessiveness of Disna at an early age was a trait which struck her parents as being unusual among their children.

Disna's behavior accorded with that of Babanona also in her habit of tying a knot in her mother's sari whenever she could. (In 1970 and 1973 Disna herself was still wearing only short dresses, not saris.) Babanona had the habit of tying a knot in her saris and there keeping some of her money.

Both Disna and Babanona gave unusual attention to cleanliness. Babanona was preoccupied with the subject, and she bathed regularly and lengthily at the same time every day. Disna stood out from her siblings in her concern about cleanliness and had a preference for bathing in the morning, which was probably the time of day when Babanona bathed.

Disna showed a definite embarrassment about the circumstances of the marriage she claimed to have contracted as Babanona. The latter had married a person from the "low country."¹² During my investigation in 1968 Disna would not discuss Babanona's marriage in the presence of her father or of a group that had gathered in her father's store during one of our visits there. She insisted on taking her mother and our interpreter into a back room, where she confided to them that in the previous life she had married against her parents' wishes. Her mother said that on an earlier occasion she had referred snobbishly to Babanona's husband as "a black boy."

Babanona herself had later disapproved of her son's (R. M. Gardias') marriage. After he had married against his mother's (Babanona's) wishes, Babanona did not visit him and his wife for a year, conduct which seems not to have permanently alienated her son and daughter-in-law. Babanona scorned the children of their marriage, her own grandchildren, and would not carry them in her arms. T. N. Alice is definitely dark-skinned, as is one of her children whom Godwin Samararatne met. It may be supposed, but has not been confirmed, that Babanona disapproved of her and her children because of their darkness. Disna, in recalling Babanona's grandchildren, declared them repulsive because of their dark skins and said she remembered that "she" had not been willing to carry them in her arms. Disna's mother gave somewhat variant testimony on the question of whether Disna herself showed color

¹² The district of Galagedera is in the highland part of Sri Lanka, whose inhabitants (Kandyans) often exhibit a superior attitude toward persons from the coastal plains of Sri Lanka. Babanona's husband had come from Devundera, in the extreme south (on the coast) of Sri Lanka. It is near the town of Matara.

prejudice. In 1968 she said that Disna did not show concern about skin color, but did prefer "good-looking children." In 1970, however, she said that Disna disliked playing with children whom she considered too dark.

When Disna was young she liked to chew betel with areca nut, an additional spice for the betel. She used a special cutter to slice the areca nuts and showed remarkable skill in cutting them. Disna's mother said she chewed betel just like an old woman. Babanona had chewed betel with areca nuts. In later childhood Disna stopped chewing betel but was still chewing areca nuts daily in 1973 at the age of fourteen.

Disna showed a fondness for two foods especially liked by Babanona. These were *karawila* (a type of bitter gourd) and coconut *sambola* (a preparation made with coconut, chilies, onions, and salt). Neither of these tastes is specific since many persons of Sri Lanka like both these foods, especially coconut *sambola*. However, although many adults like *karawila*, it is not a universal favorite and children generally dislike it. So Disna's fondness for it was definitely unusual.

When Disna was younger she disliked sweetcakes. Seelawathie Samarasinghe learned from one of Babanona's relatives (R. M. Gardias' son-in-law) that Babanona disliked cakes and that she sometimes brusquely reproached persons who brought them to her, asking them why they had not cooked and brought her rice and curry. When I enquired of R. M. Gardias himself about his mother's attitude toward cakes, he stated only that she was "not unusually fond of sweetcakes." Thus this attribution of a trait remained unconfirmed by a firsthand informant.

When she was a small child Disna asked for dresses that would cover her arms. She told her mother that what she wore in her previous life "extended down to her wrists." However, she lost this desire for long-sleeved clothes when she was about eight or nine years old. On the occasions when I met her she was dressed in short-sleeved frocks like other Sinhalese girls of her age. Disna's interest in long-sleeved dresses apparently related to the fact that Babanona invariably wore long sleeves, as did indeed most elderly Sinhalese women of her epoch.

My informants reported yet another concordance between Disna's personality and that of Babanona. The latter was said to have had a quick temper, at least with members of her own household. And Disna's mother said that she was inclined to have a hot temper. Although Disna charged Babanona's son R. M. Gardias with beating Babanona, she also remembered with charming insight that Babanona had once hit her son. This came out, according to Seelawathie Samarasinghe, on the first occasion when she and Disna went to Wettewa and met R. M. Gardias and T. N. Alice. Talking about his mother, R. M. Gardias mentioned that she had kept money in a pillow slip; he had opened this and removed the money, whereupon his mother had hit him. Listening to this narration Disna smiled. When asked if it was true, she said: "Yes. Why did he take my money? That's why I hit him!"

In Table 6, I have summarized the correspondences (or lack of them) between the behavior of Babanona and that of Disna.

In two respects Disna's reported behavior differed from that of Babanona. The latter had a morbid fear of burglars and used to be much concerned about having all doors of the house locked. Disna did not show any such concern. Babanona was very fond of milk, but Disna had only an average fondness for it, although she did not dislike it.

TABLE 6. *Correspondences in Behavior between Disna and Babanona*

<i>Disna</i>	<i>Babanona</i>
1. Antagonism toward R. M. ("Mahattaya") Gardias	Had disapproved of her son's marriage and seems to have been unhappy during the last six months of her life, when she lived with her son, who, it appears, was somewhat harsh toward his mother
2. Markedly religious; stood out from other children of her age in her interest in religious exercises; had her own shrine	Was an unusually devout old lady and when too weak to attend temple services listened to preaching on the radio
3. Precocious competence in household tasks, such as cooking and weaving of coconut leaves; played at cooking when young	Was a good cook and also knew how to weave coconut leaves skillfully to make matting for roofs
4. Possessive about personal belongings	Parsimonious and possessive as regards money, but not about other objects
5. Habit of tying a knot in a sari (tied knots in her mother's saris, as she herself did not have any)	Kept some of her money in a knot tied in her sari
6. Unusually clean, with preference for bathing in the morning	Preoccupied with cleanliness; bathed regularly every day, probably in the morning
7. In early childhood complained of the dark complexions of Babanona's grandchildren; also was "color conscious" in not playing with children she considered too dark	Refused to carry the dark-skinned children of her son R. M. Gardias, probably (but not certainly) because of color snobbishness
8. Indifferent about prowlers, burglars, etc.	Overly suspicious about burglars
9. Liked milk, but not unusually fond of it	Unusually fond of milk
10. Hot-tempered	Hot-tempered
11. Interest in long-sleeved dresses	Never wore anything but long-sleeved dresses
12. Liked karawila and coconut sambola	Liked karawila and coconut sambola
13. Chewed betel with areca nuts; skillful in cutting areca nuts	Chewed betel with areca nuts
14. Disliked sweetcakes	Said by a secondhand informant to have disliked sweetcakes; firsthand informant did not confirm more than that she was "not unusually fond" of them

Other Relevant Behavior of Disna

Disna's parents said that (apart from the previous life memories) she had never exhibited anything suggestive of extrasensory perception, whether of contemporaneous events or future ones.

The Attitude of Disna's Parents and Other Informants toward the Case

In this case the testimony of different witnesses was quite concordant with regard to the main facts of the case. There were discrepancies in details of the different statements such as one finds to some extent in all cases of this kind, but I think that in this case the number of these fell below average. Furthermore, comparing the testimony recorded in the notebook of Disna's mother (June 1964), that of the first investigation of Francis Story (May 1965), and that of my first investigation (March 1968, also with Francis Story), the testimony of the same witnesses was remarkably consistent. Some of the cases I have studied have included unsavory events such as murders or lesser scandals, and, understandably, one sometimes finds reticence concerning such happenings. The present case, apart from allegations that Babanona's son had beaten her, was generally free of occasions for such evasiveness. Francis Story and I detected some hesitation and variant testimony around possessions, and we thought that a fear Disna might reclaim property may have led the members of Babanona's family to be less frank about some such objects. With the exception of a few details of this type, however, I never had the slightest suspicion that the truth, so far as the informants could remember it, was being concealed from me. On the contrary, they seemed open and eager to narrate the details of the case. Nor have I found any evidence that it has been ornamented by the addition of false items over the years.

All the principal informants of the case believe that Disna has given them satisfactory evidence of being Babanona reborn. Such admissions are often rather easily obtainable from grieving families in Sri Lanka who welcome the chance of believing that a deceased loved one has returned. (But it would be quite untrue to suppose that every claim to rebirth is uncritically endorsed without careful examination of the evidence offered to support it.) For Disna's family, however, the acceptance of the identification of Disna with Babanona involved an acknowledgment of association with persons of a lower social and economic class, something not undertaken lightly in Sri Lanka.

T. N. Alice cherished no ill feeling against her mother-in-law. On the contrary, she acknowledged her piety and her generosity also, at least in religious matters. She offered the traditional Buddhist explanation of Disna's birth in a family much more prosperous than Babanona's—her (Babanona's) merit had brought her into these better circumstances in her new life.

Comments on the Evidence of Paranormal Processes in the Case

In the present case, for several reasons, any fraudulent contrivance seems extremely improbable. I found no evidence, other than the minor exceptions

noted, that facts had been withheld or their report modified consciously. Nor could I learn of any motive for fraud on the part of Disna or her family. The life claimed for Disna was definitely that of a person in a lower economic and social class than that of her family. The house, really only a cottage, in Wettewa was far inferior to the Samarasinghes' house. This case, incidentally, forms an exception to the majority of cases in Sri Lanka and India, in which the subject claims to remember a previous life in the same or a higher caste.¹³

More plausible than fraud as an explanation of the case is the hypothesis that Disna somehow learned about the life of Babanona from some friend or relative who visited her home and narrated the events of the life of Babanona in Disna's hearing. Disna herself would certainly not have been able to go to Wettewa by herself before she began to talk of the previous life. She would have had to be primed with a very considerable amount of detailed material from the life of Babanona. And her hypothetical informant must have known about such intimate family matters as the existence of the ant-hill near Babanona's grave, the money which Babanona had hidden in the hearth at the house in Medagoda, Babanona's use of a side door at the house in Wettewa, and who was present when Babanona died. It is most improbable that anyone could have acquired all this information and then have narrated it in Disna's presence without her parents being aware of such a visitor and afterward remembering him. The theory of cryptomnesia asks Disna's parents to forget too much.

One person who knew Babanona well and who had some acquaintance with the Samarasinghes was the Ven. Embanwelle Somasara, chief monk of the Wettewa Temple. But A. S. Samarasinghe said that so far as he could remember the Ven. Embanwelle Somasara had not been in their home between Disna's birth and the time of her first visit to Wettewa five years later, on which occasion she recognized him. And he himself said he had not seen Disna prior to the occasion when she recognized him at the time of her first visit to Wettewa.

In 1970 I explored thoroughly with D. M. William Kankanama and the Samarasinghes the possibility that the former might somehow have been an intermediary for normally transmitted information about Babanona reaching Disna. He certainly had known Babanona since youth and had visited her in the months before her death, when she was living at Wettewa. He was also a regular customer of A. S. Samarasinghe's general store in Udubogawa. And yet I felt satisfied by the replies of the Samarasinghes and D. M. William Kankanama that he had not spoken in Disna's presence (or to them) about Babanona.

¹³ Westerners uninformed fully about the doctrines of rebirth in Hinduism and Buddhism may suppose that if a child recalls a previous life in a higher caste or better economic situation, he has the motivation of escaping from present unhappiness into the fantasy of a previous life as a person in a higher social station. But for a Hindu or Buddhist such a remembrance is not at all creditable since it supposes that the person has fallen from his previous superior position because his own misconduct earned him a rebirth in a lower caste or economic condition. I am referring here to "popular" Buddhism as practiced; doctrinal Buddhism (in contrast to Hinduism) rejects the concept of caste. (See p. 82n.)

Since, however, D. M. William Kankanama was in and out of A. S. Samarasinghe's shop and seeing Disna there from time to time, perhaps she obtained from him everything that he knew about Babanona by telepathy. She would almost certainly have had to supplement this with some information from other sources. For example, he denied knowing where Babanona had secreted money, and it is most unlikely that he did. The discovery of the money hidden in the fireplace by Babanona came as a surprise to members of her immediate family.

Even supposing, however, that Disna had somehow acquired normally or paranormally all the information about the life of Babanona which she showed, we should still have to account for the very strong behavioral features of the case. For Disna did not merely recall details in the life of Babanona; she personated an older woman like Babanona—that is, she showed traits similar to those Babanona was known to have had or could be thought likely to have had. As already mentioned, these traits exhibited by Disna were certainly not specific for Babanona. Many elderly, devout, Buddhist ladies of Sri Lanka show them, but they were unusual in a child of Disna's age and situation. In short, Disna demonstrated much odd behavior which could not be accounted for by her simply having heard about the life of Babanona, and which was appropriate for the character of Babanona.

Disna's Later Development

I saw Disna and her family in November 1970. At that time she was eleven and a half years old. She was in the seventh class at school and so somewhat ahead of her peers. She showed much interest in school and was ranked twenty-seventh in a class of forty pupils.

She was skillful in needlework, but had not kept up her earlier interest in cooking because her studies left her little time for it. Her interest in religion had diminished markedly, although it also had been somewhat displaced by her schoolwork.

Disna no longer talked spontaneously about the previous life. Her mother said she thought she still remembered it but had stopped referring to it spontaneously because she had been teased about it so much by neighborhood children. There had been no direct contact between R. M. Gardias and Disna for at least the two preceding years. But Disna preserved her antagonism toward him. Her father occasionally ran into him in the large district town of Galagedera, and if he then mentioned this meeting at home, Disna would express her continuing annoyance at R. M. Gardias. Otherwise she did not mention him. She never asked to go to Wettewa.

When I asked Disna directly if she ever thought about the previous life, she said she did not and also that she did not dream about it.

I left this visit with the impression that Disna was developing into an entirely normal girl. It was difficult, as it has been in some other cases, to say to what extent she had actually forgotten the previous life and to what extent did not choose to expose memories of it. Perhaps both processes—forgetting and concealment—were in play.

In March 1973, I visited Disna and her family again at Udubogawa. She was by then fourteen years old and attending a private school in Kandy in the equivalent of the ninth class. She stood tenth in a class of twenty-seven students.

In response to a direct question Disna said she had completely forgotten the previous life. It seems unlikely, however, that she preserved no memories whatever about the previous life, if only because she occasionally saw members of Babanona's family. Thus the month before my visit she had seen R. M. Wimalasinghe on a bus. He had recognized her and she heard him describing to his companions in the bus the episode of how he had spilled and eaten Babanona's gram when he was an infant. (See item 54, Table 5.) And about two months before that, at the suggestion of her father, she and he had gone over to Medagoda and visited R. M. Gardias and T. N. Alice. I did not learn what motive A. S. Samarasinghe had for proposing this visit, but Disna went along readily and they were cordially received. Prior to this visit Disna had not been to see R. M. Gardias for three or perhaps four years. (As I had learned in 1970 that she had not visited R. M. Gardias since about 1968, I believe this visit made in late 1972 was the first in at least four years.) In any case, there was obviously almost no contact between the two families, which was to be expected in view of their different socioeconomic circumstances and Disna's unforgiving attitude—at least when younger—toward Babanona's son.

In a few traits Disna showed residues of habits corresponding to similar ones in Babanona. Thus she still chewed areca nuts (but not with betel) and she still enjoyed coconut sambola (but not spiced). She had become fond of sweetcakes, which her mother said she had not liked when younger. In all the matters that fell within my observation, Disna appeared to be fulfilling my earlier prediction that she would grow into an entirely normal girl. I would only add to this that she seemed to me superior in intelligence to the average girl of her age, an opinion supported by her record at her school.

After our meeting in 1973 Disna, who had learned to write English fairly well, became one of my more regular correspondents. We exchanged a number of letters, but did not meet again until March 28, 1976, when I found it possible to go to her village accompanied by Godwin Samararatne. We enjoyed a long visit with Disna and her family. Disna was seventeen years old and had just completed the examination for the Government Certificate earned by successful candidates at the completion of the education in Sri Lanka corresponding to that of an American high school.

Disna repeated that she had no residual memories of the previous life. She and her family maintained a slight contact with that of Babanona. Her father occasionally met R. M. Gardias and R. M. Romanis in the nearby town of Galagedera and they would invariably ask him: "How is my mother?" These inquiries made Disna's father think that it would be pleasant and courteous to visit Babanona's family in Medagoda. So he and Disna—a quite willing companion—in the spring of 1975 paid a call on R. M. Gardias and T. N. Alice. They were hospitably received, were served tea, and enjoyed themselves.

4. The Case of Lalitha Abeyawardena

Summary of the Case and Its Investigation

LALITHA ABEYAWARDENA was born in the town of Pilyandala, about 16 kilometers from Colombo, on August 16, 1962.¹ Her parents were N. E. Abeyawardena and his wife, K. E. Wasantha. Lalitha was the second of two children in the family. She had one older brother. Lalitha's father was a person of modest education who was principal of a carpentry school in Pilyandala. The family belong, in my judgment, to the lower middle class of Sri Lanka.

When Lalitha was about two and a half years old she began to speak and almost at once started saying that she was from a town called Mirigama, where she had two sons and a daughter. She said that her name was Nilanthie, and that her husband, E. S. Ekanayake, was a schoolteacher. She said she also had been a schoolteacher. She described how one could reach her house and mentioned a number of shops in the area as well as the name of the school where she had worked. She gave the names of some members of her family and of two servants and described a febrile intestinal illness from which she said she had died in a hospital.

Lalitha often showed strong emotion, including crying, as she talked of the previous life. She also manifested much concern over the children she claimed to have had, wondering if they were getting along satisfactorily or whether they were hungry, and expressing a wish to see them. She did not, however, express any wish to see the husband she claimed to have had. And although she described how to reach her home (of the previous life) in the Mirigama district, she never, in contrast to many other subjects of these cases, asked to go there.

Lalitha's family knew a teacher in Pilyandala, Mrs. C. E. Prema Lokuliyana, whose brother, C. E. Wickremasinghe, was a teacher trainee in Mirigama. From him Mrs. Lokuliyana confirmed some of Lalitha's statements as corresponding with facts in the life of a woman of that area named Nilanthie. Nilanthie had died on February 17, 1953,² thus about eight and a half years before Lalitha's birth.

In September 1965, when Lalitha was just a little more than three years old, news that she was talking about a previous life came to the attention of a distant relative of the Abeyawardenas, Mrs. Nanda Rajapaksa, a schoolteacher of Pilyandala. She visited Lalitha and, after hearing her statements about the previous life, went to Mirigama to make inquiries. She found

¹ In this report I have used pseudonyms for all persons in order to have more freedom in describing domestic quarrels and in questioning the veracity of some witnesses.

² I verified this date in the records of Durdans Hospital, Colombo, where Nilanthie had been treated for three days before her death.

without difficulty the shops and some of the other places mentioned by Lalitha, and verified many of her statements.

On November 11, 1965, Mr. V. F. Guneratne visited Pilyandala and made notes of the testimony of several informants concerning Lalitha's statements about the previous life.³ He recorded some seventeen statements made by Lalitha. He later placed all his notes at my disposal. I have made some use of these in compiling this report, although nearly all of what follows derives from my own interviews with the informants. V. F. Guneratne's notes have the advantage that he needed no interpreter to converse with the informants and that he was able to study the case before the two families concerned met, but not before the previous personality was identified. There are no discrepancies between his observations and my own data, although the information elicited is not always the same in both groups of material.

On November 28, 1965, the Sinhalese newspaper *Rividina* published a rather inaccurate account of the case. A relative of the Abeyawardenas had (without their permission) told the reporter about it. The Abeyawardenas had themselves been cooperating with a reporter from another newspaper who abandoned his project of publishing an account of the case after the one in *Rividina* appeared.

Not long afterward information about Lalitha's statements reached members of the family of Nilanthie. In about January 1966, some of them began to visit Lalitha in Pilyandala. These visitors included Nilanthie's husband, one of her sons, her daughter, and three of her brothers. Her son D. Sugath Ekanayake was the first to visit Lalitha.

I was able to begin investigating the case (with Francis Story) in July 1966. In March 1968, I returned to its investigation (again with Francis Story) and at that time interviewed many of the informants a second time. I also sought out and talked with some informants not interviewed earlier.

This case offered peculiar difficulties because, although Nilanthie's brothers as well as other informants outside Lalitha's family supported it, members of Nilanthie's marital family on the whole did not, and Nilanthie's husband, E. S. Ekanayake, implied that Lalitha's parents had tutored her to recount the story of a previous life. I shall discuss later my reasons for thinking that he had grounds for wishing the case suppressed and that he was willing to distort his testimony in order to accomplish this. I did not feel justified, however, in making such a judgment without more extensive inquiries. So in 1970 I went back to the case and had further interviews with many of the previous informants as well as with three new ones. I also had the opportunity then of learning more about Lalitha's development up to the age of eight.

In 1973 I finally met I. B. E. Vitanage, a potentially important informant whom I had tried unsuccessfully to meet earlier. (He had been well acquainted with E. S. Ekanayake, Nilanthie's husband.) Unfortunately, by this time he was seriously ill, suffering from the sequelae of a stroke, and unable to talk

³ Mr. V. F. Guneratne is a retired judge of Sri Lanka who was at one time Public Trustee. He has investigated a number of rebirth cases in Sri Lanka and has helped me in the investigation of others.

effectively. During my visit to Sri Lanka in 1973 I also visited Lalitha and her family and learned of Lalitha's further development and the persistence of residues of her memories of a previous life. By this time she was ten and a half years old. In March 1976 I had a follow-up interview with Lalitha and her mother.

In the end, thirty-two different informants gave testimony on this case.

Persons Interviewed during the Investigation

In Pilyandala and nearby villages I interviewed:

Lalitha Abeyawardena

K. E. Wasantha, Lalitha's mother

N. E. Abeyawardena, Lalitha's father

M. Kamala Samarakoon, Lalitha's paternal grandmother

Nanda Rajapaksa, relative of the Abeyawardenas and schoolteacher of Pilyandala

C. E. Prema Lokuliyana, schoolteacher of Pilyandala

C. E. Wickremasinghe, C. E. Prema Lokuliyana's brother

B. T. Kumarage, C. E. Prema Lokuliyana's nephew

M. G. R. Ratnayake, Nilanthie's oldest brother

V. T. Dhammika, M. G. R. Ratnayake's wife

L. Kulasekera, M. G. R. Ratnayake's daughter

M. Kulasekera, M. G. R. Ratnayake's daughter

Mary Fernando, neighbor of the Abeyawardenas

Seetha Fernando, schoolgirl and daughter of Mary Fernando

Padma Gamatilleke, schoolgirl and neighbor of the Abeyawardenas

M. G. R. Pathirane, Nilanthie's middle brother

C. E. Seetha Nimala, former domestic assistant of Nilanthie

J. T. Sackremagama, Ayurvedic physician and acquaintance of Nilanthie

In Kottala Estate village, near Veyangoda, I interviewed:

E. S. Ekanayake, Nilanthie's husband

E. N. Ekanayake, E. S. Ekanayake's older brother

E. F. Wathaseelie, E. N. Ekanayake's wife

Nilanthie Ekanayake, E. S. Ekanayake's second wife (having the same first name as his first wife)

Renuka Ekanayake, daughter of (the first) Nilanthie

V. T. Kusuma Sarathchandra, headmistress of school at Bandarawatte and neighbor and friend of (the first) Nilanthie

T. K. Sarathchandra, V. T. Kusuma Sarathchandra's son

V. Sarathchandra, V. T. Kusuma Sarathchandra's son

In Ratmalana, near Colombo, I interviewed:

D. Sugath Ekanayake, older son of (the first) Nilanthie

In Colombo I interviewed:

M. G. R. Petcheragama, Nilanthie's youngest brother
Ven. Upali Wilgoweliya Thera

In Hultota I interviewed:

B. E. Maria Ratne (familiarily known as "Kanthie"), relative and domestic assistant of Nilanthie

In Arukwatta, Padukka, I interviewed:

E. Vitanage, whose husband, I. B. E. Vitanage, was the uncle of V. T. Dhammika and a person who knew Nilanthie and her husband, E. S. Ekanayake

In Halugama, near Mirigama, I interviewed:

V. N. Wanninayake, schoolteacher and acquaintance of E. S. Ekanayake

In addition to the above I discussed the last illness and death of Nilanthie with two physicians of Durdans Hospital, Colombo. These were Drs. N. S. Perera and B. E. R. B. Samarakoon. They kindly showed me the hospital records of Nilanthie's illness. Dr. Samarakoon had admitted and treated her and was able to recall her case. I also obtained a copy of her official death certificate.

I have not listed I. B. E. Vitanage among the above informants because, as I have already mentioned, by the time I was finally able to meet him in Arukwatta, Padukka, he had had a stroke and was almost completely aphasic.

Several members of Nilanthie Ekanayake's marital family had or developed strongly negative attitudes toward the case, and it will be necessary to examine these and the motives for them in detail later.

Another informant, otherwise reliable, showed a puzzling discrepancy in the testimony she gave on two different occasions. This was C. E. Prema Lokuliyana. In 1966 she gave a rather detailed account as if she had been an eyewitness of the meeting between E. S. Ekanayake and Lalitha, but in 1970 she said she had not been present on that occasion but had seen him in Pilyandala on the occasion of another visit. Since to the best of my knowledge E. S. Ekanayake came only once to see Lalitha, I think that C. E. Prema Lokuliyana's memories had become somewhat impaired between 1966 and 1970 and I have adopted what she said in 1966 as being more reliable. She was then recalling events of the fairly recent past, but in 1970 they were five years old.

Among the members of Lalitha's family, her mother, K. E. Wasantha, was the most valuable informant. Lalitha's father and her paternal grandmother were present during my early interviews at their home but contributed less. N. E. Abeyawardena listened to his wife's testimony and usually said little himself, although sometimes he offered comments or answered questions.

*Relevant Facts of Geography and Possibilities for Normal Means of Communication
between the Two Families*

Pilyandala, where the Abeyawardenas lived, is almost 16 kilometers southeast of Colombo. Mirigama lies 45 kilometers northeast of Colombo and about 61 kilometers from Pilyandala. Actually Nilanthie lived not in Mirigama itself but at a small place called Halgampitiya, near another town, Veyangoda, which is 13 kilometers closer to Colombo and about 48 kilometers from Pilyandala.

The Abeyawardenas denied any knowledge of Nilanthie Ekanayake and her husband before Lalitha began to talk about them. It happened, however, that an older brother of Nilanthie had moved many years earlier to Pilyandala. (He had died in 1944, before the development of the case.) Following him, three more of her brothers moved to Pilyandala. These were M. G. R. Ratnayake, the oldest brother, M. G. R. Pathirane, the middle brother, and M. G. R. Petcheragama, the youngest brother. To start with the last first, M. G. R. Petcheragama had lived in Pilyandala from 1947 to 1956. During this time he had as a business associate a brother of N. E. Abeyawardena. From time to time M. G. R. Petcheragama visited the Abeyawardena home in connection with some business matters. The visits were not social, and he said that he never talked of family affairs to the Abeyawardenas. These visits ceased after the death of N. E. Abeyawardena's brother in 1955, that is, seven years before Lalitha's birth. In 1957, M. G. R. Petcheragama moved from Pilyandala to another place, 5 kilometers away. Nilanthie's middle brother, M. G. R. Pathirane, said that he knew the Abeyawardenas but had no friendship or social relationships with them. He lived in a different section of Pilyandala from the Abeyawardenas, and so there was little possibility of casual contact between him and the Abeyawardena family. The situation of Nilanthie's oldest brother, M. G. R. Ratnayake, did, however, present such possibilities. He had moved to Pilyandala in the 1940s and had lived there ever since. During the years 1958-64 he and his family lived in a house only about 200 meters from the Abeyawardenas and on the same street. For about a year in 1965-66 they moved to another house in Pilyandala and then returned to their former neighborhood, where they occupied a house about 100 meters farther down the same street, again quite close to that of the Abeyawardenas. The families were casually acquainted and smiled when they passed on the street. With one exception they had no social contacts. N. E. Abeyawardena did not remember any occasion when the Ratnayakes had been in his house

and M. G. R. Ratnayake himself said there had been none. His wife, V. T. Dhammika, however, recalled that there had been a funeral at the Abeyawardenas' house around 1963 and that she had gone into the house at that time. Her husband had not. V. T. Dhammika could not recall whether or not Lalitha was in the house on that occasion, but in any case she would only have been about a year old at the time. The visit was formal and would have provided no occasion for V. T. Dhammika to talk about her sister-in-law even if she had been disposed to do so to comparative strangers. The informants of these families mentioned no other occasion of being in each other's house from that time until the Ratnayakes came to hear of Lalitha's statements about a previous life. The Ratnayakes had three daughters, but the youngest of these was born in 1953, thus nine years before Lalitha, and so she was not in Lalitha's group of playmates.

An Ayurvedic physician, J. T. Sackremagama, who had been an acquaintance of Nilanthie's brothers, also lived in Pilyandala, but he had no social contact with the Abeyawardenas, and Lalitha's mother said they did not know him at all before Lalitha began speaking of the previous life. Moreover, it is doubtful if he knew much about Nilanthie. In 1966 he said that he had met her before her marriage but had not visited her afterward. In 1970, however, he denied that he had ever met her personally; perhaps in 1966 he was confusing Nilanthie with another member of the family.

I have already mentioned that C. E. Wickremasinghe, the brother of a teacher in Pilyandala who was acquainted with Lalitha, made some of the first verifications of her statements in the area of Mirigama, where he was a teacher trainee in 1965. But he had only been in Mirigama one year, did not know E. S. Ekanayake personally, and had to ask another teacher of the area to verify the statements. So he could not have been a conduit for normal communication of information about Nilanthie to Lalitha.

Lalitha's mother, K. E. Wasantha, knew and had known for twenty years C. E. Seetha Nimala, a woman who had worked as a servant for Nilanthie. She was living in the 1960s in Kilamone, near Pilyandala, where I met her. She had a considerable familiarity with the details of Nilanthie's unhappy marriage, although she was not living with her at the time of her terminal illness. She did not, however, visit Lalitha's family or talk about the life of Nilanthie at any time when Lalitha was very young and before she began to talk about the previous life.

In sum, three of Nilanthie's brothers were living in Pilyandala when Lalitha first talked about the previous life. Only one of them, M. G. R. Ratnayake, and his family, lived close enough to the Abeyawardenas to permit much contact between the families. The Ratnayakes were neighbors of the Abeyawardenas at the time Lalitha was born and afterward, but both families denied that they had any more than "street acquaintance" before Lalitha began talking about the previous life.

The Marriage, Illness, and Death of Nilanthie

My brief account of the marriage, illness, and death of Nilanthie will be derived and condensed from information given me by Nilanthie's brothers, friends, and servants, and by her son in my first interview with him. Their statements all agreed with regard to the main events reported.

Nilanthie was born on February 20, 1914, (probably) at Kerawalapitiya, near Hendala, about 5 kilometers from Colombo. In early life she trained as a teacher. She was living at Henegama, near Horana, about 35 kilometers from Colombo, when she married in 1939, at the age of about twenty-five years. Her husband, E. S. Ekanayake, had been an assistant teacher to Nilanthie's father, who was principal of a school at that time. She and her husband, it seems, enjoyed some years of satisfactory marriage, but he later treated her unkindly and she grew afraid of him. He began to show what one informant called "lust for other women." He probably drank alcohol to excess, but no firsthand informant said that he was an alcoholic.

Nilanthie and her husband moved, in young adulthood, to the village of Halgampitiya, which is about 3 kilometers from Veyangoda and about 15 kilometers from Mirigama. They both took positions as teachers in this area, first in the same school, later in different ones. Although Nilanthie had three children (two sons and a daughter), she continued to teach school while raising her children. During the later years of her marriage she taught at a school near Bandarawatte, and her husband at one farther away, near Mirigama.

E. S. Ekanayake became infatuated with another woman who was a teacher at the school near Mirigama where he himself taught and who happened to have the same name as his wife, Nilanthie. He wanted to marry the second Nilanthie and, apparently looking for an excuse to divorce his wife, began to accuse her of having an affair with another man. When she denied this, he tried to choke her and later threatened her with a knife. Nilanthie confided these brutalities to her friend and principal, V. T. Kusuma Sarathchandra. To her oldest brother, however, Nilanthie tried to maintain a brave front, but she sometimes hinted at her sufferings to her other brothers and sisters. Her family gradually sensed that she was afraid of her husband and learned the extent of her unhappiness. Two of her brothers suggested that she leave her husband and come to their homes, but she refused on the grounds that she had to stay with her three children.

Eventually, however, Nilanthie did decide to leave her husband and informed V. T. Kusuma Sarathchandra of her decision. She wound up her work at school and did not return the following week. Some days later, V. T. Kusuma Sarathchandra heard that Nilanthie had died. In the meantime, her husband had taken her to the home of her oldest brother, M. G. R. Ratnayake, in Pilyandala. She had a fever and her brother had her admitted to Durdans Hospital in Colombo, where she succumbed three days later, on February 17, 1953. Her death was attributed to "nonspecific enteritis."

For the events between Nilanthie's last conversation with V. T. Kusuma Sarathchandra and her arrival at her brother's house (perhaps a day or two later) I have no firsthand information. Her oldest brother, M. G. R. Ratnayake, learned later that E. S. Ekanayake had beaten his wife and that he had then forced her to bathe (in the well) even though she was ill at the time and had a fever.⁴ He obtained this information from his wife's uncle, I. B. E. Vitanage, who came from the area of Veyangoda and knew E. S. Ekanayake. I went twice (in 1970) to this informant's village, Arukwatta, Padukka, in the hope of interviewing him, but missed him each time. However, his wife, E. Vitanage, confirmed that her husband had told her that E. S. Ekanayake had a mistress, that he had mistreated and beaten his wife, and that when she became ill he neglected her and forced her to bathe. (In 1973 I went out to Arukwatta, Padukka, again and succeeded in meeting I. B. E. Vitanage, but by this time a stroke had reduced him to a pathetic aphasic cripple and he was unable to communicate effectively.)

Before she died Nilanthie herself made no complaint to her brother M.G.R. Ratnayake of being beaten or forced to bathe. Her silence on this matter may have been a continuation of her attempts to minimize her troubles with her husband to her family or possibly she was simply too ill at that time to go into any details of her situation.

After his sister's death, M.G.R. Ratnayake was sufficiently suspicious about the shortness of her illness to contemplate asking for an inquest, but he did not do so. Nilanthie's body was embalmed, taken back to Veyangoda, and buried. According to another brother, M.G.R. Petcheragama, Nilanthie's son Sugath said that his father had beaten his mother with a baton about a week before her death. And V. T. Kusuma Sarathchandra's sons, T. K. Sarathchandra and V. Sarathchandra, said that Sugath and others had accused E. S. Ekanayake of murdering his wife. D. Sugath Ekanayake made the milder admission to me in 1966 that his father had been cruel to his mother and had forced her to bathe when she was ill. There were no firsthand witnesses of any actual mistreatment by E. S. Ekanayake of his wife, but a general consensus among my informants found credible the idea that he had forced her to bathe when she was already ill. And the reluctant complaints of Nilanthie that he had beaten her on earlier occasions and had threatened her left him vulnerable to suspicions in connection with her death which were perhaps undeserved. He cannot have reduced the gossip against him when he married the second Nilanthie three months after his first wife's death.

As will be seen in later sections, the accounts I obtained of what happened to Nilanthie during the last ten days of her life accord very well with Lalitha's statements, and this, I think, bears on the attitude of E. S. Ekanayake (and later that of his son) toward the case.

⁴Although most Western persons bathe indoors and do so even when they have a fever, most persons of South Asian villages bathe outdoors near wells or ponds (called tanks), and as they can become chilled at such times they consider it quite imprudent to bathe when they have a fever.

During the three days Nilanthie spent in the hospital before dying, she was delirious much of the time. Her brother M. G. R. Petcheragama said that when he saw her she was going through the motions of plucking flowers for a religious (*puja*) offering. She also pulled off and threw away a chain and a wedding ring, saying she did not need them. He heard in 1968 from a former servant of Nilanthie, B. E. Maria Ratne (“Kanthie”), that Nilanthie was also in her delirium going through the motions of teaching a class and feeding her children. However, by the time I interviewed B. E. Maria Ratne (“Kanthie”) in 1968 she had largely forgotten the gestures shown by Nilanthie during her terminal delirium. She recalled Nilanthie speaking of opening a bottle for a drink and mentioning some clothes. She also remembered her making gestures with her arms as if to ask people (children in a class perhaps) to sit down. At one time during the delirium Nilanthie said: “I hear footsteps of Mr. Ekanayake.”

M. G. R. Ratnayake was not present at the moment of his sister’s death, although he had visited her in the hospital. He learned later that as she was dying she pressed her hands flat together in a final gesture of worship.⁵

As relevant to details occurring in Lalitha’s statements about the previous life, I should mention here that Nilanthie’s death was attributed in her death certificate to nonspecific enteritis. From my study of the hospital records at Durdans Hospital and review of the case at the hospital with the two physicians previously mentioned, Drs. N. S. Perera and B. E. R. B. Samarakoon (one of whom, Dr. Samarakoon, had actually treated Nilanthie), it was clear that typhoid fever was seriously considered in the differential diagnosis because she was given chloramphenicol, a drug generally considered almost specific for typhoid fever. Nilanthie was critically ill with a fever ranging between 101° F and 105° F, and the physicians did not feel justified in awaiting the results of blood cultures and other examinations before starting medication. However, since she died before they had reached a specific diagnosis, the death certificate gave the cause of death as nonspecific enteritis. These details bear on the fact that Lalitha, in describing the cause of the fever from which Nilanthie died, used the word *unasannipatha*, a Sinhalese word translated as “typhoid fever.”

The Character of Nilanthie Ekanayake

From the statements of various informants it has been possible to reconstruct the main elements in the character of Nilanthie. She was fond of her brothers

⁵ The behavior of delirious persons and the last words of dying persons often expose the central preoccupations of the person’s life before he reached the critical or terminal point of it, at which time these concerns become more openly expressed. For illustrations of this phenomenon, see H. G. Wolff and D. Curran. 1935. Nature of delirium and allied states. *Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry* 33: 1176–1215; C. T. Thurmond. 1943. Last thoughts before drowning. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 38: 165–84; and E. S. LeComte, ed. 1955. *Dictionary of last words*. New York: Philosophical Library. In the present case, Nilanthie’s piety, her fear of her husband, her love for her children, and her interest in teaching all came to the surface during her terminal delirium. The last words and gestures of the previous personalities of these cases rather frequently figure in the statements and behavior of the subjects. For other examples of such correspondences, see the cases of Shamlinie Prema (this volume), Marta Lorenz, and Sukla Gupta (I. Stevenson. 1974. *Twenty cases*).

and sisters and had affectionate relations with them. She was popular with her nieces. She was devoted to her own children, and her concern for them kept her from leaving her husband even when he apparently maltreated her cruelly. She was evidently concerned about preserving an appearance of harmony in her family to her brothers, because she confided very little to them about the miseries of her marriage; she spoke more freely with her friend V. T. Kusuma Sarathchandra. Her oldest brother, M. G. R. Ratnayake, knew of the extreme unhappiness in her marriage only a few months before her final illness and death. Even when Nilanthie's husband (at her request) brought her, seriously ill, to her brother, she said nothing to him about her husband beating her (as it seems likely he did) and forcing her to bathe.

Outside her family, Nilanthie's chief interest was teaching, at which she worked for many years. She was gentle with the children in her classes.

Nilanthie was known to everyone as a devoutly religious person. She went often to Buddhist temples, where she made offerings of flowers. She herself sang gathas.⁶

Statements and Recognitions Made by Lalitha

In Table 7 I have not attempted to list in chronological order all the statements and recognitions made by Lalitha. Instead I have placed the statements in groups more or less related to topics. Thus items 1-16 refer to Nilanthie and members of her immediate family, such as her husband, children, siblings, and mother. Items 17-22 refer to Nilanthie's schoolteaching. Items 23-29 describe Nilanthie's house in Halgampitiya and directions for reaching it. Items 30-49 refer to people, places, objects, or incidents connected with Nilanthie's married life at Halgampitiya. These are followed by items 50-54, referring to the infidelity of her husband with his mistress (the second Nilanthie), who became his second wife, and to E. S. Ekanayake's mistreatment of his first wife (the first Nilanthie). Items 55-62 refer to Nilanthie's illness and death. After these statements I have grouped the recognitions made by Lalitha in items 63-71.

Most of the statements for which Lalitha's mother, K. E. Wasantha, is listed as the informant were made before any verification of Lalitha's statements had been made, that is, before September 1965. This is almost always the case when she is listed as the only informant. (As I have mentioned earlier, her mother-in-law, M. Kamala Samarakoon, and her husband, N. E. Abeyawardena, were present throughout much of the interviews with K. E. Wasantha and consenting to or supplementing what she said; but I have not listed them except in special places as additional informants.) Lalitha's mother was also a witness of some statements made by Lalitha when and after members of Nilanthie's family or friends came to visit her. Lalitha made some of her statements on these occasions in answer to questions put to her by the visitors. Items 36-37 are examples of such statements.

⁶ Gathas are short verses of Buddhist scriptures which are often sung as part of religious devotional exercises. The word is cognate with Sanskrit *gita* (English: "song").

Lalitha's statements as reported by informants included a number of words she mispronounced. Examples were her saying "set" for "shed" (item 26), and the names of persons she probably or definitely mispronounced (items 31 and 42).⁷ For item 45 Lalitha supplemented her words with gestures to indicate the action of rowing a ferry across a river.⁸

I believe that the reporting by the child's parents or other discovery of such mispronunciations (or use of supplementary gestures) provides some additional evidence of the authenticity of cases in which these occur. It indicates that the child really did begin to talk about the previous life at a very young age and before having full development of speech. And it sometimes also tells us that the names mispronounced were unknown to the child's parents, who would otherwise have corrected the pronunciation during their reporting. Sometimes they can infer what the child means, as in the instance of "set" for "shed," but with proper names this is naturally difficult, when not completely impossible.

Most of Lalitha's statements which could be checked turned out to be correct. They include, however, one puzzling feature that I do not adequately understand. When asked where Nilanthie was from, Lalitha would invariably say Mirigama. She never seems to have mentioned by name either Halgampitiya, the village where Nilanthie lived during the later years of her life, or Veyangoda, the fairly large town nearer to Halgampitiya than Mirigama. She mentioned shops in Mirigama where Nilanthie's husband traded, but where he said she had never shopped. (I do not think he can have known this with certainty, but it is improbable that Nilanthie went often to Mirigama to shop. Veyangoda was much closer.) Nilanthie's husband taught in Mirigama and the place certainly had importance in her life for that reason, but not so much as one would have thought Halgampitiya and Veyangoda would have had. Mirigama, however, is the major town of the area and it would therefore be permissible and indeed expected that someone from the area would say he (or she) "came from Mirigama."

Lalitha's statements show a definite clustering around the events in the later, married life of Nilanthie. Thirteen statements (items 50-62), 22 per cent of the total number, refer to Nilanthie's marital unhappiness and her illness and death, which were all associated events and to some extent causally related. Nearly all the other statements definitely or probably refer to events occurring during the time of Nilanthie's marriage. Only two items refer to events of her life before marriage. These were the references to her mother's fondness for a particular food, *kukulala* (item 16), and to Nilanthie having had her finger bitten by a younger brother when feeding him (item 12). Assuming that this last event occurred when the boy (who was born in 1927) was not more

⁷ For other examples of mispronunciations of words by the subjects of these cases, see the cases of Shamlinie Prema, Sujith Lakmal Jayaratne, Mahes de Silva (this volume), and Imad Elawar (I. Stevenson. 1974. *Twenty cases*).

⁸ For other examples of the use of gestures to supplement words in describing the previous life, see the cases of Kumkum Verma (first volume of this series), Ruby Kusuma Silva, Sujith Lakmal Jayaratne (this volume), and Imad Elawar (I. Stevenson. 1974. *Twenty cases*).

TABLE 7. Summary of Statements and Recognitions Made by Lalitha

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. She was called Nilanthie.	K. E. Wasantha, Lalitha's mother Seetha Fernando, schoolgirl and neighbor of the Abeyawardenas	M. G. R. Ratnayake, Nilanthie's oldest brother E. S. Ekanayake, Nilanthie's husband	It should be remembered, to avoid confusion later, that the second wife of E. S. Ekanayake was also called Nilanthie. Lalitha used the present tense in saying: "My name is Nilanthie."
2. Her husband was called E. S. Ekanayake.	K. E. Wasantha Seetha Fernando	E. S. Ekanayake	Seetha Fernando did not mention that Lalitha had given the initials of Nilanthie's husband.
3. She was from Mirigama.	K. E. Wasantha Nanda Rajapaksa, schoolteacher and distant relative of the Abeyawardenas Padma Gamatilleke, schoolgirl and neighbor of the Abeyawardenas	E. S. Ekanayake	Nilanthie had lived in the general area of Mirigama, which is the largest town of the area. It is only loosely correct, however, to say that she came from there. She actually lived much closer to another town, Veyangoda.
4. She had two sons attending school.	K. E. Wasantha	E. S. Ekanayake M. G. R. Ratnayake	These sons had stopped attending school by the time Lalitha began speaking of the previous life. When Nilanthie died, her older son, Sugath, was thirteen, and her younger son, Udaya, was nine.
5. One son was called Sugath.	K. E. Wasantha	D. Sugath Ekanayake, Nilanthie's older son	Sugath was born in 1940 and was therefore thirteen when his mother died in 1953.
6. One son was called Udaya.	K. E. Wasantha	E. S. Ekanayake	Udaya was nine when his mother died.

7. She had an infant daughter.
 K. E. Wasantha
 Mary Fernando, neighbor of the Abeyawardenas
 E. S. Ekanayake
 M. G. R. Ratnayake
8. She had three brothers and two sisters.
 K. E. Wasantha
 M. G. R. Ratnayake
9. Her brother wore trousers.
 C. E. Prema Lokuliyana, school-teacher of Pilyandala
 See comment.
10. Her younger sister lived at Hultota.
 K. E. Wasantha
 M. G. R. Ratnayake
11. Her younger brother visited her on a motorcycle.
 M. G. R. Petcheragama,
 Nilanthie's youngest brother
 M. G. R. Petcheragama
12. Her brother bit her finger once when she was feeding him.
 M. Kamala Samarakoon,
 Lalitha's paternal grandmother
 M. G. R. Ratnayake
- Nilanthie's daughter, Renuka, was born in 1950 and thus was three years old when her mother died.
- Lalitha was making a distinction between her own older brother, who wore a sarong, and the brothers of the previous life. Two of them, a teacher and a government clerk, would wear trousers to work. At the time I interviewed them, these brothers, M. G. R. Ratnayake and M. G. R. Petcheragama, wore trousers, but Nilanthie's middle brother, M. G. R. Pathirane, wore a sarong.
- Nilanthie's younger sister actually lived at a place called Karawinela, which is near Hultota.
- M. G. R. Petcheragama was born in 1927 and was still a young man and unmarried when Nilanthie died in 1953. He had a motorcycle and visited Nilanthie every week.
- Nilanthie's youngest brother, M. G. R. Petcheragama, did not himself remember that he had bitten her finger once when she was feeding him. He did remember that she, as the oldest sister, had fed him. He remembered that his mother told him about the incident when he was

TABLE 7 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
12. (cont.)			older. It occurred during his early childhood and therefore long before Nilanthie's death. M. G. R. Petcheragama was born in 1927. If we assume his older sister would not be feeding him (at the latest) after the age of three, the episode could not have occurred after 1930; therefore it took place approximately twenty-three or more years before Nilanthie's death and was being remembered by Lalitha thirty-five years after it happened.
13. She had a brother at Mirigama.	C. E. Prema Lokuliyana	Incorrect	Nilanthie's husband taught at Mirigama, but she had no brother or other relative there.
14. She had an older sister living at Panadura.	C. E. Prema Lokuliyana	M. G. R. Ratnayake	M. G. R. Ratnayake and his wife lived for a time at a village near Panadura. The remark could be considered correct in the sense that a sister-in-law is often referred to as sister in Sri Lanka. Nilanthie's sister-in-law was the wife of her older brother, but she was herself younger than Nilanthie. Nilanthie did not have a real sister living in Panadura.
15. She was born in Henegama.	K. E. Wasantha	Doubtful	According to M. G. R. Ratnayake, Nilanthie's brother, she was born in Kerawalapitiya, but he was not sure of this. Another of Nilanthie's brothers, M. G. R. Pathirane, said that Nilanthie was born in

Henegama. She was living in Henegama when she was married in 1939. This was the place to which her father retired in 1935.

16. Her mother was very fond of kukulala.
K. E. Wasantha
C. E. Prema Lokuliyana
M. G. R. Petcheragama
Lalitha asked her mother to get some kukulala. She said it was a root. It is a root somewhat like a yam eaten as part of a curry or separately after boiling. The Abeyawardenas had never even heard of it and asked M. G. R. Petcheragama what it was. His and Nilanthie's mother had been fond of it and had given it to her family often.
17. She was a schoolteacher.
K. E. Wasantha
C. E. Prema Lokuliyana
Seetha Fernando
E. S. Ekanayake
M. G. R. Ratnayake
18. She taught the kindergarten class.
K. E. Wasantha
V. T. Kusuma Sarathchandra, headmistress of school at Bandarawatte
M. G. R. Ratnayake
V. T. Kusuma Sarathchandra recalled that Nilanthie had taught the lower classes, but could not remember exactly which ones. M. G. R. Ratnayake was not quite certain that his sister had taught the kindergarten class.
19. Her husband was a schoolteacher.
K. E. Wasantha
E. S. Ekanayake
M. G. R. Ratnayake
E. S. Ekanayake taught at a school near Mirigama during the later years of his wife's life.
20. She taught school at Bandarawatte.
K. E. Wasantha
V. T. Kusuma Sarathchandra
21. She taught at a school called Pathegegedera.
E. S. Ekanayake
V. T. Kusuma Sarathchandra
The school at Bandarawatte where Nilanthie taught was also known as Pathegegedera.

TABLE 7 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
22. She went to the school to teach in a car.	K. E. Wasantha	M. G. R. Ratnayake	E. S. Ekanayake and his (first) wife, Nilanthie, lived at Halgampitiya, not far from Veyangoda. E. S. Ekanayake would drive his wife in their car to her school at Bandarawatte, near Veyangoda, and then go on to his own school, near Mirigama.
23. Her [previous] house was very much larger than her [present] house.	K. E. Wasantha	Verified by me on comparing the two houses	The difference is not great. The house in Halgampitiya is somewhat larger than the one-story house in Pilyandala, but not "very much" larger.
24. She had a sewing machine, bookcase, beds, and almirah [closet] in her house.	K. E. Wasantha	M. G. R. Ratnayake	M. G. R. Ratnayake verified that his sister had owned all the named items except bookcases. He was not sure about them.
25. A blacksmith's shop could be seen from the house.	Nanda Rajapaksa C. E. Prema Lokuliyana Padma Gamatilleke	Verified, but name of informant not written down	An informant who was in a group showing us the house in Halgampitiya said there had formerly been a blacksmith's shop near the house. There was also a blacksmith's shop (still existent in 1968) just at the entrance of the Kottala Coconut Estate, to which E. S. Ekanayake had moved about 1955, after the death of his first wife, Nilanthie. There is a blacksmith's shop, or, more accurately, a shop for metal work, just next door to the

Abeywardenas' house in Pilyandala. This shop may have been the stimulus for the memory.

26. There was a petrol shed near the crossroads going to the house.

K. E. Wasantha
C. E. Prema Lokuliyana

I saw this "shed" at Veyangoda.

Petrol shed is the phrase used in Sri Lanka for "gasoline station." The word *shed*, although English, is used in the Sinhalese language. Lalitha could not pronounce the word *shed* correctly when she first tried to give directions for finding "her" house and said "set" or "setia."

27. There was a bo tree near the crossroads going to the house.

K. E. Wasantha
Nanda Rajapaksa

I saw the bo tree near the petrol shed in Veyangoda.

The bo tree was across the railway tracks from the petrol shed. The petrol shed was the nearest one to the house in Halgampitiya where Nilanthie and her husband lived. E. S. Ekanayake pointed out that there were also a petrol shed and a bo tree at Mirigama. I saw these also during a visit to Mirigama in 1970. Since Lalitha mentioned going first to Mirigama junction, she may have been referring to the petrol shed and bo tree there rather than to the ones at Veyangoda.

Neither a petrol shed nor a bo tree is very specific in reference to a place. Nor is the combination rare, since both bo trees and petrol sheds are likely to be placed at crossroads.

28. To go to the house from the present house you had to get into a bus and go a long distance.

Nanda Rajapaksa

Verified by me during my visits to the places concerned

The distance between Pilyandala, where Lalitha lived, and Halgampitiya, where Nilanthie lived, is about 42 kilometers. It is possible to go most of the way by bus.

TABLE 7 (*cont.*)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
29. Cars can go along the road to the house, but buses cannot.	K. E. Wasantha	Verified by me on a visit to Halgampitiya	The road was a rather poor dirt road, traversible by automobiles, but not suitable for buses.
30. She had a necklace.	D. Sugath Ekanayake	D. Sugath Ekanayake	D. Sugath Ekanayake did not hear about the necklace directly from Lalitha. Her mother asked him to bring for her a necklace to which Lalitha was referring. Nilanthie had had a gold chain.
31. "Pareratne" used to visit the home often.	K. E. Wasantha	B. E. Maria Ratne ("Kanthie"), relative and domestic assistant of Nilanthie	It seems probable that the word "Pareratne" (which no one could place as such) was Lalitha's effort to say "Maria Ratne." The last four syllables are very similar. (For other examples of mispronunciations by Lalitha, see items 26 and 42.) The description could well apply to B. E. Maria Ratne, who was, however, more than a visitor. She lived in the Ekanayake home for four or five years. She was an employee and also a close friend of Nilanthie. She visited Nilanthie in the hospital before she died.
32. "Kanthie" was a servant who cooked.	K. E. Wasantha	B. E. Maria Ratne ("Kanthie")	B. E. Maria Ratne, the person referred to in this item, was familiarly known as "Kanthie." She worked as a domestic assistant or servant for the Ekanayakes for four or five years and had left them only

a few months before Nilanthie died. She was a close friend of Nilanthie. While living with the Ekanayakes she attended school and in her spare time helped with the housework. I did not learn whether she cooked, but I think it likely that she did. M. G. R. Ratnayake thought that she might have cooked but was uncertain.

33. There was a servant driver called Kurukulasooriya. Nanda Rajapaksa Incorrect
 E. S. Ekanayake said he and his wife did not have a driver. Kurukulasooriya was not known.
34. "Bomulla" (name mentioned by Lalitha) C. E. Prema Lokuliyana E. S. Ekanayake
 There is a village called Alubomalla 6 kilometers from Panadura, where Lalitha said one of Nilanthie's sisters lived. (See item 14.)
35. Indiparapa (name mentioned by Lalitha) C. E. Prema Lokuliyana E. S. Ekanayake
 Indiparapa is a village in the Mirigama area.
36. Seetha Nimala cooked *pittu* for her. C. E. Seetha Nimala, former domestic assistant of Nilanthie K. E. Wasantha C. E. Seetha Nimala
Pittu is a mixture of coconut and flour steamed and eaten with gravy for breakfast.
37. She and Seetha Nimala had picked *gotukola* together. C. E. Seetha Nimala C. E. Seetha Nimala
Gotukola is a leafy vegetable that grows wild in Sri Lanka and is collected often in the paddy fields. C. E. Seetha Nimala had spent about a month in Nilanthie's home about six months before her death. She said that "every evening" she and Nilanthie went together to pick *gotukola*.
38. There was a boutique called Marikasi. Nanda Rajapaksa E. S. Ekanayake
 Marikasi boutique was in Mirigama. It was known to E. S. Ekanayake,

TABLE 7 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
38. (cont.)			but he doubted that it could have been known to his first wife.
39. There was a Lakamage or Likorge Boutique.	Nanda Rajapaksa	Doubtful	E. S. Ekanayake could recall no boutique having either of these names but Nanda Rajapaksa told me that she had found a boutique called Likorge in Mirigama. However, when I visited Mirigama in 1970 I could find neither this boutique nor anyone who had heard of it.
40. There was a Kemal Boutique.	K. E. Wasantha Nanda Rajapaksa	E. S. Ekanayake I saw this boutique when I visited Mirigama in 1970.	This boutique in Mirigama was owned by Mustapha Kemal. E. S. Ekanayake shopped there. Lalitha had said Nilanthie had shopped at this boutique, but Nilanthie's husband and son denied that she had done so. (See text for further discussion.)
41. Baddewithe owned Kemal Boutique.	K. E. Wasantha Nanda Rajapaksa	Incorrect	See the preceding item. It seems possible, however, that Lalitha's mother had incorrectly remembered Lalitha's statement about Baddewithe. Nanda Rajapaksa said that Lalitha had said that one Baddewithe (not Baddewithe) had worked at the Likorge Boutique and she found this was correct. Furthermore, there were two Kemal Boutiques in Mirigama, so Lalitha could have been referring to the other one.

42. "Anjanie" worked at the school.	Nanda Rajapaksa	Nanda Rajapaksa	One Ranjanie, not "Anjanie," worked at a school of the Mirigama district. I did not verify this item independently. After the death of his first wife, E. S. Ekanayake had a servant called Anjanie. Just possibly this person is meant; if so, Lalitha showed knowledge of events occurring after Nilanthie's death.
43. She used to take her children to the temple.	K. E. Wasantha	M. G. R. Petcheragama	According to M. G. R. Petcheragama, his sister used to take her children to the temple almost every full moon day.
44. "Mirigama amma" lived with them.	K. E. Wasantha Nanda Rajapaksa	M. G. R. Ratnayake	<i>Mirigama amma</i> means "the mother from Mirigama," that is, Nilanthie's mother-in-law. Her in-laws lived in a house within the same compound as hers at Halgampitiya, but they did not actually live in her house.
45. They had once attended a wedding that had to be reached by rowing across a river in a ferry.	K. E. Wasantha	Unverified	Lalitha used her hands in the gesture of rowing to supplement her words as she described this event.
46. A hen fell into the well and she had to bring water from a neighbor's well.	B. T. Kumarage, C. E. Prema Lokuliyana's nephew	Unverified	I could not verify this statement. If such an event happened, it would probably be known to few people. There was a well by the house in Halgampitiya.
47. They had a coconut estate at Kottala.	Nanda Rajapaksa	D. Sugath Ekanayake E. N. Ekanayake, E. S. Ekanayake's older brother E. F. Wathaseelie, E. N. Ekanayake's wife	The informants disagreed about when E. S. Ekanayake bought a coconut estate at Kottala. Nilanthie's son, Sugath, said the estate was purchased in 1955, and so after Nilanthie's death, but her

TABLE 7 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
47. (cont.)			brother-in-law (and his wife) put the date earlier, at about 1948, although they said it could have been later.
48. Amerasekera used to bring coconuts to the house from the estate.	Nanda Rajapaksa	Unverified	See the preceding item. During Nilanthie's lifetime the Ekanayakes did not live on the coconut estate. The name "Amerasekera" was not placed by D. Sugath Ekanayake.
49. One day she returned home from school and there was a big commotion at home. Her husband had returned home after drinking and had beaten a girl.	Nanda Rajapaksa	Unverified	
50. Her husband had girl friends.	K. E. Wasantha	V. T. Kusuma Sarathchandra T. K. Sarathchandra, V. T. Kusuma Sarathchandra's son C. E. Seetha Nimala M. G. R. Petcheragama	Whether E. S. Ekanayake had more than one girl friend is not clearly established but seems probable. C. E. Seetha Nimala said she had heard that E. S. Ekanayake had "illicit love affairs." M. G. R. Petcheragama said that he had "lust for other women."
51. Her husband's second wife had been his girl friend before she [the first Nilanthie] had died.	K. E. Wasantha	T. K. Sarathchandra V. Sarathchandra, another son of V. T. Kusuma Sarathchandra	The Sarathchandras lived just opposite the school in Bandara-watte where Nilanthie taught. V. T. Kusuma Sarathchandra was headmistress of the school and a confidante of Nilanthie,

who told her about her troubles with her husband.

52. Her husband's second wife had been a teacher.

K. E. Wasantha

V. T. Dhammika,
M. G. R. Ratnayake's wife
T. K. Sarathchandra
V. Sarathchandra

The statements of this and the preceding item were apparently first made after Lalitha saw E. S. Ekanayake, who came to Pilyandala accompanied by his second wife. When Lalitha saw them together she might have inferred that they were then married. But this would not have told her that the second Nilanthie was a teacher.

53. Her husband drank too much alcohol.

Nanda Rajapaksa

Nanda Rajapaksa

Lalitha said once: "All the trouble I had [in the previous life] was due to my husband taking alcohol." Several informants mentioned that E. S. Ekanayake drank alcohol. One informant said he was quarrelsome when intoxicated. I did not find any firsthand informant who said that he was an alcoholic. Nanda Rajapaksa told me that one of Nilanthie's younger brothers—she did not say which—had described E. S. Ekanayake as a "liquor addict." (This was second-hand testimony.) Nilanthie's older brother M. G. R. Ratnayake said that E. S. Ekanayake drank alcohol, but did not know if he did this to excess.

54. Her husband had beaten her.

C. E. Seetha Nimala

M. G. R. Petcheragama
M. G. R. Ratnayake

The notes of V. F. Guneratne record that Lalitha had referred to

TABLE 7 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
54. (cont.)			<p>a fight and said Nilanthie's husband had struck her and she had fallen near a well. (The informant for this remark was not identified in the notes.) This statement evidently relates to that of the next item.</p>
			<p>M. G. R. Petcheragama and M. G. R. Ratnayake were both second-hand verifiers (to me) for this item. The former said that he had heard from Nilanthie's son D. Sugath Ekanayake that his father had beaten his mother about a week before her death. M. G. R. Ratnayake said that after his sister's death he had learned from I. B. E. Vitanage, himself not a direct witness, that her husband had beaten her. There seems to have been no eyewitness to the beating, if it occurred.</p>
55. She had fallen by a well and injured her shoulder.	K. E. Wasantha	Unverified	<p>I conjecture that this item may refer to the events after Nilanthie became ill and at the time her husband forced her to bathe. There could have been some resistance and scuffling near the well.</p>
56. She had a high fever, then bathed, and her condition became much worse.	K. E. Wasantha C. E. Seetha Nimala	M. G. R. Ratnayake D. Sugath Ekanayake	<p>C. E. Seetha Nimala said Lalitha told her that Nilanthie's husband had first beaten her and then forced her to bathe when she had fever.</p>

The villagers of South Asia usually bathe at wells, streams, or ponds (tanks) and thus in the open air. They are therefore likely to become chilled during the bathing, which is generally avoided during fever.

57. She died in a hospital.
 K. E. Wasantha
 M. G. R. Ratnayake
 E. S. Ekanayake
 Also verified by me in the records of Durdans Hospital, Colombo
 Nilanthie was admitted to Durdans Hospital in Colombo and died there three days later.
58. Her three brothers visited her in the hospital.
 K. E. Wasantha
 M. G. R. Ratnayake
 M. G. R. Petcheragama
 I do not know if Nilanthie's second brother, M. G. R. Pathirane, visited her in the hospital. Her other two brothers did, but her husband did not.
59. Her older son visited her [in the hospital] after she died.
 M. G. R. Ratnayake
 D. Sugath Ekanayake
 I am not positive that M. G. R. Ratnayake was a firsthand witness of this statement. Lalitha's mother, K. E. Wasantha, said she had not heard Lalitha say this. Evidently Lalitha was referring to a visit made by Nilanthie's son to Durdans Hospital. Strictly speaking, the statement is inaccurate. D. Sugath Ekanayake visited his mother in the hospital on the day before she died, but she had by then lapsed into terminal delirium verging on unconsciousness.
60. She died of "unasannipatha".
 K. E. Wasantha
 M. G. R. Ratnayake
 Also verified by me in the records of Durdans Hospital, Colombo
 The best translation of *unasannipatha* seems to be "typhoid fever" or "enteric fever." See text for report and discussion of details of Nilan-

TABLE 7 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
60. (cont.)			
61. She was thirty-eight years old when she died.	K. E. Wasantha	M. G. R. Ratnayake E. S. Ekanayake	<p>thie's last illness obtained at the hospital where she died. K. E. Wasantha did not think Lalitha had heard this unusual word before she used it.</p>
			<p>M. G. R. Ratnayake remembered his sister as having been thirty-nine when she died, and it seemed at first that Lalitha was mistaken. However, E. S. Ekanayake furnished exact dates for Nilanthie's birth and death, according to which she was a few days short of being thirty-nine when she died. According to him, she was born on February 20, 1914, and died on February 17, 1953. I myself further confirmed the date of death at Durdans Hospital and from the death certificate, which, incidentally, gave Nilanthie's age at death as thirty-eight.</p>
62. After her death she had gone back to Veyangoda.	M. G. R. Ratnayake	M. G. R. Ratnayake	<p>I am not positive M. G. R. Ratnayake was a firsthand witness for this statement. Nilanthie's body was embalmed and taken back for burial at Halgampitiya, near Veyangoda. (The bodies of some Buddhists in Sri Lanka are not cremated after death. There is a tendency to bury the</p>

bodies of younger persons and especially that of a wife if the husband is still living.) Lalitha was here showing knowledge of an event that happened after the death of Nilanthie.

63. Recognition of
E. S. Ekanayake,
Nilanthie's husband

K. E. Wasantha
C. E. Prema Lokuliyana

Lalitha's mother said E. S. Ekanayake came unannounced. He was accompanied by his daughter and second wife. Lalitha's mother indicated the guests sitting on the veranda and asked Lalitha: "Who are these people?" Lalitha replied: "Ekanayake."

C. E. Prema Lokuliyana (who was a secondhand witness) said that when Lalitha first saw E. S. Ekanayake she looked down. (This is the common expression of shyness shown by women of India and Sri Lanka in the presence of their husbands.) When E. S. Ekanayake had entered the house he called Lalitha to come to him, but she replied: "No, I am angry." She gave the same response when E. S. Ekanayake's second wife (also Nilanthie) asked Lalitha to come to her. As they were leaving, someone asked Lalitha who these people were. Lalitha said: "My husband, Ekanayake." E. S. Ekanayake overheard this remark (he being still within earshot) and said: "To whom are you referring?" Lalitha replied: "To you."

E. S. Ekanayake's account of this

TABLE 7 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
63. (cont.)			<p>meeting differed from the foregoing. He agreed that he had come unannounced. He had been invited to visit five days later, but had decided to surprise the family by coming earlier. He said that he introduced himself to the family upon arriving. (But Lalitha may not have heard him say who he was.) He said he asked Lalitha if she could recognize him and she said: "I don't know you." E. S. Ekanyake also denied that Lalitha had recognized his and (the first) Nilanthie's daughter.</p>
64. Recognition of Sugath, Nilanthie's son	K. E. Wasantha C. E. Seetha Nimala		<p>A doubtful recognition. D. Sugath Ekanyake said he was the first member of Nilanthie's marital family to visit Lalitha. He went with M. G. R. Pathirane on this visit, which actually preceded that of item 63, when he accompanied his father, sister, and step-mother. He denied that Lalitha had recognized him. Lalitha's mother in her testimony confused Lalitha's behavior toward Sugath with her behavior toward (the first) Nilanthie's daughter, Renuka. Concerning the first visit of Sugath, however, Lalitha's mother said Sugath asked Lalitha if she was his mother. To this Lalitha had</p>

replied: "I am not your mother now, but I was." C. E. Prema Lokuliyana was present at the Abeyawardena house on a later visit by Sugath when Lalitha indicated him and said: "This is my son Sugath." (See also the following item.)

65. Recognition of exercise book owned by Nilanthie

C. E. Prema Lokuliyana

For one visit to the Abeyawardenas, D. Sugath Ekanayake brought with him an exercise book which Nilanthie (his mother) had used. Mrs. Lokuliyana saw Lalitha with the book, and Lalitha said: "This is the book I used." Mrs. Lokuliyana tried to tell Lalitha this was wrong and that the book in fact belonged to her, but Lalitha very persistently said that she had used the book and it was hers. Since I do not know how Sugath handed the book over to Lalitha, I cannot say that she recognized it without any guidance. The episode is noteworthy, however, in showing Lalitha's strong attachment to the book. Unfortunately, I failed to ask D. Sugath Ekanayake himself about this episode.

66. Recognition of Renuka, Nilanthie's daughter

K. E. Wasantha

Renuka came with her father. Lalitha did not give her name, but said: "Podi duva," meaning "small daughter," when she saw her; she treated her affectionately and as a mother might. Although Renuka was fifteen and Lalitha less than four, Lalitha brought powder

TABLE 7 (cont.)

Item	Informants	Verification	Comments
66. (cont.)			<p>and put it on Renuka's face as a mother (in Sri Lanka) would. After first denying that Lalitha had applied powder to her face, Renuka said she had done this. But she denied that Lalitha had recognized her, as did her father and step-mother. Possibly they did not hear Lalitha's remark or they may have deliberately suppressed the truth. E. S. Ekanayake's second wife, also called Nilanthie, said she pointed to Renuka and asked Lalitha if this was her daughter. Lalitha replied: "No, yours." The expression <i>podi duwa</i> would have been appropriate also if Lalitha had thought Renuka was the second Nilanthie's daughter, not the first Nilanthie's. It would have been somewhat surprising if Lalitha had recognized Renuka, who had grown from a three-year-old toddler to a fifteen-year-old adolescent since the death of her mother.</p> <p>Since Renuka came with her father, Lalitha might have inferred normally that Renuka was the first Nilanthie's child.</p>
67. Recognition of M. G. R. Ratnayake, Nilanthie's oldest brother	M. G. R. Ratnayake		<p>I do not know exactly when Lalitha first saw M. G. R. Ratnayake. It seems that when quite young and before she could even</p>

speak, Lalitha used to point at his wife, V. T. Dhammika, when she went by the Abeyawardenas' house, as if she recognized her. And it is likely that she had similarly noticed M. G. R. Ratnayake himself, in which case her mother (who knew him by sight) would probably have told her who he was.

After the Ratnayakes heard of Lalitha's statements about the previous life, M. G. R. Ratnayake went to visit the Abeyawardenas. Lalitha saw him in the compound, gestured to him to come in, and showed him to a chair. She then went from his presence and cried, not with anger, but apparently with sorrow. After he had left their house, Lalitha told her mother (he heard this later from K. E. Wasantha) that he was "her" oldest brother. This was the first time M. G. R. Ratnayake had ever met Lalitha, but, as mentioned above, she may have seen him earlier.

68. Recognition of
M. G. R. Pathirane,
Nilanthie's middle
brother

K. E. Wasantha
M. G. R. Pathirane

M. G. R. Pathirane went to the Abeyawardenas with J. T. Sackremagama. The latter pointed at M. G. R. Pathirane and asked Lalitha: "Who is this?" She did not know. He then asked: "Where is he from?" Lalitha then said: "Henegama and Horana." M. G. R. Pathirane had in fact lived in Henegama, which is near Horana.

TABLE 7 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
69. Recognition of M. G. R. Petcheragama, Nilanthie's youngest brother	M. G. R. Petcheragama		M. G. R. Petcheragama went with his wife to visit Lalitha. His visit was unexpected. They met Lalitha in the compound outside the house. When she saw him she said spontaneously: "Punchi malli," meaning literally "small brother" but also "younger brother." She then ran into the house. She behaved rather shyly, but every so often came, peeked at him, and smiled. He heard her pointing him out to others as her youngest brother. A second meeting occurred some time later.
70. Recognition of C. E. Seetha Nimala, Nilanthie's former domestic assistant	C. E. Seetha Nimala		Lalitha had asked her family to bring her to visit Nilanthie's brothers. One day her mother brought her to the home of M. G. R. Petcheragama. They arrived when he was absent. They waited, and when he returned and entered the house, Lalitha's mother asked her: "Who has come now?" Lalitha replied: "Punchi malli."
			C. E. Seetha Nimala said that when she heard about Lalitha's statements concerning a previous life she went to see her. Lalitha smiled at her and Lalitha's mother then asked her if she knew the visitor. To this Lalitha replied: "Seetha achchie," meaning roughly "Granny Seetha." Lalitha's mother and her paternal

grandmother, M. Kamala Samarakoon, each gave different accounts of one (or possibly two) other meetings between Lalitha and C. E. Seetha Nimala. Lalitha made the statements of items 36 and 37 at the time she met C. E. Seetha Nimala.

71. Recognition of I. B. E. Vitanage, friend of the Ekanayakes

E. Vitanage, friend of the Ekanayakes

E. Vitanage was a secondhand informant for this recognition, but I have listed it because, according to her report, it included a specific detail. I. B. E. Vitanage was the uncle (by marriage) of M. G. R. Ratnayake, and although he was actually younger than M. G. R. Ratnayake, he was generally known in the family as "uncle." He went once with M. G. R. Ratnayake to see Lalitha and she recognized him by saying "I remember 'uncle.'"

than three years old, it happened before 1931, which means before Nilanthie was seventeen years old and therefore some twenty-two years before her death.⁹

Item 62 refers to an event that happened *after* the death of Nilanthie, namely, that after being embalmed, Nilanthie's body was taken back to Veyangoda. Some of the other statements that refer to events happening after Nilanthie's death might have derived from inferences, for example, Lalitha's remark that E. S. Ekanayake had (after the first Nilanthie's death) married his girl friend, the second Nilanthie (item 51).

Lalitha did not recognize several persons who were presented to her for recognition. Perhaps one of these was Renuka, Nilanthie's daughter. Renuka, however, was only three when her mother died and had grown to a girl of fifteen before she first met Lalitha. When Lalitha met M. G. R. Ratnayake's three daughters, Nilanthie's nieces, she smiled at the two oldest as if she might have recognized them, although she did not give their names. The third daughter, however, puzzled her, and she asked who she was. This child had not been born or was just an infant when Nilanthie died. Lalitha also failed to recognize B. E. Maria Ratne ("Kanthie"), the relative, servant, and close friend of Nilanthie (see items 31-32). I was myself an eyewitness of this failure since in 1968, having heard that Lalitha had never met "Kanthie," I went to her home and persuaded her to accompany me to Lalitha's house. We then took her (without announcing our intention) back to Pilyandala. Lalitha showed no obvious sign of recognition. Toward the end of the visit, after being urged to say who "Kanthie" was, Lalitha said: "Nangi," meaning "younger sister." But by this time Lalitha had already been told that "Kanthie" was not her *akka*, or "older sister," so she might have inferred that perhaps "Kanthie" was a *younger* sister. It is, however, unusual for a little girl to refer to an adult woman as "nangi," since obviously she could not be younger to the child. In fact, "Kanthie," born in 1920, was younger than Nilanthie, who was born in 1914. The failure, which I consider it to be, of this recognition test has to be evaluated with regard to the fact that Lalitha did not meet "Kanthie" until March 1968, by which time she was five and a half years old and already at school.¹⁰ Her memories had largely faded by this time.

⁹ It is unusual for events occurring so far before the death of the previous personality to be remembered by the subjects of these cases. Most of the memories relate to events of the last years or even months of the previous life, or at least, as in the present case, there is a relatively much higher incidence in the memories of events that occurred during the later years of the life as compared with those that occurred during the earlier years. But occasional exceptions occur. See the case of Kumkum Verma (first volume of this series) for an example of a memory of an event in the previous life that occurred at least twelve years before the death of the previous personality.

¹⁰ I think there is an important connection between attending school and the fading of memories. Prior to beginning school, a child lives at home in a relatively unstructured or at any rate very permissive environment. Although the child is often encouraged to give attention to life away from the home or to the demands of persons outside the family, he is not really required to do so. Such a situation permits, if it does not promote, memories of previous lives. At school the process of adaptation to the world beyond home begins to take priority over the child's previous "inner world," and among subjects of these cases attention becomes diverted, often rather quickly, from the previous life to the present life. How quickly and how well this adaptation proceeds depends on many factors, including the attitude of the child's

Table 7 lists seventy-one items; I have omitted some others because I was unsatisfied with the clarity and concordance of the testimony offered. But even without such additional items as may have been lost in this way, the case remains one of the richest known to me in numbers of details.

The Attitudes of the Principal Informants toward the Case

The testimony in this case provided by Lalitha's parents and by Nilanthie's brothers, friends, and servants was completely consistent in the main outlines of the accounts given by different informants and showed no more than the average number of discrepancies in details. Lalitha's mother, K. E. Wasantha, furnished much information in 1966 and again in 1968, and yet in going over my detailed notes I found that she had (or probably had) made very few errors when her statements were assessed against each other or those of other informants. She seemed to have forgotten in 1966 some birthmarks on Lalitha which she mentioned and showed me in 1968. These birthmarks could not be definitely related to injuries of Nilanthie and hence contributed little to the case. K. E. Wasantha seems also to have later confused in her memories Lalitha's behavior with Sugath, Nilanthie's son, and with Renuka, her daughter, when they visited. (Due to evasiveness on the part of Nilanthie's children, which I shall also mention later, it is difficult to know just what did happen.) She also forgot that Nilanthie's sister-in-law, V. T. Dhammika (wife of M. G. R. Ratnayake), had once been in the Abeyawardena house at a funeral; but she may not even have noticed V. T. Dhammika if there was a crowd of visitors on that occasion. And she seems to have misremembered one proper name mentioned by Lalitha. Her testimony, however, contained few errors considering the total amount of information she furnished.

The attitude of a subject's family toward publicity gives some clue to their interest in the case. V. F. Guneratne learned from informants outside the Abeyawardena family that they had been at first reluctant to have the case publicized. He heard, for example, that Nanda Rajapaksa, a relative of the Abeyawardenas and a local schoolteacher, had visited the Abeyawardenas after Lalitha had begun talking of the previous life, and yet K. E. Wasantha told her nothing about what Lalitha was saying. Later, after C. E. Prema Lokuliyana had told her about Lalitha's statements, she went to the Abeyawardenas for another visit. Even on this second visit neither Lalitha nor her mother said anything to her about the previous life. But the following day K. E. Wasantha saw Nanda Rajapaksa passing by the house, called her in, and said that she knew she was interested in what Lalitha had been saying about a previous life. She then said that Lalitha had been talking about it for a year and a half, but her husband's parents did not wish the case to be publicized, although it was known about in the immediate vicinity. These events occurred in the autumn of 1965.

parents and the strength of the pull to the previous life, that is, the intensity of the imaged and behavioral memories. For further comments on this topic, see I. Stevenson. 1974. *Twenty cases*.

Later, in November 1965, the Abeyawardenas were collaborating with a newspaper writer in whom they had confidence in the preparation of a report of the case. But at this time a relative of their family told the story of the case to another reporter who published it in *Rividina*, as I mentioned earlier. On the evidence available it seems certain that the Abeyawardenas sought no publicity and indeed avoided it for at least eight months after Lalitha began to talk about the previous life. I do not know why they changed their minds and agreed to a newspaper report; like the parents of some other subjects, they may have hoped for a kind of public vindication of the accuracy of what neighbors had heard Lalitha saying.

None of the witnesses of the group mentioned at the beginning of this section made any discrediting comments about the case with the exception of Nilanthie's middle brother, M. G. R. Pathirane, who expressed some mild reservations about it, the grounds for which he did not clearly specify.

The above attitudes contrasted noticeably with those of E. S. Ekanayake and (to a lesser extent) those of his children and of his second wife. I interviewed E. S. Ekanayake in 1966, and at that time he expressed doubts about the genuineness of the case and said he thought it might have been worked up fraudulently. In his conjectures, an alliance between the Abeyawardenas and Nilanthie's oldest brother, M. G. R. Ratnayake, would have made this possible. E. S. Ekanayake and his brother-in-law did not get along well. Their disharmony started, he thought, when he (E. S. Ekanayake) disapproved of M. G. R. Ratnayake's marriage and did not attend the wedding. He surmised that perhaps his brother-in-law was trying to "spoil his reputation through enmity." E. S. Ekanayake further claimed to have overheard (during a visit to the Abeyawardenas) Lalitha's maternal grandmother calling Lalitha aside and saying to her: "Is this the way we have asked you to answer these questions when these people came?" (In the notes of Francis Story this remark is recorded as: "Is this the way we coached you to answer these questions when these people came?") From this remark E. S. Ekanayake claimed that Lalitha's parents had tutored her to furnish rehearsed answers to questions. If Lalitha's grandmother really had made such a remark with the implication of prior rehearsal it would naturally be damning to the case. I myself doubt that the remark was made as reported by E. S. Ekanayake. In the first place, if Lalitha's family had taught her the lines for the role of Nilanthie, they would not have been so foolish as to say so publicly, even in a whisper. Secondly, if they had drilled her beforehand, their efforts were singularly unsuccessful in the meeting between Lalitha and E. S. Ekanayake. Lalitha furnished little information in response to his questions. According to her mother, she was angry at E. S. Ekanayake. He had insensitively come with his second wife, who had been his mistress during Nilanthie's lifetime. If Lalitha was remembering Nilanthie's life, few actions could have enlivened her memories or her vexation more strongly. Lalitha wanted to have little or nothing to do with them, and so they got no information from her. This could have been a disappointment to Lalitha's family, who naturally hoped that she would say in public some of

the things she had been saying to them in private. It is quite conceivable that they had earlier asked her to do her best in answering the questions of the visitors and that her grandmother reproached her with failing to cooperate during the actual visit. That Lalitha's grandmother ever made a remark exactly like that attributed to her by E. S. Ekanayake I very much doubt. I think it not at all unlikely that he twisted some different comment into a form that justified his rejection of the case; or he may have completely invented the remark himself.

E. S. Ekanayake had strong motives for discrediting the case. As already mentioned, the death of his first wife after a short illness led to suspicions expressed even by his own son that he had killed her or at least hastened her death by forcing her to bathe when she was already ill. His brother-in-law had been on the verge of demanding an inquest. Then, twelve years later, a child was reported spreading the same insinuations and narrating details of his abuse of alcohol and illicit love affairs. Such a development cannot have been welcome to E. S. Ekanayake. In reviewing the testimony, however, I have noticed that Lalitha's mother tended to minimize what Lalitha said about the cruelties and misbehavior of Nilanthie's husband. Much of the information on these points came from other informants who said Lalitha had talked to them about these matters. I do not suppose that Lalitha said anything less to her parents and I believe therefore that they were to some extent trying to protect E. S. Ekanayake from Lalitha's revelations and perhaps also trying to shield themselves from charges of defamation.

During my interview with E. S. Ekanayake he showed a quite wobbly attitude toward the case. After at first saying the case was false, he later said he did not think it was, although he was not fully convinced that Lalitha was his first wife reborn. He said that his doubts were increased by her failure (according to him) to recognize him. (But her family said she did recognize him.) No question could arise in his mind (or anyone else's) about the identity of the person to whose life Lalitha's remarks referred. He himself contributed to the verification of a number of statements made by Lalitha. His ambivalence toward the case was shown by his invitation to the Abeyawardenas to visit him at Kottala, where he was then living. They did not accept the invitation, probably because Lalitha never expressed any desire to go there and because of her marked antagonism toward him. In addition, M. G. R. Ratnayake warned them against taking her there because he had a fear that some harm, poisoning perhaps, would come to her.

E. S. Ekanayake died in 1967. I interviewed him only once. I was able to interview his son D. Sugath Ekanayake four times, twice in 1966 and twice again in 1968. At my first meeting with him (when Francis Story and I interviewed him alone) he acknowledged freely the cruelty of his father toward his mother and the fact that he told her to take a bath when she was already ill. I have mentioned the reports of other informants that Sugath had said his father had beaten his mother and that he had blamed his father for her death, even accusing him of murder. During this

first interview D. Sugath Ekanayake seemed to be accepting Lalitha as the reincarnation of his mother. My second interview with him (also in 1966) took place at his father's home and in his presence. On this occasion he showed a much greater reserve toward the case than he had earlier, evidently an obedient satellite getting into proper orbit. When I saw him next in 1968 he expressed definite disbelief in the case. He then denied any resemblance between Lalitha and his mother, although in 1966 he had said that he had noticed a physical similarity between them.¹¹

My last interview with D. Sugath Ekanayake occurred at his home in Kottala when his stepmother (the second Nilanthie) and his sister, Renuka, were present. On this occasion, although these three informants verified some details of Lalitha's statements, they showed evidence of serving up prepared answers, refuting at least two of the items mentioned by the Abeyawardenas. Renuka first denied, then admitted Lalitha's behavior toward her as reported by Lalitha's mother; and the interpreter heard her stepmother prompting her to deny knowledge of another person mentioned by Lalitha.

D. Sugath Ekanayake did not claim that the Abeyawardenas were trying to exploit the case for their benefit. He said they had asked him for the necklace Lalitha had mentioned, but for nothing else.

Considering the several interviews with D. Sugath Ekanayake and the information about his attitudes reported by other informants, I think he at one time believed that his father had been cruel to his mother and had perhaps (minimally) hastened her death. Later he came under the influence of his father in the matter. After his father's death he seems to have decided to do as little as possible to give credit to the statements and behavior of Lalitha which, as I have already mentioned, certainly did not improve his family's reputation.

In summary, the case was supported strongly by Nilanthie's oldest and youngest brothers and with some hesitation by her middle brother. It was attacked, but inconsistently, by members of Nilanthie's marital family. Even these persons, however, contributed confirmatory information which added to the verifications of what Lalitha had been saying about the previous life; moreover, the comments about his mother's death made (both to me and to other persons) by Nilanthie's son Sugath accorded very well with what Lalitha stated about the circumstances leading up to it.

Lalitha's Behavior Related to the Previous Life

Circumstances and Manner of Lalitha's Speaking about the Previous Life. When Lalitha first began to talk about the previous life, doing so aroused intense emotions in her. She often cried as she recalled the events of the previous life.

¹¹ In mentioning this I do not mean to imply that I attach much importance to comments about a physical resemblance between the subject and the related previous personality. But a question of this kind put to informants often elicits remarks expressing their attitudes toward the case and also reports about specific details in which the informant believes that the concerned two persons seem to resemble each other.

She seemed particularly concerned about the children of the previous personality and would say when crying: "I wonder if my children are suffering and unhappy." She told Mary Fernando that "she" had an infant daughter "who may be crying from hunger," and asked her to bring her (previous) daughter to her.

In talking about the previous life, Lalitha sometimes used the present tense and sometimes the past tense. She said: "My name *is* Nilanthie." But, unlike some of the subjects of these cases, she did not demand to be called by the name of the previous personality whose life she was remembering. In referring to E. S. Ekanayake, she said: "That is my husband." At times she showed no awareness whatever of the passage of twelve years since the death of Nilanthie. She spoke of having an infant daughter and of sons attending school. It never seemed to occur to her on these occasions that they had all grown up in the meantime. But at other times she was aware of the passage of time and she then spoke in the past tense. When one of Nilanthie's sons, Sugath, asked Lalitha if she was his mother, she replied: "I was your mother, but am not now."¹² She said on another occasion that she used to be big and wear saris but now she was small.¹³

Her mother said that when Lalitha was speaking about the previous life she seemed more mature, as if an adult were speaking.¹⁴ At other times she seemed quite normal.

Play and Other Actions of Lalitha Apparently Expressive of Actions of the Previous Life. Lalitha exhibited in her spontaneous play several behaviors that corresponded with the interests of Nilanthie. First, she played at being a teacher, using a cane to imitate a pointer and a door for a blackboard. She asked an imaginary class for copybooks. One informant said Lalitha wrapped herself in a garment to imitate a teacher's sari. Lalitha's mother said she sometimes took her sari and wore it when she played at teaching. Lalitha played in this fashion when she was three years old and before she herself had seen adults teaching. In her play at being a teacher, Lalitha did not draw other children into the play but acted the scene by herself. This behavior was continuing in 1968, when Lalitha was five and a half. By that time she had begun school herself.¹⁵

¹² The phrase in quotation marks is a composite of somewhat different statements given by two informants reporting this remark. The phrase I have given conveys the sense of both reported statements but does not correspond exactly to the words of either one.

¹³ Other subjects of these cases who have commented on their awareness of a change in body size are Marta Lorenz, Parmod Sharma, and Sukla Gupta (I. Stevenson. 1974. *Twenty cases*).

¹⁴ Similar observations of a greater maturity of behavior on the part of the subject when talking of the previous life have been noted in other cases, such as that of Swarnlata Mishra (I. Stevenson. 1974. *Twenty cases*).

¹⁵ For other examples of the expression in the subject's play of themes in the life of the previous personality, see the cases of Sukla Gupta, Parmod Sharma, Sleimann Bouhamzy, Paulo Lorenz (I. Stevenson. 1974. *Twenty cases*), Disna Samarasinghe, Wijanama Kithsiri (this volume), and Erkan Kılıç (the third volume of this series). With the exception of Wijanama Kithsiri, these are all subjects of cases with verified memories of previous lives. There are in addition many children who exhibit spontaneous play of a kind that, so far as the informants know, was not learned by the child from other children or adults before the

Lalitha's mother remarked that even at the age of six she showed an especial attachment to books. In contrast, she was indifferent to toys and took no special interest in housework.

Second, at the age of one and a half years, Lalitha spontaneously assumed the cross-legged sitting posture (lotus posture) adopted by Buddhists for meditation. Her mother said she did this before she could have seen anyone else doing it. (I think her mother meant anyone else in the family, since she also said that she had taken Lalitha to a temple first when she was just three months old, and there she would almost certainly have seen persons sitting in the lotus posture.) The Abeyawardenas had one other child, an older boy, and he had never been observed to assume this posture.

Lalitha showed other early evidences of piety. She liked to have her mother sing gathas to her, and she herself began reciting them at two years of age without anyone having taught her to do so. She had naturally heard gathas sung by others before this. She liked to perform puja in the Buddhist style of worship and picked flowers to offer in the temples. Here again her brother showed no such behavior. Lalitha's unusual interest in flowers had ceased by 1968, but her interest in religion continued undiminished.

Lalitha also showed a precocious ability to handle a pencil. Her mother said that between the ages of two and three she would take her older brother's pencil and seemed to know how to hold it without being taught. She would have seen her brother, and perhaps her parents, using a pencil, and her ability to use one is less notable than her interest in doing so at such a young age. The two schoolteachers who came early to observe Lalitha and who verified some of her remarks, Nanda Rajapaksa and C. E. Prema Lokuliyana, both said that they also were impressed by Lalitha's ability to use a pencil when she was very young. C. E. Prema Lokuliyana said Lalitha was only about two when she observed her using a pencil with precocious skill. I think, however, that she must have been somewhat older since she did not begin to speak about the previous life (according to her mother) until she was about two and a half, and C. E. Prema Lokuliyana did not visit the family until after she had heard about Lalitha's references to a previous life.

Lalitha's Attitudes toward Persons Related to the Previous Personality. Lalitha expressed a wish, indeed, a strong desire, to see her (previous) children, but never said she wanted to see her (previous) husband. Nor did she even ask to go to the home where the previous family lived. Later, when someone asked her to go to the Mirigama area, she refused.

child showed the behavior in question. I shall include in a later volume of American cases of the reincarnation type an account of one child who when quite small played at being a teacher as did Lalitha. This child had no imaged memories of a previous life. She had a strong inclination to become a teacher but actually did not do so when she grew up. In young adulthood, however, she had a long vivid dream of a previous life (as it seemed to the dreamer) in which she was a teacher. The dream contained no verified details and it may have arisen simply from ordinary stimuli and experiences of the subject. But it may also have derived from an actual previous life in which the previous personality worked as a teacher. If so, we could also account for the play at being a teacher shown by the subject when she was a small child.

Toward Nilanthie's husband Lalitha expressed considerable anger. When he first visited and asked her to come to him, she said: "No. I am angry." She repeated this when E. S. Ekanayake's second wife made the same suggestion. When Nanda Rajapaksa returned from her trip (for verification) to the Mirigama area and mentioned that she had met E. S. Ekanayake, Lalitha, who heard this, began weeping. When asked who he was, she said: "That is my husband." Once Mary Fernando suggested that if she were to bring Nilanthie's daughter (as Lalitha had requested), E. S. Ekanayake might come also. To this Lalitha replied: "I don't want him. I am angry with him." Lalitha used terms of contempt in referring to "her" (previous) husband. She called him "mage miniha," which means literally "my man" but is in Sinhalese a term of disrespect when applied to a husband.¹⁶ In describing the crudities of Nilanthie's husband Lalitha used expressions which her parents found coarse and obscene. I could not get them to elaborate on this by stating exactly what words Lalitha had used. They were afraid she would acquire a reputation for vulgarity or worse if it became known that she used such unsavory language, which they had not taught her themselves.

Her dislike of E. S. Ekanayake was so strong that her older brother found he could frighten her simply by pronouncing the word *Ekanayake* in her presence.

When Lalitha heard of the death of E. S. Ekanayake in 1967 she said simply: "Well, I am sorry for my children."

Lalitha spoke with affection of Nilanthie's mother-in-law ("Mirigama amma"), who had lived with her, and wanted to meet her. So there was no generalization from her dislike of E. S. Ekanayake to other members of his family.

Toward Nilanthie's brothers Lalitha showed affectionate behavior and pressed her mother to take her to the homes of Nilanthie's oldest and youngest brothers, M. G. R. Ratnayake and M. G. R. Petcheragama. At the Hindu New Year (which Buddhists celebrate) in April 1967, Lalitha visited the home of M. G. R. Ratnayake, bringing him some betel in the traditional offering of respect to an older brother that takes place at the beginning of the New Year. She showed interest in his children also. He told me that once Lalitha's mother had asked if they should take lozenges (sweets) for the Ratnayake children. Lalitha replied that these children did not take lozenges. Then she added that when she visited, the children would come running to her and say: "Aunt." I did not obtain a report of this incident from Lalitha's mother, but M. G. R. Ratnayake said that it was true that when Nilanthie visited his home, his children would run to greet her and say: "Aunt." He also confirmed that he and his wife never gave their children lozenges, a rather unusual restriction for Sinhalese children.

¹⁶ This is the exact contrary of what applies in Germany, where a wife regularly and properly refers to her husband as "mein Mann."

Other Relevant Behavior of Lalitha

Lalitha was noted by her mother to be a generous child ready to share with other children. She also seemed more mature in her manner of relating to other people than the average girl of her age. Her mother said she gave advice to her older brother and her father and generally adopted a motherly attitude toward other members of the family. She frankly asserted that Lalitha was more intelligent than other members of the family.

Lalitha had no marked phobia of bathing,¹⁷ although her mother told me that she was, when small, rather more frightened of water than other children and did show a marked phobia of illnesses. When she fell ill (as a small child) she became frightened and asked for medicines and to have ritual chants performed. On one occasion when she became ill she asked her parents to take her to a doctor. She then told him about her illness and had a serious conversation with him about which foods she should take and which avoid. Her own health was, however, good between 1966 and 1968. Lalitha showed concern also over the illnesses of other persons.

Lalitha's favorite color was pink. She wore a pink dress when I first saw her in 1966. And in 1968, when about to be photographed, she dressed herself in a pink dress. However, I have noticed that many small girls in Sri Lanka wear pink dresses. The point of this observation about Lalitha's favorite color is that pink seems to have been a popular color with Nilanthie, although not identified as her favorite one.

Lalitha, as already mentioned, complained that Nilanthie's husband drank alcohol excessively and made their troubles worse thereby. She remarked: "All the trouble I had was due to my husband taking alcohol." Lalitha's father was not a teetotaler and she expressed concern about this and warned him against taking alcohol. She once said: "I am suffering in the present because my father takes alcohol."

Lalitha used to ask for kukulala, a kind of root somewhat similar to a yam. She mentioned that "her" (Nilanthie's) mother liked kukulala (see item 16). The Abeyawardenas had apparently never heard of kukulala, much less served it, but Nilanthie's mother had liked it and had given it to her children often.

Lalitha made some disparaging comments about the difference between her present situation and that of the previous life. She said that her family's home was "not her home." She claimed (but with exaggeration) that her former house was very much larger than her present one (item 23, Table 7). Once when she saw her mother baking *hoppers*,¹⁸ Lalitha said the "Mirigama mother" did not have to suffer like that. This remark evidently alluded to the fact that the previous family was more prosperous and had a servant. Lalitha

¹⁷ Such a phobia might have been expected if she believed the death of Nilanthie was importantly caused by the bathing she did when ill before she died. Parmod Sharma showed a phobia of immersion in water that related to his belief that tub baths had hastened death in the previous life (I. Stevenson, 1974. *Twenty cases*).

¹⁸ Hoppers is a farinaceous food often prepared in a shape somewhat resembling that of American pancakes. It is eaten for breakfast most often by persons of humble circumstances.

also claimed that the "Mirigama mother" cooked better food than her own mother, a statement somewhat inconsistent with the comment about a servant just cited. She also claimed that the "Mirigama mother" was a better mother than hers. In general, however, Lalitha did not show a marked discontent with her situation as have some subjects of these cases. She lived in a family of affectionate people, and the vivid memories of Nilanthie's mistreatment by her husband perhaps restrained her from more than transient grumbling. As I have already mentioned, she asked to see the children of the previous life, but never to go to Mirigama.

Concerning the period between the death of Nilanthie and her own birth, Lalitha said: "I told my husband's mother ('Mirigama mother') to look after the children, and I came here."¹⁹

Correspondences in Personality Traits between Lalitha and Nilanthie

To assist the reader in comparing the information I obtained concerning personality traits in Lalitha and Nilanthie, I have summarized the main correspondences in Table 8. As with others of these summaries included in these reports, I do not emphasize the specificity of the traits reported for Nilanthie as compared with other women of her age and class. Those listed for Lalitha are also not, for the most part, specific to her. But most of them were noticeable within the Abeyawardena family as Lalitha's parents compared her early behavior with what they had observed in her brother or other children of her age. The important point is that the unusual behavior on the part of Lalitha noted by her parents corresponded (except for the eating of beef) with behavior reported by informants for Nilanthie.

Comments on the Evidence of Paranormal Processes in the Case

I have already mentioned the allegation by E. S. Ekanayake that the case was fraudulently contrived by Lalitha's parents in concert with Nilanthie's oldest brother, M. G. R. Ratnayake. And I have given my reasons for rejecting this charge and suggesting that the accusation was itself contrived and dishonest. No other of the many witnesses suggested that the case was fraudulent, or even (with the exception of M. G. R. Pathirane) expressed any reservations about the interpretation of the case as evidence of the reincarnation of Nilanthie.

Such a majority endorsement by the informants, all more or less involved themselves, naturally forms only one part of the record in our attempt to evaluate the case. There are, however, other elements that point toward its

¹⁹ This interesting remark shows a condensation of time with apparent complete omission of other events during a period of twelve years. It reminds me of a similar remark made by Parmod Sharma when he was a small child. He once said, in explanation of his situation: "I was sitting in a tub and my feet have become small." This remark, not reported in *Twenty cases suggestive of reincarnation*, evidently referred to the fact that the previous personality in Parmod's case had taken naturopathic tub baths during his terminal illness and just before he died.

TABLE 8. *Correspondences in Behavior between Lalitha and Nilanthie*

<i>Lalitha</i>	<i>Nilanthie</i>
1. Piety and interest in religious practices, for example, assumption of lotus posture, singing of gathas	Liked to go to temples; recited gathas
2. Interested in books; played at teaching	Was a schoolteacher
3. Concern and fear about illness in herself and others	Died of "enteric fever"
4. Dislike of beef	Ate beef
5. Fondness for kukulala	Kukulala often eaten in Nilanthie's home before her marriage
6. Affection for brothers of the previous life; hostility toward husband of previous life	Had affectionate relations with brothers, unhappy relationship with husband
7. Opposition to consumption of alcohol	Husband drank alcohol, probably excessively
8. Generous; shared her sweets with other children	Self-sacrificing for her children
9. Interest in flowers	Often offered flowers at a shrine
10. Lack of interest in housework	Had a servant who did much of her housework while she taught school

genuineness. Lalitha's parents were by no means the sole informants for many of her statements. Study of Table 7 will show that other informants, notably the two schoolteachers, Nanda Rajapaksa and C. E. Prema Lokuliyana, heard from Lalitha many of the items reported by her parents or ones not mentioned by them. I doubt very much whether a three-year-old child could be trained to provide correct statements or answers to so many different people in different situations. If Lalitha's parents were coaching her, it is incredible that they encouraged visits to and from Nilanthie's brothers, any one of whom might have caught her in error and exposed her as her parents' pupil in the statements she was making. Finally, I see no motive whatever for their selection of Nilanthie as a person around whom to develop a fictitious claim of remembering a previous life. For although Nilanthie herself was apparently a gentle, lovable person the circumstances of her life were unhappy and indeed rather grim. N. E. Abeyawardena and his wife cannot have expected to enhance their own standing in the community by inventing a case built around the lives of a miserably troubled family such as the Ekanayakes had been.

The hypothesis of cryptomnesia seems to me in most cases a more plausible one than fraud, but in the present case it seems less likely. I say this because

of the large number of items, including unusual words and proper names, attributed to Lalitha. With regard to such richness of detail the case is almost on a footing with that of Imad Elawar. How all this information could have got into the mind of Lalitha without her parents being aware that it had reached her I am unable to understand, and I do not believe that it did so.

If we accept that Lalitha obtained the information she showed in some paranormal manner, then to evaluate it further we must also take account of the behavior she showed in relation to the events and people of the previous life. Her case seems to me also particularly rich in behavioral features and consequently more difficult than many others to evaluate with regard solely to its cognitive aspects.

Lalitha's Later Development

The peak of Lalitha's talking about the previous life had already been passed at the time of my first visit to the Abeyawardenas in 1966, but the behavior related to it continued strong. In 1968 she had stopped talking spontaneously about the previous life. She had lost her interest in flowers, but continued to be interested in religion and also to play at teaching class. She was then showing a diminished desire to visit Nilanthie's brothers. One of them, M. G. R. Petcheragama, told me in 1968 that when Lalitha's parents asked her to visit them she did not wish to do so.

As for the Ekanayake family, their visits to Lalitha ceased very soon, as might have been expected in view of what she was saying about E. S. Ekanayake. He visited her only once. His son Sugath went to see Lalitha only two or three times up to 1968. Thus the case did not include the frequent and sustained visits between the two families concerned that have occurred in many others. D. Sugath Ekanayake did not return to visit Lalitha after 1968; and Nilanthie's other son, Udaya, never visited Lalitha in Pilyandala or elsewhere.

In 1970 Lalitha's mother said she no longer talked of the previous life. And when I asked Lalitha about the persistence of her memories, she said she did not remember it. But when I asked if she remembered the name of the previous personality, she promptly said: "Nilanthie."

Lalitha was in the third class of school and stood first in her class. She was enjoying school and said that she wished to be a teacher when she grew up.

Her mother said that she still showed a strong interest in religion and in religious practices. In this respect she behaved quite differently from her older brother, who took religion casually.

Lalitha was a little over eight years old when I saw her in 1970. I was impressed by her poise and maturity, unusual, it seemed to me, for a girl of her age, and I left with the impression that she was somehow more "grown up" than the average girl of eight.

In March 1973, I visited Lalitha and her family again. Lalitha was then about ten and a half years old. She was in the sixth class of primary school and standing at the top of her class.

Lalitha denied that she remembered anything of the previous life and her mother said that she thought Lalitha had completely forgotten it. To test her memory of the previous life, we asked Lalitha if she could tell us the names or relationships of some of the people connected with the person whose life she had earlier remembered. She could place M. G. R. Ratnayake as being the older brother of the previous life, and she correctly gave the names of Nilanthie's two sons, Sugath and Udaya. She could not remember—or did not want to utter—the name of Nilanthie's husband. So she had not completely forgotten the previous life, although it would be unwise to decide whether she recalled original imaged memories of the previous life or simply memories of information acquired normally through meeting the previous family.

Lalitha still preserved some traits which may have derived from the previous life. Her mother said that she was more religious than other children of her age and more religious than she (her mother) was. And she still played at teaching school, although she no longer tried to dress in saris when she assumed the role of schoolteacher in playing. Lalitha told us that she wished to become a schoolteacher when she grew up. In contrast to her fondness for school-teaching, she showed a strong reluctance to learn or perform household duties such as cooking.

Visits between the two families concerned in this case had completely stopped by about 1971. Lalitha's family did not discourage the visits of Nilanthie's brothers, but it seems they gradually lost interest. The one who had paid most attention to Lalitha, M. G. R. Ratnayake, had retired and had moved to another community from which visits to Pilyandala would have meant a moderately long journey. Lalitha herself had, according to her mother, shown less affection to Nilanthie's brothers as she grew older. (It often happens that the subjects, especially girls, become embarrassed about the previous relationships as they grow older.) This may have had a discouraging effect on Nilanthie's brothers and further diminished their interest in Lalitha.

In 1973 Lalitha seemed to have grown considerably, both physically and in social maturity, since my previous visit. The impression I had formed in 1970 that she was more mature than the average girl of her age became further strengthened in 1973.

On March 26, 1976, I visited Lalitha and her mother again at their home in Pilyandala. Lalitha was by this time fourteen years old and in the ninth class at school. She was preparing to take the lower or ordinary level examination for the Government Certificate. There had been no further visits between the two families concerned in the case. Lalitha had not even mentioned the previous life for "some years." She stated, however, that she still remembered what others had told her she had said about the previous life when younger. She continued to feel some ties to that life and expressed mild unhappiness over the fact that she had had no further visits from members of Nilanthie's family. In 1976, Lalitha still intended to become a schoolteacher and she remained as interested in Buddhism as she had been when younger.

5. The Case of Ruby Kusuma Silva

Summary of the Case and Its Investigation

RUBY KUSUMA SILVA was born in the hospital at Galle, on September 12, 1962. Her parents were W. K. Simon Silva and his wife, Somie Nona Jayasekera. W. K. Simon Silva worked, when I first met him, as a clerk in the post office of Batapola; subsequently, after retiring from this position, he opened a boutique for selling vegetables, also in Batapola. He was able to speak a little English, his wife and children none at all. At the time the case developed, they were persons of very modest means who would be regarded as in the lower middle class. Subsequently they became more prosperous.

When Ruby was born, her parents had seven children, of whom six were boys and one a girl. Somie Nona very much wanted to have another girl at the time of her pregnancy with Ruby. (Her husband said he also wanted a girl.) Her pregnancy with Ruby was markedly overlong; according to her, it lasted the unusual period of twelve months.¹ Because of this postmaturity, she was admitted to the hospital and spent about three months there altogether. The delay frightened her and she thought she might die. Three days before her delivery she dreamed that she read an announcement in a newspaper to the effect that she had had quadruplets and that she and the babies were doing well. I have never understood whether Somie Nona regarded this dream as, on balance, reassuring in its prediction of the outcome of her pregnancy or alarming as to the anticipated products; but she was unmistakably relieved when her condition finally terminated in the delivery of Ruby.

¹ When I first heard of the long duration of Somie Nona's pregnancy, I thought that she had exaggerated or set a record. But this simply showed again the dangers of unchecked assumptions. *Guinness book of world records* (N. McWhirter and R. McWhirter, eds. 1974. New York: Sterling Publishing Co.) states, without citing a source in the medical literature, that "the longest medically-accepted pregnancy was one of 390 days [about 13 months]." The editors of the book, in turn, must be ignorant or skeptical of reports given by G. M. Gould and W. L. Pyle (*Anomalies and curiosities of medicine*. 1896. Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders), who cite, among other long pregnancies, one lasting sixteen months and twenty days and one of fifteen months and nineteen days, each reportedly observed by a physician. For those who think remote events, however well attested, less credible than more recent ones, I will mention a well-documented pregnancy lasting 334 days (about eleven months) (S. M. Wells. 1949. A case of prolonged pregnancy. *Obstetrical and Gynecological Survey* 4:378). A New York court accepted a pregnancy of 355 days (nearly twelve months) as legitimate (I. N. Perr. 1959. Paternity and prolonged pregnancy. *Cleveland-Marshall Law Review* 8:234).

The average duration of human pregnancy, if counted from the first day of the mother's last menstrual period, is about 280 days (L. M. Hellman and J. A. Pritchard. 1971. *Obstetrics*. 14th ed. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts). (Different series have shown unimportant variations for the mean duration of pregnancy.) In estimating the duration of a pregnancy, errors may arise from irregularities in menstruation. This point should be kept in mind also in appraising the reported postmature birth of Gamini Jayasena (this volume).

The Silvas had lived for many years in the neighborhood of the town of Batapola, which is in southwestern Sri Lanka, approximately halfway between Colombo and Galle.

When Ruby was about two, the family moved to the village of Pollewa, approximately 1.5 kilometers from Batapola. Ruby began to speak connectedly when she was less than a year and a half old. She began to talk about a previous life when she was still under two years old.² She did not then have the vocabulary for some of the things she wanted to say about the previous life and used gestures or paraphrases.

Ruby asserted, among other declarations about the previous life, that she had been a "brother" and not a "sister." She acted in many ways like a boy, as I shall describe later, and wanted to be called "brother" or "son" and not "sister" or "daughter." She seemed perplexed about being a girl and sometimes would say: "Why did I become a girl?" She also acted as if her body were larger than it was and said on more than one occasion: "I am big." She claimed that she could do the work of a bigger person; in fact, she was rather precocious mentally, if not physically. She did not, however, complain of being in a small body, only of being in a girl's body.

Her mother one day asked her why she had "come to them" (that is, been born to them), and Ruby replied: "I was beaten by the other mother." She did not elaborate on this. She did, however, gradually bring out many other details of the previous life she claimed to have lived as a boy. In fact, as can be seen from Table 9, Ruby recalled more details of the previous life than have most subjects of these cases. Lalitha Abeyawardena, the subject of the preceding case of this volume, matched Ruby in the number of details remembered,³ but few other subjects known to me have done so.

Ruby's father paid little attention to what she was saying until one day she described how she had returned from working in the paddy fields, had gone to the well to wash, and had slipped into it and drowned. Ruby narrated this scene with gestures showing how (in the previous life) she had fallen into the well. She also said that she had injured her leg in doing so and had bled. (She pointed to her right leg just below the knee.)

Since Ruby also mentioned that she had lived in a town called Aluthwala and had attended religious school at the temple there, W. K. Simon Silva asked his wife to go to that temple and enquire about a boy in Aluthwala the facts of whose life would agree with Ruby's statements. Somie Nona therefore went (in March or early April 1966) to visit the head monk at the Nandaramaya Temple at Aluthwala, near Ambalangoda. He in turn instructed another monk of the temple, the Ven. Siri Ratana, to make inquiries in

² There is a discrepancy in the testimony here. In 1966, Somie Nona said that Ruby first talked of the previous life when almost three; in 1968, she said Ruby was just over a year and a half at the time.

³ Imad Elawar was credited with remembering a slightly larger number of details and Marta Lorenz remembered many more, although in her case, her father's notes of 120 items were accidentally destroyed before they were published (I. Stevenson, 1974. *Twenty cases*). For a Western case the subject of which had abundant memories of a previous life, see E. Ryall, 1975. *Second time round*. London: Neville Spearman.

Aluthwala about a boy corresponding to what Ruby's mother had reported at the temple.⁴ It seems that the monks of the temple at Aluthwala, and certainly the Ven. Siri Ratana, did not distinctly recollect a boy fitting Ruby's statements. After two days of investigation, however, the trail led to a family called Singho living in Aluthwala. In the meantime, Ruby's parents had initiated other inquiries that also indicated the same family. The Singhos had lost a son called Karunasena, who had slipped into a well and drowned at the age of (not quite) seven and a half, on July 19, 1959, that is, a little more than three years before Ruby was born. It quickly became obvious that nearly all the statements made by Ruby matched facts in the life of Karunasena.

During these inquiries, members of Karunasena's family heard about Ruby, and some of them came to see her at Pollewa. G. G. Dhanasiri, one of Karunasena's older brothers, came first, but he arrived at night when Ruby was sleeping and so they did not meet. Karunasena's father, G. G. Punchi Singho, then came to visit her. He called at the Batapola post office, where W. K. Simon Silva worked, and obtained his permission to visit Ruby, which he did later the same day. Next, Karunasena's mother, younger brother, and aunt visited Ruby, and later other relatives came. The Ven. Siri Ratana also came to visit her and G. G. Dhanasiri came again. Ruby recognized all these people (except perhaps G. G. Dhanasiri) if Karunasena had known them, and without anyone having told her who they were. Indeed, in all but one instance, members of her own family did not know who the visitors coming to the house were until Ruby informed them. These meetings took place in (about) April 1966 and after.

Ruby had compared the greater prosperity of the previous family with the relative poverty of her own but had never expressed any strong desire to go to Aluthwala. And although she did afterward visit the temple at Aluthwala, she never went to the Singho house there. Some members of the Singho family visited her throughout 1966, but thereafter contact between the two families diminished.

I first learned of the case through a newspaper report in 1966. One account of it appeared in the *Ceylon Times* of April 19, 1966. I was fortunately able to begin my investigation when the main events were still fairly recent. I spent two days studying the case with Francis Story in July 1966. Then eighteen months later, in March 1968, I returned to the area and spent another two days investigating the case, again accompanied by Francis Story. In preparing this report I have had the advantage of using his notes made both in 1966 and 1968, as well as my own. In November 1970 I returned to the area of the case for the third time in order to check some details again and learn about Ruby's further development. (During the years between 1966 and 1970 both families had moved but still lived within the same district. Ruby's family lived then at a place called Kobetuduwa, which is approximately 1 kilometer from

⁴The Ven. Siri Ratana gave different statements in 1966 and 1968 concerning whether he had met Ruby's mother when she first came to the temple or only later when he went to the Silva home to see her. I have given above his 1968 testimony, which I think probably correct.

Pollewa and about 2.5 kilometers from Batapola.) In March 1973 I worked on the case further. At that time I visited both families again to learn about Ruby's progress and about the later relations between the two families concerned. I also found some informants whom I had not been able to interview previously.

The Ven. D. Dharmasena of Kumara Maha Vihara at Dodanduwa (not far from the area of this case), along with some other Buddhist monks and newspaper reporters, visited Ruby and her family in 1966. This must have been shortly after the two families had met but before Francis Story and I had begun to investigate the case, that is, between April and July 1966. The Ven. D. Dharmasena summarized his observations of the case in a letter to me dated May 27, 1971. In this he described various statements Ruby had made to him about the previous life. Some of these corresponded exactly or closely to items I had already learned about, but others were new to me. In March 1973 I visited the Ven. D. Dharmasena at his temple and formed a favorable impression of his reliability.

Persons Interviewed during the Investigation

In Pollewa, near Batapola, I interviewed:

Ruby Kusuma Silva
 Somie Nona Jayasekera, Ruby's mother
 W. K. Simon Silva, Ruby's father
 W. K. Sumanadhasa, Ruby's older brother
 P. D. Themis, neighbor of the Silva family

In Kobetuduwa, near Batapola, I interviewed:

J. N. Podiappu, distant relative and neighbor
 of the Silva family
 W. K. Amarawansa, Ruby's older brother
 W. K. Kamalawathie, Ruby's older sister

In Aluthwala, near Ambalangoda, I interviewed:

D. W. Punchi Nona, Karunasena's mother
 G. G. Punchi Singho, Karunasena's father
 D. W. Yogadasa, D. W. Punchi Nona's younger brother
 and Karunasena's maternal uncle
 D. W. Babun Singho, D. W. Punchi Nona's younger
 brother and Karunasena's maternal uncle
 K. G. B. de Silva, teacher of Aluthwala School
 who had taught Karunasena
 Ven. Siri Ratana Thera, monk of Nandaramaya Temple

In Godalla, near Dodanduwa, I interviewed:

W. K. Rosena Hami, W. K. Simon Silva's paternal cousin
J. G. Mary Nona, G. G. Punchi Singho's older
sister and Karunasena's paternal aunt
Lila Kalupahana, friend of W. K. Rosena Hami

In Pollunawa I interviewed:

G. G. Upasena, Karunasena's older brother
G. G. Nandasena, Karunasena's younger brother

In Batapola I interviewed:

G. G. Dhanasiri, Karunasena's older brother
D. W. Lalawathie ("Hichchiamma"), D. W. Punchi
Nona's younger sister and Karunasena's maternal aunt
L. H. Tennie, Ruby's teacher at school in 1973

In the above list I have given the place of my first interview with each informant. Because the families had moved, later interviews sometimes occurred in different places.

In addition to evidence furnished by the above persons, I have also availed myself of the information supplied in correspondence (already mentioned) by the Ven. D. Dharmasena of Dodanduwa.

*Relevant Facts of Geography and Possibilities for Normal
Means of Communication between the Two Families*

The village of Pollewa, near Batapola, and the small town of Aluthwala, near Ambalangoda, are about 14 kilometers apart. W. K. Simon Silva, Ruby's father, came originally from Aluthwala, although he had lived for eighteen years before 1966 in the immediate vicinity of Batapola. So far as my informants knew, the two families immediately concerned had had no personal contact whatever before they met in the spring of 1966 on the occasion of the first verification of Ruby's statements. They did, however, have some shared acquaintances and even some distant relationships through marriage, as follows.

The most significant of these connections was probably that of W. K. Rosena Hami, who was a first cousin of W. K. Simon Silva. She was a good friend of J. G. Mary Nona, who was an older sister of G. G. Punchi Singho, Karunasena's father. These two women, who both lived in the nearby village of Godalla (near Dodanduwa), where I interviewed them, were also related by marriage. W. K. Rosena Hami's husband was an uncle of J. G. Mary Nona's husband. Thus the two families concerned in the case were distantly connected by marriage. Although they must have known about this association before the case developed, they evidently did not think of it at the time Ruby's family

decided to try to verify her statements. If they had had any reason to believe that the previous personality was even remotely related to themselves, they would have gone directly to the family identified instead of starting with indirect inquiries at the temple in Aluthwala.

J. G. Mary Nona had known Karunasena, her nephew, and had liked him very much. She missed him when he died and talked of him to W. K. Rosena Hami at the time. W. K. Rosena Hami was an infrequent visitor and correspondent of the Silvas. She thought she had gone to visit Ruby's mother when the latter was in the hospital in Galle awaiting the delayed birth of Ruby. However, her memory of this visit was quite unclear and at one point in my interview with her she said that her older sister, not herself, had visited Ruby's mother in the hospital at that time.

W. K. Rosena Hami visited the Silvas occasionally, but she said that she had not done so for four years prior to a visit she made in April 1966, that is, since Ruby's birth. At that time, having heard about Ruby's statements concerning a previous life, she went over to Pollewa to learn for herself what Ruby was saying. J. G. Mary Nona and two other women accompanied her. J. G. Mary Nona said that she had never met the Silvas before this visit.

W. K. Simon Silva confirmed that they had never seen J. G. Mary Nona before this visit, and he was also certain that W. K. Rosena Hami had not visited them since they had moved, in about December 1965, to the house they occupied in Pollewa at the time the two families met. He was not as definite as W. K. Rosena Hami that she had never visited them elsewhere since Ruby's birth. It seems clear, however, that she knew little or nothing about Karunasena except what she had heard from his aunt, J. G. Mary Nona, and it therefore seems unlikely that she could have transmitted to Ruby all the knowledge Ruby showed about the life of Karunasena. Even supposing she had all the information, which is itself very doubtful, if her visits to the Silvas were as infrequent as the testimony indicates, I do not think she could have communicated normally all the details Ruby knew about Karunasena without her parents themselves becoming aware that this was happening. Students of these cases who favor extrasensory perception between the living as an explanation of them can, however, find in W. K. Rosena Hami a possible telepathic or psychometric link between the two families.

Since Ruby's father had relatives in Aluthwala, the families may possibly have had other links, but I think no close ones. The Ven. Siri Ratana had the impression that Ruby's mother, before her visit to the temple at Aluthwala in (about) April 1966 to begin verification of Ruby's statements, had come irregularly to the temple. Her husband, W. K. Simon Silva, said that although he himself had gone to the temple before that date, his wife had not; but Somie Nona said that she had visited it before the development of the case, and, in fact, before Ruby's birth. She seems to have been known by sight to the Ven. Siri Ratana, who said, however, that she was not a regular visitor to the temple. He denied that he knew the Silvas personally before Ruby's mother came to make inquiries in April 1966. This does not preclude the possibility

that other monks at the temple knew the Silvas. Karunasena's family attended the temple at Aluthwala also, but not often; and, as I have mentioned, it took the Ven. Siri Ratana two days of inquiries before he could identify correctly the family Ruby had been talking about.

The above information derives mostly from the Silvas and persons acquainted with them or related to them. D. W. Punchi Nona, however, confirmed that she did not know the Silvas until after the case developed. (Her husband, who was ill, usually took little part in my interviews with his wife and children, although he was present for most of them.) She said that Karunasena had attended the religious classes at the Aluthwala temple. She did not recall that he had been particularly attached to any one of the monk teachers more than to others.

Her son G. G. Upasena, a young man of twenty-one (in 1970), was said to have been four years older than Karunasena. (This accords within one year with the age of about seven and a half that was attributed to Karunasena when he drowned in 1959.) He stated in 1970 that he had known W. K. Simon Silva casually since about 1965-66. He thought he had known him before Ruby had begun to speak about the previous life, although this claim does not agree with what we otherwise know of Ruby's age when she first spoke about it. In any case, G. G. Upasena had only a casual acquaintance with W. K. Simon Silva, apparently restricted to seeing him in the post office at Batapola, where he worked. He had never visited the Silva family before 1969. According to him, his older brother, G. G. Dhanasiri, whom I could not meet in 1970, did not know the Silvas any better. When I finally did meet G. G. Dhanasiri in 1973, I asked him a great many questions and forgot to put this one to him. Subsequently, however, during 1973, it was posed and answered in correspondence between Godwin Samararatne (who had earlier acted as an interpreter for me in the case) and G. G. Dhanasiri. The latter wrote that he had not known W. K. Simon Silva or any other member of the Silva family prior to hearing about Ruby's statements concerning a previous life and his visit to the Silvas in April 1966.

I also asked (in an interview) the same question of D. W. Babun Singho, Karunasena's maternal uncle, who had lived with Karunasena's family "for a good many years." He said that the two families did not know each other before the development of the case.

From all the above, it remains possible that Ruby's parents picked up some information about Karunasena and his family from their visits with relatives and to the temple at Aluthwala. As I have mentioned before, however, it is quite certain that they had no *conscious* knowledge of the correct family to look for in verifying Ruby's statements; if they had had such knowledge, they would have gone directly to that family instead of making inquiries in Aluthwala and at the temple. For the visit of inquiry made there by Ruby's mother, I have the independent testimony of the Ven. Siri Ratana.

It should be remembered that the two families met in April 1966, when Ruby was barely three and a half years old. A child of that age in Sri Lanka

would be constantly under her mother's surveillance. It seems to me not only unlikely but almost impossible that anyone could have told Ruby about Karunasena, at any rate with all the detail she expressed, without her mother becoming aware of the facts in passage, so to speak. And in that case, she and her husband would have known where to look for the family when they wanted to do so. But in that case also there would have been no family worth looking for, because they would not have been surprised at any of Ruby's statements. They would have known that she was just identifying with that particular boy who had drowned some years earlier.

The Life and Death of G. G. Karunasena

G. G. Karunasena was the third of four sons born to G. G. Punchi Singho and D. W. Punchi Nona. According to his horoscope, he was born on March 4, 1952. (The Aluthwala school records give the same date.) He had two older brothers, G. G. Dhanasiri and G. G. Upasena, and one younger brother, G. G. Nandasena.

His family cultivated land—they owned coconut and rubber trees—and had some other sources of income. For a time, G. G. Punchi Singho drove trucks and buses, and at least one aunt of the family was a weaver. For some years the family lived in Trincomalie, on the east coast of Sri Lanka. In 1956 G. G. Punchi Singho suffered a stroke and became bedridden. At this time the family moved to Aluthwala. G. G. Punchi Singho remained bedridden for two years but then gradually improved and became able to walk around with a cane. According to his wife, he was walking again in this lame manner before Karunasena died.

Karunasena began school in Trincomalie. When the family moved to Aluthwala, he entered the school there, going with his older brother G. G. Upasena. The school registers, which I had examined, showed him first entered in the school on January 21, 1957. At the time of his death, he was in the second class. He also attended the Sunday school of the Nandaramaya Temple in Aluthwala, going there also with his older brother G. G. Upasena or alone.

Karunasena liked to work in the fields, and his mother remembered him doing so with unusual diligence. One day when he was just a few months more than seven years old, he returned from working in the fields, went to the well to wash, fell in, and drowned.⁵ Members of the family pulled his body out of the well but could not revive him. Karunasena's parents told me he died on July 18, 1959, a date which is very probably correct because the Aluthwala School register showed his name was removed from its rolls on July 20, 1959.

Apart from his energetic application in field work, Karunasena seems not to have developed any unusual habits or inclinations that marked him off sharply from other young boys of his age. He liked to be clean and well dressed, and he had a perhaps greater than average interest in Buddhism. He was

⁵ Many wells in Sri Lanka have no wall or even railing around them. One or two months after Karunasena's death one of his aunts fell into this same well and drowned. Later the family closed it up.

interested in dancing and drum music and enjoyed the usual games of Sinhalese boys such as kite flying.

The informants for Karunasena's side of the case without exception said that he had been a "boyish boy" with no trace of effeminacy. His mother said that he had never expressed a wish to be a girl. His older brother G. G. Dhana-siri told me that Karunasena had only one testicle, but I do not think he could have distinguished an undescended testicle from the real absence of one.

In his mother's memories, Karunasena became almost apotheosized into an unblemished son whose absence she seemed to feel more rather than less as the years went by. Her husband had become largely disabled by his stroke but survived many years as an invalid requiring special care. He was still able to move around a little when I visited the family in March 1973. For some reason, the family's oldest son, G. G. Dhanasiri, moved out of the parental home and went to stay with an aunt and uncle. He was still unmarried in 1973. The two surviving younger sons continued to live with their parents.

Statements and Recognitions Made by Ruby

In Table 9 I have listed all the statements and recognitions attributed to Ruby by the informants of the case. Instead of attempting to place the statements in chronological order, which I am not sure I could do precisely anyway, I have grouped most of them according to themes which I think will make them easier to understand and to clarify with the various comments. To the best of my knowledge, all but one of the statements for which Ruby's parents are the informants were made before the two families met. An exception is item 45, which Ruby stated during a visit by one of Karunasena's uncles.

Ruby possibly did not state items 60-65 until after the two families had met. Ruby's parents or other informants of her family did not mention them to me. She told them directly to the Ven. D. Dharmasena during his visit to her in the late spring or early summer of 1966. He reported them to me in the letter previously mentioned dated May 27, 1971. They have the disadvantage of having been stated after the two families had met, although Ruby may well have made similar statements to members of her family without their remembering to tell them to me. But they have a special value in that Ruby spoke them directly to the person who recorded them, a respected Buddhist monk having no relation to the family. I have grouped near each other those items mentioned only by the Ven. D. Dharmasena. I have also listed him as an additional informant for some other items that Ruby told directly to him.

Ruby also did not talk about the previous life to P. D. Themis, J. N. Podiappu, and the Ven. Siri Ratana until after the two families had met. Her statements for which they were informants were made between April 1966 and mid-July of the same year, when I recorded them.

Ruby often said the same thing on different occasions, and not all the informants for a particular item heard it at the same time.

TABLE 9. Summary of Statements and Recognitions Made by Ruby

Item	Informants	Verification	Comments
1. She lived at Aluthwala.	Somie Nona Jayasekera, Ruby's mother Ven. Siri Ratana, monk of Nandaramaya Temple in Aluthwala Ven. D. Dharmasena, monk of Kumara Maha Vihara, Dodanduwa	D. W. Punchi Nona, Karunasena's mother	The Singho family resided in Aluthwala for about two and a half years before Karunasena died.
2. She was a "brother," not a "sister."	Somie Nona Ven. Siri Ratana	D. W. Punchi Nona	Karunasena had been the second youngest boy in the family. Ruby said to the Ven. Siri Ratana that she had been a <i>malli</i> (English: "younger brother"). She also asked to be called "malli" in her family.
3. At school she was known as Karunasena.	Somie Nona	D. W. Punchi Nona	
4. At home she was known as "Kira."	Somie Nona	D. W. Punchi Nona	
5. Her father was fair in complexion.	Ven. Siri Ratana	I interviewed G. G. Punchi Singho, Karunasena's father, and noted he was fair in complexion.	
6. Her father had no hair on the top of his head.	Somie Nona Ven. Siri Ratana	Verified by me when I met G. G. Punchi Singho	I met G. G. Punchi Singho several times and had ample opportunity to observe that he was completely bald on the top of his head. W. K. Simon Silva has abundant hair on his head. There would be an obvious contrast in appearance to anyone seeing both of them.

7. Her mother was [also] fair in complexion.

Ven. Siri Ratana

I interviewed D. W. Punchi Nona, Karunasena's mother, and noted that she was definitely fairer than Ruby's mother.

8. Her mother wore a jacket and skirt.

Somie Nona

Ven. Siri Ratana

J. N. Podiappu, distant relative and neighbor of the Silvas

J. G. Mary Nona, Karunasena's paternal aunt

D. W. Punchi Nona

According to the Ven. Siri Ratana, Ruby said: "Unlike my [present] mother my [previous] mother [at Aluthwala] wears a jacket and frock." Other informants for this item used, instead of the word *frock*, a word translated literally as "cloth," but referring to a sarong or garment covering the lower part of the body. The word *skirt* is probably the closest approximation of this garment's name in English.

Ruby's mother wore dresses on the occasions of my visits in 1966, 1968, and 1973. In contrast, D. W. Punchi Nona wore a jacket and skirt in 1968 and 1973. (My notes do not record the clothing of the women at other visits).

9. She had two older brothers.

W. K. Sumanadhasa, Ruby's older brother
Somie Nona

D. W. Punchi Nona
G. G. Dhanasiri, Karunasena's older brother

I cannot find in my notes that Somie Nona said more than that Ruby had said she had brothers without specifying that they were

NOTE: Although I have used the pronouns *she* and *her* in reference to Ruby's statements, readers should remember that she (Ruby) was referring in these statements to Karunasena and to places and events in his life. To avoid confusion, I have sometimes used Karunasena's name in describing what Ruby said, although she herself did not use his name in her remarks.

TABLE 9 (cont.)

Item	Informants	Verification	Comments
9. (cont.)		G. G. Upasena, Karunasena's older brother	older, or younger, or how many. I met G. G. Upasena in 1970 and G. G. Dhanasiri (who was the oldest son of the family) in 1973.
10. She had one younger brother.	W. K. Sumanadhasa Somie Nona	D. W. Punchi Nona G. G. Nandasena, Karunasena's younger brother	I met G. G. Nandasena, Karunasena's younger brother, in 1970.
11. She had sisters.	Somie Nona	G. G. Punchi Singho	Ruby used the Sinhalese word <i>akka</i> , which means "older sister." In fact, Karunasena had no real sisters, but he had female cousins, who, in the Sinhalese usage, would be referred to as sisters.
12. She wore trousers.	W. K. Rosena Hami, W. K. Simon Silva's paternal cousin	Doubtful	G. G. Dhanasiri denied that Karunasena wore trousers and said he wore shorts only. But Karunasena's mother said he had sarongs (see following item), and it is possible that he occasionally wore trousers. A slip of translation may have occurred here also. Ordinarily the Sinhalese word <i>kalisang</i> is qualified by an adjective to indicate whether long trousers or shorts are in- dicated. But in casual remarks <i>kalisang</i> may be used alone to refer to either.

13. She had five new sarongs. Somie Nona D. W. Punchi Nona
Most villagers and many urban dwellers in Sri Lanka wear sarongs. Karunasena was fond of clothes and had many of them.
14. Her older brother did not wear trousers, but a sarong and shirt. J. N. Podiappu Partly incorrect
When I met G. G. Upasena and G. G. Dhanasiri, they were wearing sarongs. G. G. Dhanasiri stated that during Karunasena's lifetime he had worn both sarongs and trousers (at different times).
15. The house at Aluthwala was bigger. J. N. Podiappu I saw both houses in 1966 and 1968.
The Singho house in Aluthwala was definitely bigger and more substantial than the Silva house in Pollewa, near Batapola.
16. The roof of the house was tiled and the walls color-washed. Ven. Siri Ratana This was a correct description of the Singho house in Aluthwala, which I saw.
17. They had an almirah [closet] without a mirror. W. K. Simon Silva,
Ruby's father I was shown this almirah without a mirror in the Singho house.
At the Silva home they had an almirah with a mirror.
18. On the way to the house you come to a culvert and then a junction. Somie Nona I saw the culvert and junction near the Singho house in Aluthwala.
The "junction" is really only a place where a road turns off to another house, but it might have seemed more important to a child.
19. Buses passed along the road by the house. Ven. Siri Ratana G. G. Punchi Singho
20. They had many coconut trees at her house. J. N. Podiappu D. W. Punchi Nona
I saw numerous coconut trees at the Singho house in Aluthwala.
Since coconut trees are quite common in this whole area, the item is not at all specific. However, Ruby was making a comparison with the relative paucity of coconuts at the Silva home.

TABLE 9 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
21. There were piles of coconuts at her house.	Ven. Siri Ratana W. K. Sumanadhasa W. K. Simon Silva Somie Nona	I saw coconuts in piles at the Singho house in Aluthwala.	There were no piles of coconuts at the Silva house in Pollewa. (See also comment for item 20.)
22. The coconuts were brought by carts and lorries.	Somie Nona	G. G. Punchi Singho	
23. Her older brother used to climb coconut trees to pluck coconuts. They drank water from the coconuts.	J. N. Podiappu	D. W. Punchi Nona G. G. Upasena	When water is not otherwise readily available, and coconuts are, the top of a coconut can be sliced off with a heavy knife and a pint or more of coconut water is then drunk directly from the hole in the fruit.
24. They owned a boutique where coconuts were sold.	Ven. Siri Ratana	D. W. Punchi Nona	
25. There was a well in their compound.	Ven. Siri Ratana	I was shown the well in which Karunasena had drowned.	
26. Her father had a bus. Her father drove the bus.	W. K. Simon Silva Ven. Siri Ratana J. N. Podiappu Somie Nona Ven. D. Dharmasena	G. G. Punchi Singho	Ruby's mother and the Ven. Siri Ratana said Ruby said her (previous) father used to "come home in a bus." G. G. Punchi Singho drove his brother-in-law's bus. Karunasena had seen him drive the bus. Sometimes he kept the bus at the house, and so on those occasions he had "come home in a bus." When Ruby first talked of the bus, she did not know how to

verbalize the idea of driving or steering a bus and had communicated with gestures of steering that this was what Karunasena's father had done. G. G. Punchi Singho drove the bus when the family lived in Trincomalie. They moved to Aluthwala about two and half years before Karunasena's death, in approximately January 1957.

27. There was an old lorry [truck].

W. K. Simon Silva

D. W. Punchi Nona

G. G. Punchi Singho had driven a lorry, and the family had owned one.

28. Her father brought vegetables, including tomatoes, curd, and milk, when he returned home.

W. K. Sumanadhasa
Ven. Siri Ratana
W. K. Simon Silva

D. W. Punchi Nona
D. W. Babun Singho,
Karunasena's
maternal uncle

The informants for this item differed in the naming of the individual provisions mentioned by Ruby as being brought home by Karunasena's father. One of the mentioned foodstuffs, tomatoes, was a luxury for the Silvas. D. W. Punchi Nona said that her husband brought home vegetables (without specifying tomatoes), fish, and milk. D. W. Babun Singho mentioned that he brought home curd. (See also item 60.) The item was not specific; Ruby's father also sometimes brought provisions back to the Silva home.

29. They bought mangoes from a shop.

W. K. Sumanadhasa

D. W. Babun Singho

Ruby implied by this that although the Singhos had plenty of coconuts on their property, they had no mangoes and needed to buy them. D. W. Babun Singho included

TABLE 9 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
29. (cont.)			mangoes in his list of produce brought home by G. G. Punchi Singho.
30. Buses went between Ambalangoda and Galle.	Somie Nona	Ambalangoda and Galle are towns on the coastal road and buses went along this road.	Ruby made this remark when she heard that Karunasena's father was ill and she suggested that she take him to the hospital. The nearest large hospital was in Galle.
31. She had a bicycle.	Somie Nona W. K. Sumanadhasa	Incorrect	Karunasena had a tricycle, but not a bicycle.
32. She rode very fast on her bicycle.	Somie Nona	D. W. Punchi Nona	Karunasena came down a hill very fast on his tricycle.
33. She went to school on a bicycle.	Ven. Siri Ratana	Incorrect	Karunasena was only seven when he died. He did not have a bicycle of his own, only a tricycle. G. G. Dhanasiri denied that Karunasena ever went to school on a bicycle, although he said that Karunasena sometimes rode on the pillion to shops.
34. There was a rubber plantation [near the home].	Somie Nona	D. W. Punchi Nona	The rubber plantation was near the Singho house in Aluthwala. It belonged to the Singho family.
35. Her mother would not allow her to go there.	Somie Nona	D. W. Punchi Nona	Karunasena's mother disapproved of his going over to the plantation. Karunasena was buried there.

36. She had been to Kataragama with her father.

P. D. Themis,
neighbor of the Silva family
Somie Nona

G. G. Punchi Singho

Kataragama is a well-known religious center and place of pilgrimage in southern Sri Lanka. Ruby had not been to Kataragama. (For additional information about Kataragama, see the report of the case of Indika Guneratne and references cited therein. See also the following item.)

37. There were a big crowd, a bo tree, and a temple at Kataragama.

P. D. Themis

P. Wirz. 1966. *Kataragama: The holiest place in Ceylon*. Trans. from the German by D. B. Pralle. Colombo: Lake House.

When Ruby said she (in the previous life) had been to Kataragama, P. D. Themis tested her by asking her to describe it and received this correct answer. The subject of Kataragama had come up when Ruby, visiting P. D. Themis with her mother, noticed a picture of Lord Kataragama on the cover of a book he was reading and asked him whose picture it was.

Large crowds make pilgrimages to Kataragama, where there are numerous temples and a bo tree. The place is a special center for penitents and is the principal site of fire walking in Sri Lanka.

38. She had been to Galle.

Somie Nona

D. W. Punchi Nona

Galle is an important city in southwestern Sri Lanka. Ruby made this remark at the time she was being taken to Galle for the first time since her birth there. Karunasena had been to Galle.

39. She had been to Dodanduwa.

Somie Nona

D. W. Punchi Nona

As with the previous item, when Ruby was being taken to Do-

TABLE 9 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
39. (cont.)			danduwa she said she had been there before. Karunasena had been there. Dodanduwa is between Ambalangoda and Galle.
40. There were two monks at the temple [at Aluthwala], one tall and one short	J. N. Podiappu	Unverified in part	In fact there are perhaps twenty monks at this temple. Possibly Karunasena knew only two of them well.
41. There was a belly tree at the temple.	Ven. Siri Ratana	I saw the belly tree at the temple near Aluthwala.	The Ven. Siri Ratana was a secondhand informant for this item.
42. She had eaten fruit from the belly tree at the temple.	J. N. Podiappu	Unverified	The Ven. Siri Ratana said children often took fruit from the belly tree, but he could not specifically remember Karunasena as one who had done this. D. W. Lalawathie, Karunasena's aunt, thought (but was not sure) that Karunasena had taken fruit from the belly tree at the temple in Aluthwala. No other informant could confirm that he had done so.
43. She had once offered flowers at the temple.	Ven. Siri Ratana W. K. Simon Silva	Unverified	This was very likely true but could not be verified or refuted as the Ven. Siri Ratana did not specifically remember Karunasena. D. W. Punchi Nona was also unable to verify this item.

44. She had picked up a pencil near the bookshelf in the temple and given it to one of the monks.

W. K. Simon Silva
J. N. Podiappu
Ven. Siri Ratana

Unverified

The Ven. Siri Ratana was a secondhand informant for this item, having heard it from Ruby's mother, not directly from Ruby herself. At the temple in Aluthwala there was a bookshelf such as Ruby was referring to. The Ven. Siri Ratana could not remember any particular episode corresponding to Ruby's statement, but a child might well have picked up a pencil and given it to him without his remarking or remembering the incident. W. K. Simon Silva and J. N. Podiappu did not say that Ruby had said where the pencil was when Karunasena picked it up.

45. An uncle had pushed and choked her.

Somie Nona

Somie Nona

Some time between July 1966 and March 1968, Karunasena's maternal uncle, D. W. Babun Singho, came to see Ruby. She received him coolly and asked angrily: "Why have you come here?" She explained that he had pushed and choked Karunasena, and he admitted that he had. The item was not independently verified, and D. W. Punchi Nona denied that any uncle had physically mistreated Karunasena. D. W. Babun Singho also denied to me that he had ever mistreated Karunasena. He and other members of the Singho family said, or implied, that he and Karunasena had had an excellent relationship.

TABLE 9 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
45. (cont.)			Sometimes they played at wrestling together. Could Ruby have had a confused memory of such a scene? Or were members of the Singho family suppressing an episode with painful memories for them? I favor somewhat the latter solution of this discrepancy since Somie Nona gave quite consistent testimony about Babun Singho's visit to Ruby both before and after I had asked the Singhos if they could verify it.
46. There had been fights with the neighbors over vegetable plots.	W. K. Sumanadhasa W. K. Simon Silva	D. W. Punchi Nona	Ruby's father said she was stimulated to make this remark when she saw her mother one day preparing to cook vegetables.
47. Premadasa and Abraham were workers.	Somie Nona	Unverified	These names were not recalled by Karunasena's parents. D. W. Punchi Nona recalled a worker they employed called Premasiri, and Ruby may have been trying to remember this name.
48. She had friends called Vasantha, Kusuma, and Nandawathie.	Somie Nona	Unverified	Karunasena had friends at school. His mother could not recall their names.
49. Her aunts once washed a burned part of a machine in a well.	W. K. Simon Silva Somie Nona	D. W. Punchi Nona	The Singho family owned looms and one of Karunasena's aunts (not two) once washed a part of loom machinery in a well. The part had not actually been burned,

but had become blackened with soot from an oil lamp. Karunasena helped the aunt wash the blackened part of the loom.

W. K. Simon Silva did not say that Ruby had mentioned who had washed the machine in the well or that it had been burned. Ruby's family had no idea what she was talking about until the detail was verified. Somie Nona's statement about this item was recorded in 1968 and varied in non-essential details from that given by her husband in 1966. She said Ruby had stated that two aunts had washed the burned piece of the loom, but in fact only one aunt seems to have been involved in the episode.

50. Two cobras came to her home. One was killed and burned by other persons.

W. K. Simon Silva
Ven. Siri Ratana

G. G. Punchi Singho

According to Ruby's father she said of the two cobras that one was killed and the other escaped. He said that Ruby, presumably very young at the time, used childish language to describe this scene. He transmitted it to me in adult language.

51. Her mother had beaten her.

Somie Nona

Unverified

When this matter was brought up, D. W. Punchi Nona denied that she had beaten Karunasena. The discrepancy may have derived from different meanings attached to the word *beat*. Is a slap or a cuff a beating or not?

TABLE 9 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
52. Her mother was miserly.	Somie Nona	Unverified	Another difficult item to enquire about on the Singho side of the case. No informant of the family admitted that D. W. Punchi Nona had been more than frugal. To a child trying to extract money from an adult, thrift may appear as stinginess.
53. She used to work in a paddy field.	W. K. Simon Silva	D. W. Punchi Nona	Although less than seven and a half years old, Karunasena had helped the adults working in the paddy fields.
54. She had been working in the fields just before she fell into a well.	Somie Nona	D. W. Punchi Nona	G. G. Dhanasiri also verified this item, although he himself was not at home when Karunasena drowned. (See also item 64 for a detail related to this item.)
55. She had gone to wash herself in the well, slipped, and fell in.	W. K. Simon Silva Somie Nona Ven. Siri Ratana J. N. Podiappu Ven. D. Dharmasena	D. W. Punchi Nona	W. K. Simon Silva did not mention that Ruby said she had gone to the well to wash. He did say that Ruby had shown how Karunasena put up his hands as he fell into the well.
56. She bled profusely.	W. K. Simon Silva Somie Nona Ven. Siri Ratana	Unverified	Somie Nona said Ruby had said that Karunasena had bled from the right leg. D. W. Punchi Nona denied that Karunasena had bled.
57. She was carried by her brothers after falling into the well.	J. N. Podiappu Somie Nona	D. W. Punchi Nona	Somie Nona said Ruby had said Karunasena was carried into the house by his oldest brother.

D. W. Punchi Nona, in 1966, said Karunasena's body was carried into the house by *her* brother, Karunasena's uncle, but in 1968 she confirmed that Karunasena's brother had carried him. Possibly both of them did so together. The brother in question could not, however, have been the oldest one because he, G. G. Dhanasiri, was not at home when Karunasena drowned. Another older brother, G. G. Upasena, was at home. I neglected to ask G. G. Upasena about his part in the episode when I talked with him.

58. One of her brothers said: "Let us take him to the hospital." The other said: "He is dead."

J. N. Podiappu
W. K. Simon Silva

D. W. Punchi Nona

W. K. Simon Silva said Ruby quoted the second brother as saying: "It is not necessary to do that [take the drowned Karunasena to the hospital]." D. W. Punchi Nona could not recall the exact words spoken after Karunasena's body was recovered from the well, but remembered that they discussed taking him to the hospital.

59. Her mother was there and crying when she died.

Somie Nona
J. N. Podiappu

D. W. Punchi Nona

Both in 1966 and 1968, D. W. Punchi Nona cried when talking about Karunasena's death. In 1968 she said: "How can a mother lose a child and not weep?"

60. Her father used to bring her plantains and pineapples.

Ven. D. Dharmasena

D. W. Babun Singho

See also item 28 for Ruby's statements about other provisions brought home by G. G. Punchi Singho.

TABLE 9 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
61. Her father was lame.	Ven. D. Dharmasena	D. W. Punchi Nona	G. G. Punchi Singho had a stroke in 1956. He was bedridden for two years but then became mobilized and able to move around with a cane.
62. She went to the religious [Sunday] school in Aluthwala with her older brother.	Ven. D. Dharmasena	D. W. Babun Singho D. W. Lalawathie, Karunasena's maternal aunt	W. K. Simon Silva said Ruby had referred to the Sunday school at the temple in Aluthwala. He did not say she had mentioned going there with an older brother. Karunasena went to the Sunday school sometimes alone and sometimes with his older brother G. G. Upasena.
63. She used to pick wood apples at the temple.	Ven. D. Dharmasena	Unverified	
64. She had been working in the garden <i>with her brother</i> before she drowned in the well.	Ven. D. Dharmasena	Unverified	Karunasena's mother, D. W. Punchi Nona, said he had been working in the fields before he went to the well and drowned. She did not mention that he had been working with a brother, although this is possible. G. G. Dhanasiri (who was not at home when Karunasena drowned, but would quickly have learned the details afterward) stated that Karunasena had been working with his uncle D. W. Babun Singho and some "outside workers." (See also item 54.) In reporting item 54, Somie Nona

had credited Ruby with saying that Karunasena had been helping *his father* in the fields before he went to wash in the well and drowned. This seems improbable; but, although the lame G. G. Punchi Singho could do no work himself, he might have been watching or supervising those who could.

65. She cried out to her brother after slipping into the well, but he did not turn and rescue her.

Ven. D. Dharmasena

Unverified

I did not verify that Karunasena had cried out after falling into the well. He was pulled out of the well, but too late, probably by his brothers.

G. G. Dhanasiri stated that no one had heard Karunasena cry for help as he fell into the well. But he himself was not at home at the time of the accident.

66. Recognition of Karunasena's mother, brother, and maternal aunt

Somie Nona
W. K. Simon Silva
D. W. Punchi Nona
G. G. Nandasena
D. W. Lalawathie

When the visitors approached the house, Ruby saw them coming and ran into the house saying: "My mother, brother, and 'hichchi' are coming."

D. W. Punchi Nona said she went to Ruby's house accompanied by her youngest son, G. G. Nandasena; her sister, D. W. Lalawathie; her sister's husband; and two of their children. (Somie Nona only mentioned *one* of D. W. Lalawathie's children as having come.) Ruby did not recognize D. W. Lalawathie's husband and child (or

TABLE 9 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
66. (cont.)			<p>children). Of them, she said: "They are not relatives." In fact, D. W. Lalawathie had not married until after Karunasena's death.</p> <p>D. W. Punchi Nona apparently did not hear Ruby's initial remark of recognition spoken to her mother. She did not think Ruby had recognized her but thought she had recognized her youngest son, G. G. Nandasena, who had come with her. Of him, Ruby said: "This is my youngest brother."</p> <p>W. K. Simon Silva's account of these recognitions accorded with that of his wife, that is, that Ruby had identified three of the visitors. He also mentioned that attempts were made to persuade Ruby that the small child of Karunasena's aunt was Karunasena's brother, he being a much smaller child than Karunasena's younger brother, who was nine at the time of this visit. Ruby persisted, however, in saying that this older boy was Karunasena's brother.</p> <p>G. G. Nandasena's account of this meeting accorded in essentials with that of the other informants. He remembered (in 1970) that when Ruby was asked why she called a boy who was bigger than she was her "younger brother," she</p>

had replied: "Well, he *is* my younger brother." She did not give his name.

Hichchi means literally "smaller" or "younger." The mother's younger sisters (maternal aunts) may be called "Hichchiamma" and, by shortening, just "Hichchi." D. W. Lalawathie said that Ruby called her (to her face) "Hichchiamma," but she used the short form in speaking to her mother.

67. Recognition of the
Ven. Siri Ratana

Ven. Siri Ratana
Somie Nona

The Ven. Siri Ratana went to the Silva house in Batapola. Ruby's mother pointed to him and asked her who he was. She said: "The monk from our temple." The Ven. Siri Ratana said that Ruby further specified that he was from the temple at Aluthwala. Somie Nona said that Ruby told the monk that he had taught her (that is, Karunasena), but the Ven. Siri Ratana thought he had not taught Karunasena, who was in the lower forms of the school, whereas he taught the upper classes. It is nevertheless possible that Karunasena had some instruction from him. There were discrepancies in the testimony on whether or not Ruby's mother had met the Ven. Siri Ratana at the temple (when she went to make inquiries to verify what Ruby had been saying) before he came to the Silva house.

TABLE 9 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
68. Recognition of J. G. Mary Nona, Karunasena's paternal aunt	W. K. Simon Silva J. G. Mary Nona W. K. Rosena Hami		No one in the Silva family knew who J. G. Mary Nona was. Ruby was very friendly and even affectionate with her, and her father asked her: "Who is she?" Ruby replied: "That is my aunt." She did not identify the other three women with Karunasena's aunt; Karunasena had not known them.
69. Recognition of G. G. Punchi Singho, Karunasena's father	Somie Nona W. K. Simon Silva		When Ruby saw a man who was a stranger to the family approaching the house, she said: "There comes my father." She went to him and sat on his lap but did not then or later give his name. After he left she told the other children and also her parents that this man was "her" father.
70. Recognition of Karunasena's maternal uncle	Somie Nona		Since G. G. Punchi Singho had called at the post office in Bata-pola to ask Ruby's father for permission to visit, the latter knew who G. G. Punchi Singho was when he arrived. But other members of the family did not.
			Karunasena's uncle asked Ruby: "Who am I?" She replied: "You are my uncle." The members of her family did not know who he was. The uncle had not introduced himself to anyone before putting his question to Ruby. Ruby seemed more affectionate toward him than

she had been toward Karunasena's father. According to Karunasena's mother, D. W. Punchi Nona, Karunasena was fonder of one of his uncles than of his parents. The uncle of this item was not D. W. Babun Singho (who figured in item 45), but another maternal uncle whom I did not question about this recognition. I also failed to record his name.

In 1966, during the first investigation by Francis Story and myself, Ruby entered affably into our interview with her mother. She confirmed or repeated some of the statements which her mother said she had made about the previous life. The following day, when we talked with her father, she was more reticent. Despite her interventions during my interviews in 1966, I have not listed Ruby as an informant in Table 9. But she spoke directly to the Ven. D. Dharmasena (in 1966) all items for which he is listed as the informant.

Ruby's recognitions all occurred at the Silva house in Pollewa village, near Batapola. On the occasion when Ruby was taken to the Aluthwala temple a huge crowd gathered, as so often occurs when news of such a case spreads in Asian villages and towns. The throng excited Ruby and this possibly accounted for her failing to recognize anything at the temple. The difference between her behavior under these circumstances at the temple and at her home impressed the Ven. Siri Ratana.

So far as I could learn, the recognitions Ruby made at her home were free of suggestions from bystanders. In most instances even members of Ruby's family did not know the people she was recognizing, and so they could not have hinted their identities to her. There were, however, crowds of villagers standing around when Ruby recognized members of the Singho family.

I have omitted from Table 9 a reported recognition made by Ruby of one of Karunasena's older brothers, G. G. Dhanasiri. Ruby told her family *after* he left that he was "her" brother. G. G. Dhanasiri said that Ruby had not recognized him. He and Ruby talked together for a time, but evidently she conveyed no indication of recognizing him to him at the time. He could possibly have identified himself to Ruby, thus vitiating the value of her saying later to her family that he was her (previous) brother.

Ruby failed to recognize the other of Karunasena's older brothers, G. G. Upasena, when he went to visit her in 1969. But by this time her memories had begun to fade. I do not consider her failure to recognize him particularly noteworthy.

Ruby's Behavior Related to the Previous Life

Circumstances and Manner of Ruby's Speaking about the Previous Life. Ruby sometimes talked as if she were somehow "on leave" from the home in Aluthwala, and really belonged there rather than in Pollewa. When the Ven. D. Dharmasena visited her (in the spring of 1966), he gave Ruby some gifts, which she passed over to her mother. When he then asked her if this woman was her mother, she replied negatively and said that her mother was at Aluthwala. When he asked who was the woman (Ruby's mother) caressing her, she did not reply. When a little later he asked her to call her father (who was at the house but apparently not present at this moment), Ruby replied that her father was at Aluthwala.

Ruby sometimes spoke in the present tense and sometimes in the past tense in referring to the previous life. Some of her remarks, as translated to

me, showed her use of the present tense—for example: “There *are* piles of coconuts at my house,” “Buses *pass* along the road by my house,” and “The coconuts *are* brought by carts and lorries.” Another statement of this type occurred when Ruby told her mother: “If you do not have coconuts here, we can get them in Aluthwala.” But in other instances her remarks were translated with the past tense, as if she could, at least some of the time, distinguish past from present.

When she first spoke about the previous life she sometimes lacked an adequate vocabulary to convey her meaning. For example, Ruby’s father, W. K. Simon Silva, said that she used childish language to describe the episode of cobras coming to the house and one being killed and burned (item 50). In telling me about what she had said, he “translated” her words into adult speech.

Ruby’s mother gave another example of her inability to express herself in words and her use of gestures to supplement them. When she wanted to convey the fact that her (previous) father was a bus driver, she knew the word for bus, but not that for driver. So she communicated his activity by making the motions of steering a vehicle.⁶

Many of Ruby’s remarks were stimulated by some activity of a member of the family which would lead her to say: “I used to do that.” Ruby’s comment about quarrels with neighbors over fences separating vegetables (item 46) occurred when she saw her mother cutting vegetables.

Ruby’s Masculine Behavior. I have already mentioned Ruby’s discontent with being a girl and her comments about being bigger than her physical size suggested. I will now describe in more detail the reports of masculine behavior in Ruby. Various informants, but principally Ruby’s mother, gave me details about this behavior. They compared her with other girls of her age, and notably with her older sister, Kamalawathie. In 1973, Kamalawathie herself was present when I discussed some of the following details (again or for the first time) with Ruby’s (and her) mother and older brother, W. K. Amarawansa; she gave tacit or expressed agreement to the comparisons made between her and Ruby. Kamalawathie was not otherwise an informant for the case.

Ruby manifested masculine behavior principally with regard to clothes and games. She said that (in the previous life) she had worn trousers and also a shirt and sarong, both masculine costumes in Sri Lanka, and she asked to be given trousers. Although she permitted herself to be clothed in girls’ dresses, she liked to wear boys’ shorts under them. On the occasions of my visits in 1966 and 1968 she was wearing boys’ shorts under her dress. She also liked to wear one of her brothers’ sarongs and would “borrow” them with his shirts and singlets (undershirts) to wear together.

⁶ For other examples of subjects of these cases who have used gestures to supplement words, or instead of them, when they could not yet adequately verbalize what they wanted to communicate, see the cases of Imad Elawar (I. Stevenson, 1974, *Twenty cases*), Kumkum Verma (first volume of this series), and Sujith Lakmal Jayaratne (this volume).

In games Ruby showed a preference for boys' activities such as kite flying and *cadju*, a game somewhat like American marbles. She was skillful at these games. Her sister, Kamalawathie, had never flown kites. Ruby joined the boys when they played cricket. She rode her brother's bicycle. And, perhaps most masculine of all these traits, she climbed trees. On at least one occasion she went up a coconut tree and brought down a coconut.

Ruby also whistled, a boyish habit. And she introduced to her family a cluck or clicking sound that she made at the back of her throat when she wanted to get someone's attention. (G. G. Dhanasiri, Karunasena's older brother, remembered—but only in response to a leading question—that Karunasena had had the same habit.)

In contrast, Ruby had no interest in cooking, a feminine activity. She was inclined to be aggressive in disagreements, and when angered by her brothers she would pound them with her fists like a boy. Yet she liked her brothers more than her sister.

In view of all the foregoing details we can feel no surprise that her mother thought her definitely boyish, an opinion concurred in by J. N. Podiappu, a neighbor and relative of the Silvas who would be a more objective observer.

Although Ruby knew both the official name (Karunasena) and the family pet name (Kira) of the previous personality, she seems not to have asked to be called these names by the Silva family. But she did ask repeatedly to be called "brother" or "son." Her mother yielded on this point and in 1968 was calling her "son." The other children called her "brother" only when they were angry at her and wished to tease her.

Ruby was both puzzled and discontented at being a girl. She said more than once: "Why did I become a girl?" At my second visit in 1968, Ruby's mother told me she had said that when she died again she wanted to be a boy again, "like a brother next time," as she put it. She made this remark when she attended the funeral of an old woman.

Ruby's masculine identification came out further in 1968 when I gave her an extended Draw-a-Person Test with two free choices of the sex of the person drawn.⁷ On both free choices she drew a man, an indication of masculine identification. In connection with Ruby's wish to be a boy, I may here remind readers that Karunasena's family did not in any way consider him effeminate, and he never, at least to his mother, expressed a wish to be a girl.⁸

I mentioned earlier that Karunasena had one testicle absent or undescended. G. G. Dhanasiri, his oldest brother, remarked with regard to this deficiency that he had heard that "it helps one to become a woman," that

⁷L. Whitaker. 1961. The use of an extended Draw-a-Person Test to identify homosexual and effeminate men. *Journal of Consulting Psychology* 25: 482-85.

⁸In this respect the case differs from those of Gnanatilleka Baddewithana and Paulo Lorenz (I. Stevenson. 1974. *Twenty cases*) and resembles that of Dolon Champa Mitra (first volume of this series). Tillekeratne (the previous personality in the case of Gnanatilleka) showed strong feminine inclinations, and Emilia (the previous personality in the case of Paulo) overtly expressed a wish to change sex in another incarnation. On the other hand, the informants about Nishith (the previous personality in Dolon's case) did not think him in any way effeminate.

is, in the next incarnation. Pending the development of a much larger series of cases than we now have, we should assign this comment to the level of folklore.

Ruby's Phobia of Wells. Ruby had a definite phobia of wells. In 1966, at the age of three and a half, she would go to the well only with an adult. She warned her brothers and other persons about the danger of falling into a well. In 1968 she still showed a fear of wells, but by 1970 she had lost it.

Other Behavior of Ruby Related to the Previous Life. In addition to the behavior previously mentioned, Ruby showed some other traits which corresponded with reports of Karunasena's behavior. Both children seem to have been interested in clothes as such—apart from the sex associated with the clothes worn. Ruby's interest in clothes is indicated in the rather large number of items in Table 9 which refer to Karunasena's clothes or those of other persons. Karunasena's mother said that he always liked to be neatly dressed.

As I have already mentioned, Ruby was rather an aggressive child and tended to strike her brothers with her fists like a boy when she became angry. K. G. B. de Silva, who remembered Karunasena from his days at the school in Aluthwala where she taught, described him as being mischievous and fighting with other boys. She thought of him as being aggressive. However, J. G. Mary Nona, Karunasena's aunt, remembered him as being rather timid.

Karunasena seems to have had an above average interest in religion and attended religious classes at the temple in Aluthwala voluntarily. His parents both said that he liked drawing pictures of the Buddha. Ruby also was somewhat unusual among her siblings in her interest in religion. The Silvas' fifth son had become a *bhikkhu* (monk) by 1970; when he came home to visit, Ruby asked him about religious topics, which he explained to her. When she drew pictures she showed a preference for drawing representations of the Buddha, and she liked to worship before a Buddha image. Ruby's mother thought that Ruby and her son who had become a *bhikkhu* were the most religious of her eight children.

Ruby showed a strong interest in planting and gardening. In 1970, I saw her wield a *mammotty*⁹ with great vigor. In this respect she did not differ so much from her older sister, Kamalawathie, who also liked to garden and plant. But their mother pointed out that whereas Kamalawathie, in keeping with her age, had used a small *mammotty*, Ruby had used one of adult size. Karunasena had enjoyed gardening and planting. I have previously mentioned also his enthusiasm for field work.

When a young child, Ruby used to dance when she heard drums being played. She invited her brothers to sing and dance with her. Karunasena had liked to dance.

In one respect Ruby's personality differed from that of Karunasena. He had been somewhat fussy about his food and would leave a meal if he thought

⁹ A *mammotty* is an agricultural implement somewhat like a combination of a hoe and a shovel as used in Western agriculture and gardening.

it not properly prepared. But Ruby was not known to be particularly exacting about the food she was served.

In Table 10 I have summarized the personality traits with regard to which Ruby and Karunasena showed correspondences or in which the behavior of Ruby accorded with what might have been expected from Karunasena's experiences, for example, those of a boy who had drowned in a well.

Ruby's Attitude toward Members of the Previous Family. Ruby, in contrast to many subjects of reincarnation cases, showed no strong desire to return to the previous family, or even to see or visit them. She compared their superior standard of material living with that of her parents, and disliked being a girl, but never said she wanted to be back in the previous family again. She was noticeably unfriendly toward some of its members when they visited. She behaved more cordially with Karunasena's aunt and with one of his uncles than with his parents. These attitudes harmonized with the acknowledgment made by Karunasena's mother that he had cared more for his uncle than for his parents. And she said that he sometimes confided in D. W. Lalawathie, his aunt, instead of her. On the other hand, Ruby was not devoid of feeling for Karunasena's parents; when she heard that his father was ill, she thought that she ought to

TABLE 10. *Correspondences in Behavior between Ruby and Karunasena*

<i>Ruby</i>	<i>Karunasena</i>
1. Preference for male clothes	Was a boy
2. Preference for boys' games such as kite flying	Was a boy and had owned and flown a kite
3. Interested in gardening and planting	Interested in gardening and planting; had worked in fields with his family
4. Liked dancing to drum music	Was interested in dancing and drum music
5. Made clucking sound in throat to get attention	Made clucking sound in throat to get attention
6. Above average interest in religion; liked drawing images of the Buddha	Voluntarily attended religious school at temple; liked drawing images of the Buddha
7. Liked good clothes	Liked to be neatly dressed and to wear good clothes
8. Tendency to be aggressive and to beat brothers when they annoyed her	Reported by one schoolteacher to have been aggressive but by another informant, an aunt, to have been timid
9. Afraid of wells when a small child	Drowned in a well
10. Not particularly concerned about the quality of food served	Somewhat fussy about food

have him admitted to the hospital in Galle. And she did ask to be taken to visit them from time to time up to the age of six, in 1968. After that, her requests to see them diminished.

Ruby complained of being beaten (in the previous life) by Karunasena's mother and by one of his uncles. She complained also that Karunasena's mother was miserly. Her family and relatives noted that Karunasena's parents were not very affectionate toward Ruby when they visited. J. N. Podiappu criticized Karunasena's father for not bringing Ruby a gift when he visited. Ruby's mother said that Karunasena's mother questioned Ruby rather sternly. She asked her somewhat reproachfully: "What are you doing here?" as if Ruby (or Karunasena, from her point of view) had deserted her by going off to another family to be reborn.

Other Relevant Behavior of Ruby

Ruby was precocious in learning and when she began school did very well. She learned reading, writing, and arithmetic more quickly than other children of her age. Her mother said in 1968 that when she was in the upper kindergarten she was already up to the level of children in the second class of school. Ruby had memories of having been at school and once remarked that she had learned at school (in the previous life) that $2 \times 9 = 18$.

I enquired about any capacity shown by Ruby for extrasensory perception, apart from the memories of the previous life. Ruby's mother and her older brother, W. K. Amarawansa, who answered this question, said that they had not known her to have such ability.

The Attitude of Karunasena's Family toward Ruby

The relative detachment of Ruby from the previous family accords with the fact that after the initial visits in 1966, Karunasena's parents did not return to see Ruby again between 1966 and 1970. This arose at least partly from the difficult economic circumstances into which the Singhos had fallen. As I mentioned earlier, even before Karunasena's death his father had become ill and had been unable to work since 1956. Thereafter the family had gradually declined from their former prosperity to the borderline of abject poverty. It seems that G. G. Dhanasiri, the oldest son of the family, who had moved out of the home, contributed little or no assistance afterward to his parents. Between my two visits of 1966 and 1968, the Singhos had shifted from the rather substantial house in Aluthwala, where Karunasena had lived, to a humble single-roomed dwelling in another village. It was really a mere hovel. D. W. Punchi Nona regretted (in 1968) their lack of contact with Ruby, but explained that she could not afford to visit her. She said that she had to work as well as look after her enfeebled husband.

The distressing changes in the Singhos' situation made Karunasena's mother regret his death even more. She manifested a genuine grief with weeping

when we reviewed it in both 1966 and 1968. I felt unkind in even asking her to go over these melancholy details with me again. Much of her sorrow over Karunasena's death derived from true affection, but it was at least tinged with regrets over the loss of a child who could have been an important economic support for the family. She accused herself of having neglected Karunasena in order to care for her invalid husband; she even thought that Karunasena would then have been alive and able to help them—he would have been sixteen in 1968—if she had not been obliged to spend so much time with her husband. I assume she meant by this remark that Karunasena's fall into the well would have been noticed immediately and he would have been quickly pulled out before he drowned; there was no suggestion that he had committed suicide.

I nevertheless find it somewhat puzzling that the Singhos did not make more effort between 1966 and 1970 to keep in touch with Ruby. Some families concerned in these cases who have been as poor as Karunasena's became have managed to continue visits between the families concerned if they wished to do so. Here the attitude of Ruby's mother may have exerted a negative influence. She did not wish Ruby to go to the Singhos' house. She had an irrational fear that they might want to keep Ruby, and so she never took her to their home until 1972. But I do not think she ever discouraged the Singhos from coming to see Ruby. And, as we shall see, the families did renew their acquaintance after 1970.

Comments on the Evidence of Paranormal Processes in the Case

This case included the usual discrepancies about some of the details. The informants, however, reported its main features with little disagreement, and I found this true both in comparing the statements of different informants and in comparing what one informant said at different times. Moreover, my first investigation of the case took place within four months of its main events, and so I do not think the memories of the informants were much eroded by the passage of time or other events. There had also been little visiting between the families, which can sometimes be the occasion for the informants to exchange information about the case, after which they may confuse what the subject had said before they met with what he said only later.

The reported masculine identification of Ruby seems to me to strengthen the case because this feature is not something that parents in Sri Lanka would enthusiastically emphasize in a daughter any more than would parents of a similar child in Europe or America. Some of the observations of the informants about her masculine behavior might have arisen from their expectations that, if she had been a boy in a previous life, she should show boyish traits. But I do not think there can have been any mistake about her inclination to wear boys' clothes, which I observed twice myself. And I also observed her response on the masculine side to the first extended Draw-a-Person Test that I gave her.

The case perhaps draws its greatest strength from the large number of details in statements made by Ruby before the two families met. Her parents certainly had no conscious knowledge of all this information. I believe this was amply established from the history of their efforts to trace the related previous personality.

Some of the details Ruby knew concerned minor events of little importance and thus of a type not likely to be known outside the family. For example, D. W. Punchi Nona, speaking particularly about Ruby's reference to the washing of a sooted loom part in a well (item 49, Table 9), said that Ruby had mentioned some matters known only to Karunasena. This exaggerated a little. The aunt concerned in this episode had died soon after Karunasena, but other members of the family knew about it. Nevertheless, probably few, if any, persons outside the immediate family had heard of the incident.

Ruby never went to the Singho home for recognition tests there. The people she recognized all came to the Silva home in Pollewa village. But she recognized every one of them correctly and, so far as I could learn, without any guidance from other persons.¹⁰ Moreover, as I have mentioned before, in several instances her own family did not know who the visitor was before she recognized the person visiting.

In this case, as in some others, I found possible links between the two families through relatives and mutual friends. But from my inquiries with members of both families I feel satisfied that these persons cannot have played a significant part in the transmission of information about Karunasena to Ruby by normal means. I do not believe that one (or more) of them could have somehow stuffed into Ruby all the information she showed about Karunasena by the age of three and a half without her mother knowing about such communications to her child. It remains possible, however, that one or more of these persons somehow acted as a telepathic link between Ruby and living persons who knew about Karunasena. If Ruby obtained her information about Karunasena with extrasensory perception, he was the only person about whom she demonstrated such a capacity. It makes little sense to me to think that a child could learn by extrasensory perception as many correct and often quite specific details about one person as Ruby did, and never show any such ability with regard to other persons.

Even supposing, however, that Ruby had obtained her information about the previous personality through extrasensory perception, we should still have to account for her selection of a boy, and a particular one, to personate. In this case we have statements from both Ruby's parents that before Ruby was born they wanted another girl as their eighth child, the family having up to then only one girl and six boys. The Silva family then does not seem to have been one in which, as sometimes happens, parental desire and influence molded a child toward identification with the opposite sex.

¹⁰ Ruby did not identify one of Karunasena's brothers (G. G. Dhanasiri) to her family until *after* she and he had talked together, and he may have told her who he was.

Ruby's Later Development

In March 1968, Ruby's memories of the previous life had already begun to fade, or at least she was not then talking of it spontaneously. She would answer questions with seemingly good recall if questioned but had forgotten some details. However, she still liked to be called "brother" and she still showed some other masculine tendencies. She liked to wear boys' clothes and play boys' games.

In November 1970, Ruby (who was then just over eight years old) was in the third class of school and was rated ninth in rank. (I do not know how many pupils there were in the class.)

She was still fond of playing boys' games and she liked to use garden tools like a boy. During my visit of that year, Ruby gave an impressive demonstration of the use of the *mammotty*. She handled this large implement with skill and enthusiasm.

At this time, she was no longer talking of the previous life; indeed, according to her older brother, W. K. Amarawansa, she showed some resentment when the subject was brought up. She did not ask to be called "brother" any more. Her brother said she had stopped referring to the previous life two years earlier. She had lost her previous phobia of wells. Her mother said that she still persisted, however, in sometimes dressing in boys' clothes; but she did this less often and also, unlike before, covertly rather than openly.

Ruby occasionally expressed at this time a wish to see the previous family, but there had in fact been no visits between the parents concerned for several years. I believe there had been none since about 1966. However, in 1969 one of Karunasena's older brothers, G. G. Upasena, had gone over to Pollewa to see Ruby. She did not recognize him, and nothing further came of this visit in the way of renewed relations between the families.

One day in 1969 Ruby and her mother were in the town of Batapola and passed G. G. Punchi Singho. He was walking with the limping gait of a hemiplegic man. He saw them but seemed not to want to talk to them. Ruby noticed him first and told her mother: "There is my father." At first, Somie Nona thought she meant Ruby's father (who worked in the post office at Batapola), but then realized she was indicating G. G. Punchi Singho. She suggested that Ruby go to him, but Ruby declined, saying: "If he is not speaking to me, there is no need to go to him." Ruby's long and sometimes painful sense of transfer from the previous family to hers seemed finally to have ended in this rather pathetic scene.

At the end of March 1973, when I visited Ruby and her family again, she was ten and a half years old. She was then in the sixth class at school (in Batapola) and standing second in a class of thirty. (I interviewed Ruby at her school and not in the presence of other members of her family.)

Ruby's mother said she never talked spontaneously any more about the previous life. But Ruby herself, in response to a direct question, said that she did sometimes think about it, although not often. Asked what events

brought on her thoughts about the previous life she replied: "Water." This led to her saying that she still had some fear of water. Her mother said that she still liked someone else to be present when she bathed at the well, but that she would go to the well alone to fetch water for the house. From further questioning of Ruby, it seemed probable that she had preserved some imaged memories of the previous life but had lost many others.

Ruby had continued her interest in gardening without abatement. She still liked to draw, but seemed not to emphasize drawings of the Buddha as she had done when younger. Yet she mentioned Buddhism as one of her two favorite subjects.

At school, Ruby wore an attractive frock. But her mother said this showed her willingness to conform more than her preference. At home she was still fond of wearing boys' shorts and had recently asked her older sister, Kamalawathie, to make her some trousers. She sometimes wore her brothers' shirts, shorts, trousers, and sarongs. She still showed a strong interest in boys' games such as cricket and kite flying and had much more enthusiasm for them than her sister, Kamalawathie, had. (Kamalawathie had never flown a kite and said she had much less interest in cricket than Ruby.) Ruby also enjoyed a boys' jumping game somewhat like hopscotch which Kamalawathie had never played.

Ruby seemed quite aware of her inclinations toward boyish conduct and said that she preferred boys' games to girls' games. She also said that she would prefer to be a boy than a girl. I asked her to perform the extended Draw-a-Person Test again. On this occasion she drew a woman and then a girl for the two drawings for which she could select the sex of the person drawn. This result tended to confirm an impression she otherwise gave me at this time of being definitely more "girlish" than she had been on my previous visits.

Between 1970 and 1973 the two families concerned had renewed their exchanges of visits, at least on the part of some members of the families. In 1972, the Silvas had gone over to visit the Singhos at Ruby's initiative. D. W. Punchi Nona had also paid a visit to the Silvas. She noted that Ruby referred both to her and to her mother (Ruby's) as "amma" (mother). Karunasena's younger brother, G. G. Nandasena, made more frequent visits to the Silvas. When Ruby met him on the road (presumably in Batapola, where she attended school) she would sometimes bring him home. She treated him hospitably and he would stay one or two days with the Silvas. Ruby sometimes hid his bicycle in an effort to detain him longer. G. G. Nandasena had been about two years younger than Karunasena, who had been very fond of him.¹¹

¹¹ When I asked Ruby, in the course of testing her memories of the previous life, for the name of Karunasena's brother whom she brought home, she could not recollect it. I have already explained that the Sinhalese use proper names reluctantly, preferring to address and refer to other persons in terms of relationships. So Ruby's forgetfulness of the name of a person for whom she had so much affection has much less significance than a similar amnesia would have in the West. Ruby's mother told us a few days later that when Ruby came home from school after our talk with her she had tried to remember the name of Karunasena's brother and had got it—Nandasena.

Karunasena's aunt D. W. Lalawathie said that, even in 1973, when Ruby saw her on the street (also presumably in Batapola, where she lived and where Ruby went to school) she would come running up to her and call her "Hichchiamma."

We hope to learn in the future about the sexual development of Ruby after she reaches puberty. I predict that she will develop quite satisfactorily as a feminine woman. I justify my optimism on the grounds, first, that Karunasena was a young boy of less than seven and a half years when he died and therefore had not developed and consolidated the sexual habits of an adult male; and, second, that Ruby's family, so far as I could observe, were encouraging her normal development as a female.

After my visit to Ruby and her family in 1973 I did not meet or hear from them again until March 1976. At that time they learned that I was again in Sri Lanka and Ruby's sister, Kamalawathie, sent a message to me. Ruby and her family, she said, had moved to Polonnaruwa, where Ruby was studying at the Central College and had continued to do well in her studies. Kamalawathie invited me to visit Ruby and her family, but this was not feasible because Polonnaruwa, which is in east central Sri Lanka, was too far away from the other stops for my tour of 1976.

6. The Case of Indika Guneratne

Introduction

THIS CASE belongs to the small number of those in which a written record of what the subject said about a previous life was made before the two families concerned met.¹ In the present case I myself made the written notes of what the subject said before identifying the person to whom his statements apparently referred.

Summary of the Case and Its Investigation

Indika Guneratne was born near Pilyandala, on July 26, 1962. He was the second child of G. D. Guneratne and his wife, S. D. Harriet. They were married in 1958 and had one child, a daughter, Shriyanie, before Indika was born. By 1973 they had two more children, a boy and a girl. G. D. Guneratne was a cultivator of modest education and humble means. He lived in a small house on a rubber plantation in an area called Korale Ima, near the village of Gonapola.

Indika began to speak when he was about two years old. When he was between three and three and a half, he started talking about a previous life he claimed to have lived in Matara, a town on the southern coast of Sri Lanka. He said he had been wealthy, had owned a much larger and more beautiful house than the one in which he then lived, had had estates, and had kept elephants. He also said he had owned a truck and a car and specified that the latter was a "Benz."² Indika made invidious comparisons between his house and family and those of the former life. He commented on the shabbiness of his mother's clothes, the absence of electricity in the house, and the paucity of meat on the dinner table.

Indika's father made some inquiries among his acquaintances about the existence of a wealthy person of Matara the facts of whose life could correspond with Indika's statements. One of his acquaintances knew another person, M. G. Danthawathie, who came from Matara, and who had passed back the information that such a man had lived at Matara. M. G. Danthawathie had also verified a few of Indika's statements as correct for this particular man, who was a member of a family named Weerasinghe. But Indika's parents

¹ For a list of all (twelve) cases of this type known up to 1974, see the report of the case of Jagdish Chandra in the first volume of this series. The present volume contains one other example, the case of Sujith Lakmal Jayaratne.

² Indika never used the word *Mercedes*, but only said he had a Benz car. The Mercedes Benz Company sells both automobiles and trucks (lorries) in Sri Lanka. Its vehicles seem usually to be referred to there by the single name Benz.

had made no other moves to verify his statements in detail up to 1968, when the case first came to my attention. Since the statements verified by M. G. Dantawathie amounted to only a small portion of all Indika had said about the previous life, and since it was at that time by no means certain that she had identified the correct man, I do not regard the foregoing steps as inconsistent with my introductory statement that a written record of what Indika had said was made before the previous personality was identified.

I first learned of the case in letters written to me by Mr. V. F. Guneratne in January 1968. (Subsequently, in 1973, Mr. Guneratne could no longer remember how he had first heard of the case, but it must have been through some private source since, to the best of my knowledge, no Sri Lanka newspaper has published a report of it.) Mr. Guneratne made some inquiries about the owners of Mercedes Benz cars with the intention of tracing the previous personality through the registry of Benz car owners in Sri Lanka. In this he was unsuccessful because, as it turned out, the related previous personality of this case had not actually owned a Benz car, although he had planned to purchase one several years before his death.

I began investigating the case in March 1968, and at that time (accompanied by Francis Story) I had extensive interviews with Indika's parents. Since they had not yet taken him to Matara for the purpose of verifying his statements and perhaps seeing if he could recognize people and places there, we arranged to do so. But first we made a record of everything his parents could remember that he had said about the previous life and also of all unusual behavior on his part which they thought connected with it. Indika and his father came to Galle, on the southwest coast of Sri Lanka, where I had preceded them to work on other cases. We then drove to Matara, which is also on the coast, to the south and east of Galle. Indika made no recognitions in Matara, but our inquiries there did lead to verification of nearly all the statements he had made about a life in that city. They corresponded closely with facts in the life of a wealthy lumber merchant of Matara, K. G. J. Weerasinghe. He had died on December 18, 1960, in Colombo at the age of approximately seventy-two. We met and interviewed his widow, B. E. Abeynayake, and his adopted daughter, Padminie Yapa.

In the autumn of 1970, I returned to the study of the case. I interviewed Indika's parents once more in Gonapola and met another witness of what he had said. I also talked again in Matara with Padminie Yapa. And I interviewed several new informants in the region of Matara or elsewhere who were related to K. G. J. Weerasinghe.

In January 1972, Godwin Samararatne went to Gonapola to visit the Guneratnes again on my behalf in order to ask them some additional questions about details. At this time he learned that since my last visit in 1970, Indika's father had discovered that a friend of his in Gonapola, P. D. Marathelis, who was an attendant at the Central Hospital in Colombo, had looked after K. G. J. Weerasinghe when he had been a patient in that hospital.

Indika's statements included no proper names except those of the town, Matara, where he said "he" had lived, of Colombo, where he said "he" had shopped, and of a man (presumably a servant), Premadasa. The search for a person corresponding to his statements focused around wealthy elephant owners—this is redundant because you have to be wealthy to own elephants privately—in Matara. Although I thought that we had identified the correct person, K. G. J. Weerasinghe, I was unable between 1970 and 1973 to persuade myself that I was more than 95 per cent certain about this. And as this did not seem satisfactory, I decided to make a further study of elephant owners in Matara, which I did in March 1973. The opportunity was taken to visit Indika and his family again. At the same time I followed the clue to possible normal communications that Godwin Samararatne had uncovered during the above-mentioned visit he made to the Guneratnes at Gonapola early in 1972.

In March 1976, I had a follow-up interview with Indika and his parents in Gonapola.

Persons Interviewed during the Investigation

In Gonapola I interviewed:

Indika Guneratne
 G. D. Guneratne, Indika's father
 S. D. Harriet, Indika's mother
 Shriyanie Guneratne, Indika's older sister
 L. D. Y. Appuhamy, friend of G. D. Guneratne
 P. D. Marathelis, friend of G. D. Guneratne

In Matara I interviewed:

B. E. Abeynayake, K. G. J. Weerasinghe's widow
 P. K. S. Perera, widow of an employee of K. G. J. Weerasinghe
 K. G. D. Weerasinghe, K. G. D. P. Weerasinghe's son
 and K. G. J. Weerasinghe's nephew
 H. D. C. Padminie Weerasinghe Yapa, K. G. D. Weerasinghe's
 daughter and K. G. J. Weerasinghe's great-niece
 and adopted daughter; I refer to her elsewhere as
 Padminie Yapa or just Padminie
 H. D. C. F. Yapa, relative of K. G. J. Weerasinghe
 and Padminie Yapa's husband

In Nugegoda I interviewed:

Chandra Kulatunga, friend of the Guneratnes
 M. G. Danthawathie native of Matara and friend
 of Chandra Kulatunga

In Puhulwella I interviewed:

Punchi Appuhamy, employee of the Weerasinghes

In Wehelgoda I interviewed:

K. G. D. P. Weerasinghe, K. G. J. Weerasinghe's
older brother

In Kelaniya I interviewed:

K. G. A. Weerasinghe, K. G. D. P. Weerasinghe's
son and K. G. J. Weerasinghe's nephew

K. G. W. Weerasinghe, K. G. A. Weerasinghe's son

E. I. Ratnawardena (pseudonym), wife of a nephew
of K. G. J. Weerasinghe

I have not included in the above list a number of persons I interviewed in Matara and its environs during my efforts to trace other persons whose lives might correspond more exactly than did that of K. G. J. Weerasinghe to the statements of Indika.

Unfortunately, I was unable to meet and interview one person who would have been a valuable informant for the case. I refer to Premadasa, the servant who had worked for K. G. J. Weerasinghe for about ten or twelve years before his death and who drove him into Colombo when he went for his hospital admission. Premadasa remained with his employer in Colombo and was with him when he died. All my efforts to trace him failed. I have also omitted from the above list the names of the numerous persons I talked with in my ultimately futile efforts to find Premadasa.

*Relevant Facts of Geography and Possibilities for Normal Means of
Communication between the Two Families*

G. D. Guneratne and his family lived on a rubber plantation near the village of Gonapola, which is about 30 kilometers southeast of Colombo. Their home was about 2 kilometers from Gonapola in an area known as Korale Ima.

Matara, the city where K. G. J. Weerasinghe lived, is near the extreme southern point of the coast of Sri Lanka about 200 kilometers from Colombo. It is a city of approximately 75,000 inhabitants.

So far as I could determine in my extensive interviews, the two families concerned in this case had had no acquaintance whatever prior to its development. G. D. Guneratne had been to Matara once (in 1953) prior to Indika's birth. He and his wife had been there twice since then. They had passed through it without stopping overnight on their way to the holy place of Kataragama. Matara is the terminal point of the southern railway line in Sri Lanka and consequently an important stopping point for thousands of pilgrims who journey each year to Kataragama, which they reach from

Matara by a road that goes along the coast toward the eastern side of the island. The Guneratnes had no friends or relatives in Matara and so had no reason to halt or linger there on their way to Kataragama.

Indika's paternal grandmother had gone to Nugegoda, a town between Gonapola and Colombo, during the period when he was talking most about the previous life. She had gone there for an almsgiving ceremony and had mentioned his statements to a woman in whose house she spent the night. This was M. G. Danthawathie (a native of Matara), whom I interviewed in 1968 and again in 1973. M. G. Danthawathie had already (it seems) suggested to an acquaintance of Indika's father that his statements might apply to a man named Weerasinghe who had lived in Matara. She had heard about this Weerasinghe but had never actually met him. She had to ask a servant for more details about him, but still did not learn (or in 1968 remember) much information. She did not know the initials of the deceased Weerasinghe and thought that his wife had also died, which was incorrect. But she did know that a man called Weerasinghe had kept elephants, had had an estate, and had lived near the railway station. She had only come to Nugegoda less than eighteen months before my first interview with her in March 1968, and hence had not reached the area where Indika's family lived until long after he had talked about the previous life. She did not herself know Indika's parents, although a close friend of hers, Chandra Kulatunga, was acquainted with his father. K. G. J. Weerasinghe's adopted daughter, Padminie Yapa, said that she had never heard of M. G. Danthawathie. From these facts as well as from the limited information M. G. Danthawathie had about both families, it seemed impossible for her to have been the intermediary for conveying to Indika the correct information he had about the life of K. G. J. Weerasinghe.

As already mentioned, we learned early in 1972 that a friend of G. D. Guneratne, also living in Gonapola, had been an attendant at the Colombo Central Hospital and had looked after K. G. J. Weerasinghe during several of his admissions to that hospital. In 1973 I had two interviews with P. D. Marathelis and also discussed his connections with Indika's family with G. D. Guneratne. I have conflated their testimonies except where they differed.

P. D. Marathelis had been born in Gonapola and had lived there all his life. He had worked at the Colombo Central Hospital regularly between 1950 and (approximately) December 1964. He had been the attendant who looked after the *mudalali*³ Weerasinghe from Matara during three admissions to the Central Hospital. He said he had been one of the *mudalali*'s favorite attendants. He knew enough about K. G. J. Weerasinghe so that there could be no doubt we were talking about the same person. He knew, for example, that his patient had come from Matara, had owned elephants, and had suffered from diabetes. He knew also that he had had a servant with him in the hospital. (This was the elusive Premadasa.) On the other hand, there were surprising gaps in his knowledge. He did not know the *mudalali*'s initials, nor that he was

³ *Mudalali* is a Sinhalese word used to refer to businessmen, especially those who are wealthy and of some eminence in their communities.

married, nor that he had died at the Colombo Central Hospital. This last event might well have occurred when P. D. Marathelis was on leave, which he sometimes took for as long as one or two months; but I found it a little odd that he had not informed himself about his patient's death if he had become rather well acquainted with him, as he gave us to understand.

P. D. Marathelis and G. D. Guneratne had known each other since their student days. P. D. Marathelis said that prior to G. D. Guneratne's marriage he had visited him at Korale Ima from time to time. G. D. Guneratne did not at first remember such visits, but on reflection thought that perhaps P. D. Marathelis had come to visit his father or to attend functions such as funerals when a visit hardly counts as a social contact. Of greater importance, however, is their friendship after G. D. Guneratne married. They both agreed that they talked from time to time when they met on the road or in the village. It was on one such occasion in about 1971 that G. D. Guneratne, recalling that P. D. Marathelis worked at the Colombo Central Hospital, asked him if he had ever happened to look after K. G. J. Weerasinghe of Matara. (He had learned, when we were in Matara together in 1968, that K. G. J. Weerasinghe had died at the Colombo Central Hospital.) P. D. Marathelis then told G. D. Guneratne that he had indeed known a mudalali Weerasinghe from Matara; when Indika's father told him some of the details of Indika's statements, he thought they fitted what he knew of the mudalali rather closely.

We are next concerned with whether P. D. Marathelis had any contact with Indika prior to Indika's talking about a previous life. G. D. Guneratne said that P. D. Marathelis had not visited his home during the years between 1960 and 1970. He thought he had visited it once since then. P. D. Marathelis denied even this and said that he had not been up the road to G. D. Guneratne's house for twenty years. This discrepancy was probably resolved when, on talking again to G. D. Guneratne, we learned that P. D. Marathelis had lost a dog some six months earlier and, looking for his dog, he had come into the Guneratne compound. Was this a visit or not? It had evidently not been remembered as one by P. D. Marathelis. In any case, it occurred long after Indika had started—and stopped—talking about the previous life.

In summary, then, although it is a fact that P. D. Marathelis, a friend and fellow villager of G. D. Guneratne, had looked after K. G. J. Weerasinghe when he was in the hospital at Colombo, it seems quite unlikely that he could have been a channel for the normal transmission of information about the mudalali to Indika either directly or through Indika's father. He did not know a great deal about K. G. J. Weerasinghe in the first place, and he did not have any opportunities for communicating what he did know to Indika before Indika started talking about the previous life. Indika's father always impressed me as a strictly truthful person, and I am sure that he was as surprised as Godwin Samararatne and I were later when he learned in about 1971 that P. D. Marathelis had known K. G. J. Weerasinghe. He communicated the information to Mr. Samararatne as soon as he had an opportunity. I did not

learn of any other person more likely to have transmitted to Indika the information contained in his statements about the previous life.

A fact of the case that I can neither understand nor omit is that around 1950-51 G. D. Guneratne had himself employed a man called Premadasa who had come from Matara. We naturally wondered whether this man was the Premadasa later employed by K. G. J. Weerasinghe but were unable to satisfy our curiosity about such an interesting possibility.

Considering the isolated location of G. D. Guneratne's house, it seems to me most unlikely that he or his wife would ever have had anything to do with K. G. J. Weerasinghe. Although Indika's family lived only about 30 kilometers from Colombo, their home was actually rather deep in what amounts to a jungle containing rubber plantations. Matara is a small city far distant from Gonapola, and although it is, as I have mentioned, a stop for pilgrims going to Kataragama, it is improbable that Indika's parents would have had any occasion to meet a wealthy lumber merchant like K. G. J. Weerasinghe (or members of his family) as they passed through Matara.

It is possible, however, that K. G. J. Weerasinghe had visited Gonapola. His nephew, K. G. D. Weerasinghe, said that he traveled widely and thought it probable that he had been to Gonapola. His adopted daughter, Padminie Yapa, remembered hearing him mention the name of Gonapola once, but she could not recall his saying that he had actually gone there. She did not know of any connections her adopted father had had in Gonapola and thought that, if he had gone there, he might have done so to buy elephants.

I have learned nothing more bearing on possible contacts between the two families before the case developed. My own conclusion is that there were none. I may add that when they met in my presence in 1968 the participating members of both families acted as if they were encountering each other for the first time.

The Life, Character, and Death of K. G. J. Weerasinghe

Early Life. K. G. J. Weerasinghe was born in (approximately) 1888 in the village of Wehelgoda, which is located about 2 kilometers east of Matara. He had only four or five years of schooling and could be considered in later life as functionally almost illiterate. But he must have possessed a superior intelligence because he built up a large and successful business as a lumber merchant and building contractor. He became far more wealthy than other members of his family, some of whom became his employees and dependents.

He married but had little or no pleasure from his relationship with his wife, B. E. Abeynayake. They quarreled over his interest in other women and his insatiable habit of gambling. He objected to her relatives and would not allow them in his house. Instead of healing with increasing years, his marriage seems to have deteriorated further; at some time in 1960, K. G. J. Weerasinghe thought it best to separate from his wife and sent her away for a

time. His older brother then intervened and restored peace so that B. E. Abeynayake returned to the family home in Matara. But a few months later her husband became ill and died.

K. G. J. Weerasinghe and his wife had no children of their own. However, he took a supportive interest in his nephew, K. G. D. Weerasinghe (the son of his older brother), and eventually K. G. D. Weerasinghe, his wife, and one child, a girl (Padminie), were all living with K. G. J. Weerasinghe in Matara. (They stayed in his house with him until he died.) A son of K. G. D. Weerasinghe remained at Wehelgoda, the original village of the family. K. G. J. Weerasinghe later formally adopted his nephew's daughter, Padminie. When she grew up she married a relative, H. D. C. F. Yapa. She was born in 1949 and was thus eleven years old at the death of her adoptive father. She is the child (puta) referred to by Indika and mentioned in Table 11 (item 4).

At the time of his death, K. G. J. Weerasinghe must have been one of the wealthiest men in Matara, if not indeed in the whole south of Sri Lanka. He owned a successful business as a lumber merchant and building contractor. He possessed several houses in Matara and some estates in the country outside it. On these latter he kept cattle and elephants, but he also had some elephants in the compound of his house in the city at Matara. He was rich enough to give whole estates and houses to his employees. He could also afford to stake large sums in gambling.

The Last Illness and Death of K. G. J. Weerasinghe. K. G. J. Weerasinghe suffered from diabetes mellitus and was admitted to the hospital several times for its treatment. Three years before his death he developed an ulcer of one foot, which, although operated upon, never completely healed. (This poor healing was no doubt related to inadequate control of the diabetes from which he suffered or to associated changes in the circulation of his leg.) Apart from this festering wound, which gave him some difficulty in walking, his health did not seem much impaired for a man about seventy-two years old until shortly before his terminal illness. In December 1960, he complained of a pain in a toe. He then had his servant, Premadasa, drive him to Colombo, where he entered the Central Hospital. There he developed urinary retention and sank rather rapidly until he died on December 18, 1960. At the moment of his death, his wife, his older brother, K. G. D. P. Weerasinghe, and his servant, Premadasa, were with him. His adopted daughter, Padminie, was not present.

The Character of K. G. J. Weerasinghe. My information for the reconstruction of the character of K. G. J. Weerasinghe derives mainly from the testimony of Padminie Yapa and his two nephews, K. G. D. Weerasinghe and K. G. A. Weerasinghe. Padminie Yapa had lived all her life with her great-uncle, except when she attended boarding school in Colombo. Her father, K. G. D. Weerasinghe, had lived even longer with him, since he had stayed in his house from his own school days until after his uncle's death in 1960. K. G. A.

Weerasinghe, the other nephew, had worked with his uncle in his business, although not after 1956. Less valuable information came from B. E. Abeynayake, his widow. She was elderly and ailing when I interviewed her in 1968, and she died between then and my next visit in 1970. Apart from her physical condition when I interviewed her, her assessment of her husband's character suffered from the handicap that she had been the person most injured by his proclivities for women, alcohol, and gambling.

Some other persons added additional and, on the whole, confirmatory information. However, one person, E. I. Ratnawardena (pseudonym), the wife of one of K. G. J. Weerasinghe's nephews, gave testimony so much at variance with that given by his adopted daughter and nephews that I reluctantly concluded that she was lying. She could have been uninformed; but since she claimed to be close enough to the family to know the facts, if she was ignorant, she deceived us in representing herself as knowledgeable. The drift of her testimony was that K. G. J. Weerasinghe had had a happy marriage, got along well with his in-laws, and never gambled. She acknowledged that he drank alcohol, but she had never seen him intoxicated. (This might have been possible.) She said he did not get angry often. She gave me the impression that she thought it more important to conceal the flaws in the character of her husband's uncle than to tell us the truth.

The composite picture emerging from the testimony of other informants differed markedly from that of E. I. Ratnawardena. K. G. J. Weerasinghe seems to have had the habits and character typical of successful and wealthy businessmen in Sri Lanka and, for that matter, in many other parts of the world. He conformed closely to the type of Sinhalese businessman known as a *mudalali*. His independence, initiative, and courage led him to push ahead in commercial enterprises when more timid men held back. While his friends calmly discussed whether something could be done, he would do it. And as success follows action more often than debate, he eventually became immensely wealthy, at least for his part of Sri Lanka.

He was, however, a quarrelsome man and something of a tyrant with an inflammable temper, although his rages did not last long. His wife and many other persons feared him. He seems never actually to have beaten members of his family or servants, but he threatened to beat his servants. And he had once severely beaten a man during a quarrel arising out of gambling.

He consorted with other women when he chose and gambled with cards and lottery tickets whenever he could. He never won from a lottery ticket, but had great success with cards. Indeed, even professional gamblers refused to play with him and K. G. A. Weerasinghe said that gambling at carnivals shut down when his uncle approached. His other nephew, K. G. D. Weerasinghe, said that he would come to a gambling party with his sarong filled with money. In 1958-59, he won nearly 100,000 rupees at cards, an enormous sum in any land.

K. G. J. Weerasinghe was a regular consumer of alcohol, for many years a heavy one. After 1945 he reduced his intake of alcohol but continued to drink

every evening with one or several friends. They imbibed whiskey, toddy, and arrack.⁴

He liked living on a grand scale. He wanted to have a bigger house and a better car. Following the habits of persons who become increasingly wealthy, he had started with a small car, a "Baby" Austin, and then went on up, each year or two buying a new and somewhat larger automobile. He had planned (in about 1957-58) to buy a Mercedes Benz car (an important status symbol in Sri Lanka), but had decided against this when the price suddenly rose.⁵ He was somewhat given to bragging.

Notable virtues in his character balanced the foregoing weaknesses. He liked children and showed generosity to them as to other persons. He brought his nephew (with his wife and their daughter) to live in his home and afterward he adopted his great-niece. He gave at least two houses to valued employees, including his servant, Premadasa, and his office manager. In some respects he was a devout Buddhist. He was generous to bhikkhus (Buddhist monks); he built some temples and rest houses for pilgrims; and he donated estates to other temples. He also made frequent, almost weekly, trips to the holy place, Kataragama. (This last activity has nothing to do with Buddhism properly speaking, although many Buddhists participate in the worship of Kataragama, essentially a Hindu god.)⁶

I saw a photograph taken at the time of his funeral which showed an immense gathering. His elephants, including a young one he then owned, assisted on this occasion, suitably appareled in the white of mourning. I do not think one can assess a man's popularity accurately from the number of persons attending his funeral; but funerals are not compulsory occasions and the photograph of this one added to my general impression that K. G. J. Weerasinghe was a respected and to some extent a loved man, as well as a feared one. If he did not earn (or had lost) his wife's affection, he seemed to have had and kept that of his adopted daughter, Padminie Yapa.

His love of elephants and pleasure in their company perhaps compensated him somewhat for the unhappiness of his marital life. He enjoyed feeding and watching them. Elephants on one of his estates in the country were said to do no work on weekends until he arrived and fed them; they knew the sound of the horn of his car. The elephants played with him and sometimes squirted him with water. He bought one baby elephant about 1938. He purchased another young elephant four years before his death, and it, as already noted, appears with four adult elephants in the photograph of mourners at his funeral.

⁴ In Sri Lanka, *toddy* refers to fermented coconut juice. Its product of distillation is called arrack.

⁵ His nephew K. G. A. Weerasinghe was the informant for this item about the mudalali's intention to buy a Benz car. His other nephew, K. G. D. Weerasinghe, had never heard of this project and at first doubted it. On thinking further about the matter, however, he thought that it was possible.

⁶ For information about Kataragama, the god and the place, see P. Wirz. 1966. *Kataragama: The holiest place in Ceylon*. Trans. D. B. Pralle. Colombo: Lake House; and R. F. Gombrich. 1971. *Precept and practice: Traditional Buddhism in the rural highlands of Ceylon*. London and New York: Oxford University Press.

Statements Made by Indika

In Table 11 I have listed all the statements made by Indika. I learned of all the statements except those of item 7 (about estates) and item 22 (about the elephant Kethi) before Indika and his father went to Matara.

I have included in Table 11 two items which Indika did not utter as explicit statements, but which could be inferred from his remarks or other behavior as belonging to his memories of the previous life. These are item 16, about having a telephone, and item 19, about Premadasa, a servant.

I have omitted from Table 11 two items about which the testimony was uncertain or confused. Indika tried to tell his parents something about the way the beds of the previous personality and his wife were arranged in the house, but their understanding of this was unclear. He also seemed to refer to a burglary that had taken place. The house of K. G. J. Weerasinghe had in fact been broken into by burglars during his lifetime, but I could not find in my notes for the interviews of 1968 a precise statement about exactly what Indika had said about a burglary. When I checked this again in 1970 his parents could not remember that he had made such a remark.

Indika did not claim to have any memories about how "he" had died in the previous life. When his father asked him how he had come to their home, he said that he had come there because he had quarreled with his wife. K. G. J. Weerasinghe did have a most unhappy marriage and he had had a serious quarrel and separation with his wife just a few months before he died. Possibly Indika's statement condensed and oversimplified several events.⁷

The children subjects of these cases nearly always mention the manner or mode of dying in the previous life or include among the memories some detail of the last hours or days of the previous personality. Indika's failure to say anything about these matters therefore forms an exception to a common feature of these cases. Perhaps the rule, if I may call it such, is not completely broken, however, in that the only proper name of a person included in Indika's memories was that of the servant, Premadasa, who drove K. G. J. Weerasinghe to Colombo for his last hospital admission, stayed with him there, and was present when he died.

A few of the items in Table 11 remain unverified. Indika was definitely wrong on only four details; namely, the make and license of the car he claimed the previous personality had owned, the wearing of trousers, and the breaking of a brother-in-law's legs.

Concerning the claim to have had a Benz car, we might understand it as a memory of a desire rather than of a fact. K. G. J. Weerasinghe, according to one of his nephews, came close to buying and owning a Benz car but changed his mind when the price rose suddenly. An intense craving to own a

⁷ The children subjects of these cases rather often condense or fuse the remembered images of separate events in a manner similar to what often occurs to memory fragments in dreams. Thus Parmod Sharma said that "he" had died "in a bathtub." This was incorrect, but Parmanand (the related previous personality of the case) had had therapeutic tub baths shortly before he died (I. Stevenson. 1974. *Twenty cases*).

TABLE 11. Summary of Statements Made by Indika

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. He had lived in Matara. *	G. D. Guneratne, Indika's father S. D. Harriet, Indika's mother Shriyanie Guneratne, Indika's older sister	I visited K. G. J. Weerasinghe's home in Matara three times.	
2. To reach Matara [from Gonapola] you go first to Colombo. *	G. D. Guneratne	Maps of Sri Lanka	G. D. Guneratne was a second-hand informant for this remark made to Indika's mother. It is possible to go to Matara from Gonapola without going into Colombo, but I think most persons would go toward (if not actually into) Colombo to reach the main coastal road going south to Galle and Matara.
3. He had a wife. *	G. D. Guneratne Shriyanie Guneratne	B. E. Abeynayake, K. G. J. Weerasinghe's widow	
4. He had a child. *	G. D. Guneratne S. D. Harriet	Padminie Yapa, K. G. J. Weerasinghe's great-niece and adopted daughter	In the early interviews of this case, Indika was thought to have said "he" had a son. Later it became clear that he had used the Sinhalese word <i>puta</i> (English: "child"). The word <i>puta</i> usually refers to a son but may also apply to a daughter, especially an only daughter as in the case of the household of K. G. J. Weerasinghe. I asked Mr. E. C. Raddalgoda, one of my interpreters, how he

referred to his two daughters and he promptly replied: "Putā." In fact, K. G. J. Weerasinghe had adopted Padminie Yapa, a great-niece who lived in his home. He would occasionally address her as "putā," although he more often called her by a pet name, "Hinidu," or just "Du." But probably he used *putā* in referring to her when he talked with other persons.

Indika's parents were persons of very humble means. At the time of my interview with B. E. Abeynayake in 1968, she was not particularly well dressed and no doubt was much less prosperous than she and her husband had been during his lifetime. In earlier days they were among the wealthiest people in Matara.

Indika used to say that (in the previous life) he had "bundles of money." Padminie Yapa confirmed that her adoptive father had "money in bundles."

Indika's father did not mention this item until after the first visit to K. G. J. Weerasinghe's home in Matara. Although K. G. J. Weerasinghe lived in Matara, he also had several estates outside the city.

Verified by me in comparing the financial conditions of the two families

G. D. Guneratne
S. D. Harriet

5. His wife dressed better than his [present] mother. *

Padminie Yapa
K. G. D. Weerasinghe,
K. G. J. Weerasinghe's nephew

S. D. Harriet

6. He had a great deal of money. *

Padminie Yapa

G. D. Guneratne

7. He had estates.

NOTE: Items also correct for another wealthy citizen of Matara, S. A. Wickramaratana, are indicated by an asterisk(*). See text for a discussion of the applicability of items to him.

TABLE 11 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
8. He had a car. *	G. D. Guneratne L. D. Y. Appuhamy, friend of G. D. Guneratne Shriyani Guneratne	B. E. Abeynayake P. K. S. Perera, widow of an employee of K. G. J. Weerasinghe K. G. A. Weerasinghe, K. G. J. Weerasinghe's nephew K. G. D. Weerasinghe	K. G. J. Weerasinghe had Hillman and Austin cars.
9. His car was a Benz with license plate No. 1 SRI 600.	G. D. Guneratne	Incorrect	All informants knowledgeable on this point agreed that K. G. J. Weerasinghe had never owned a Mercedes Benz automobile or truck. His nephew K. G. A. Weerasinghe, however, said that about 1957-58 he had made all arrangements to buy a Mercedes Benz car, but when the price suddenly went up he canceled his order. He had actually owned Hillman and Austin cars. I ascertained from the Registry of Motor Vehicles in Colombo that the license number 1 SRI 600 had been given to an Opel owned by K. S. Kadigawa, of Bambalapitiya, near Colombo. This number had never been assigned in Sri Lanka to any other car. So Indika was clearly wrong in stating this license number as related to the pre- vious life.

10. His house was near the railroad station. *

G. D. Guneratne
L. D. Y. Appuhamy

Verified by me on visits to Matara

The item as given is taken from G. D. Guneratne's 1968 statement. In 1970 he said Indika had mentioned that one had to cross the railway tracks to reach "his" house. L. D. Y. Appuhamy recalled (in 1970) that Indika had described the house as between the railway tracks and the main road. The house of K. G. J. Weerasinghe was less than 200 meters from the railway station and between it and the main road. It was not necessary to cross the tracks to reach the house. K. G. J. Weerasinghe owned other houses in Matara besides the one he lived in, and it was necessary to cross railway tracks to reach some of these.

11. His house was larger and more beautiful than the Guneratne house. *

G. D. Guneratne
S. D. Harriet

Verified by me on visits to the large house of K. G. J. Weerasinghe which permitted comparison with the much smaller one of G. D. Guneratne

G. D. Guneratne said only that Indika had said the house (of the previous life) was large.

12. In his home he had electricity. *

G. D. Guneratne
Shriyani Guneratne

I verified myself that the home of K. G. J. Weerasinghe in Matara had electricity, although that of G. D. Guneratne in Gonapola did not.

Indika did not refer to electricity by name. He said that (in the previous life) he had lights that did not leak and that you could put the lights on by moving something on the wall. The "lights that leaked" in Indika's home were kerosene lamps.

TABLE 11 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
13. He had plenty of books.	G. D. Guneratne	B. E. Abeynayake Padminie Yapa	Indika's father had thought he was referring to books for writing in, such as exercise books that were kept in one room. The remark can only be considered correct if taken to refer to account books of K. G. J. Weerasinghe's lumber business, of which there were a great many. And he used exercise books for keeping his accounts. Indika's statement could not refer correctly to books for reading.
14. He had a gun. *	G. D. Guneratne Shriyani Guneratne	I saw the gun that had belonged to K. G. J. Weerasinghe; it was still at his house in Matara in 1968.	As Indika had also offered to give some of "his" books to other persons, his father had the impression that perhaps "he" had actually owned a bookshop or stationery store.
15. He had a box where he kept money.	G. D. Guneratne	I saw at the house of K. G. J. Weerasinghe a safe that had belonged to him.	
16. He had a telephone.	G. D. Guneratne	B. E. Abeynayake Padminie Yapa I saw the telephone at the Weerasinghe house in 1968 and verified that it had been installed during the lifetime of K. G. J. Weerasinghe.	In 1968 G. D. Guneratne did not say that Indika had said "he" had had a telephone in the previous life, but that he seemed in play to relive speaking on a telephone and, acting as if holding a telephone receiver to his ear, he would say:

“Hello.” In 1970 he said Indika had mentioned a telephone in words. *Hello* is widely used in answering the telephone among Sinhalese speakers. K. G. D. Weerasinghe said that his uncle used this word in answering the telephone.

17. He had a dog. *

G. D. Guneratne
S. D. Harriet

Padminie Yapa

S. D. Harriet said Indika described the dog as being “big.” This was true of two large dogs, part Alsations, owned by K. G. J. Weerasinghe.

18. There was a truck
[lorry] at his house.

G. D. Guneratne

K. G. A. Weerasinghe
B. E. Abeynayake
P. K. S. Perera
Padminie Yapa

K. G. J. Weerasinghe’s house was in the same compound as the office and yard for his lumber business, and so the truck would often be in front of the house. He had Ford and Chevrolet trucks.

19. He had a servant named
Premadasa.

G. D. Guneratne

Padminie Yapa
Punchi Appuhamy, employee
of the Weerasinghes
B. E. Abeynayake
P. K. S. Perera
K. G. A. Weerasinghe
K. G. D. Weerasinghe

Indika did not explicitly refer to Premadasa as being a servant. His manner of talking about Premadasa, however, permitted this conjecture. K. G. J. Weerasinghe had a servant called Premadasa for many years. Premadasa, who had been at first a mahout (elephant driver), became a favorite with his employer and worked at times as a servant in the house. He drove K. G. J. Weerasinghe to Colombo when he was admitted to the hospital there and looked after him during his final illness.

TABLE 11 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
20. Once Premadasa had removed the tire from his car.	G. D. Guneratne	Unverified	Indika seems not to have referred to the removal of a tire with a leak which needed repairing, but to some unauthorized removal of the tire by the servant. He said: "I must beat him." Informants could not recall any episode of Premadasa having removed a tire incorrectly or dishonestly.
21. He owned elephants, including a baby elephant. *	G. D. Guneratne S. D. Harriet L. D. Y Appuhamy Shriyani Guneratne	B. E. Abeynayake	L. D. Y. Appuhamy and S. D. Harriet remembered Indika mentioning having only one elephant, not several.
22. One elephant was called Kethi.	G. D. Guneratne	K. G. A. Weerasinghe	Indika's father did not tell me this item until <i>after</i> the visit to the Weerasinghe home in Matara. K. G. A. Weerasinghe gave this verification in response to a leading question, and I have not obtained a verification of the elephant's name from any other informant, including K. G. D. Weerasinghe, K. G. J. Weerasinghe's other nephew. B. E. Abeynayake could not remember an elephant called Kethi, even when asked a leading question, although she gave the names of other elephants, at least two of which another informant mentioned also.

- | | | | |
|--|-----------------|---|--|
| 23. Sometimes the elephant would get unchained. | S. D. Harriet | Padminie Yapa
K. G. A. Weerasinghe
K. G. D. Weerasinghe | One of the Weerasinghes' elephants got unchained once and killed a man before he was controlled again. |
| 24. When this happened he could control the elephant. | S. D. Harriet | Unverified | K. G. J. Weerasinghe used to feed the elephants and they liked him. If an elephant got unchained he probably would leave the matter to the mahouts and would not try to intervene himself. Conceivably, he might have tried to control the baby elephant. |
| 25. The baby elephant used to blow water at him. | G. D. Guneratne | K. G. A. Weerasinghe | |
| 26. He bought saris for his wife and clothes for his child in Colombo. * | G. D. Guneratne | B. E. Abeynayake
Padminie Yapa | K. G. J. Weerasinghe used to bring his wife saris and other gifts when he returned from visits to Colombo. He also brought back clothes for Padminie. Although S. A. Wickramaratana bought saris in Colombo, I did not learn whether he also bought clothes for his child there. |
| 27. He wore a coat and long trousers. * | G. D. Guneratne | | Every knowledgeable informant on this point agreed that K. G. J. Weerasinghe wore only a sarong and never trousers. He used to tease his friends if they came to his house wearing trousers. |

TABLE 11 (*cont.*)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
28. He drank arrack. *	G. D. Guneratne L. D. Y. Appuhamy	Padminie Yapa K. G. A. Weerasinghe	Padminie Yapa did not specifically say K. G. J. Weerasinghe drank arrack, but said that he drank alcohol. K. G. J. Weerasinghe said he took arrack, but also whiskey and toddy. In Sri Lanka toddy is a fermented variety of coconut juice. When distilled, it yields the product called arrack. One can also make arrack from molasses.
29. His wife objected to his drinking alcohol. *	G. D. Guneratne	Padminie Yapa	K. G. J. Weerasinghe had prolonged antagonisms toward his in-laws and would not even allow them in his house. No informant, however, could recall that he had ever come to blows with any of them. He had once, however, beaten another man very badly in a quarrel over gambling. The beaten man had afterward wanted to shoot K. G. J. Weerasinghe, but friends restrained him; then, feeling humiliated and unrevenged, he killed himself by drinking poison. Conceivably, Indika had fused memories of this physical assault with those of the quarrels with the in-laws. It is also possible that a mistake occurred here in
30. He had a fight with a brother-in-law and broke his legs.	G. D. Guneratne	Incorrect as to breaking legs, although not as to quarreling	K. G. J. Weerasinghe had prolonged antagonisms toward his in-laws and would not even allow them in his house. No informant, however, could recall that he had ever come to blows with any of them. He had once, however, beaten another man very badly in a quarrel over gambling. The beaten man had afterward wanted to shoot K. G. J. Weerasinghe, but friends restrained him; then, feeling humiliated and unrevenged, he killed himself by drinking poison. Conceivably, Indika had fused memories of this physical assault with those of the quarrels with the in-laws. It is also possible that a mistake occurred here in

translation, since the word *machang*
(a corruption of *massina*, meaning
"brother-in-law") may also be
used loosely in referring to friends.
And the man beaten up by K. G. J.
Weerasinghe and with whom he
had been gambling might have
been his friend before the quarrel,
if not after it.

Benz car might have developed (in the mind of Indika) into a private reality of belief that "he" had in fact owned one.

For the incorrectness of the detail of wearing trousers I have no explanation. I thought at one time that it might have arisen from an error of translation, but the interpreters went into this possibility quite carefully and have excluded it. Perhaps Indika clothed the previous personality with trousers as part of a program to enhance the prestige of that figure. But wearing trousers was quite uncharacteristic of K. G. J. Weerasinghe. Many Sinhalese, especially educated, English-speaking ones, have taken more or less to Western dress, including trousers. K. G. J. Weerasinghe, however, belonged to a group of businessmen who, while by no means backward, sternly maintained nationalist habits in their clothing. All informants agreed that he always wore a Sinhalese sarong. Moreover, when friends came to his house wearing trousers he would deride them for this. It seems to me therefore extremely unlikely that his memories could have included the wearing of trousers. Indika's error in this item remains a puzzle that I cannot solve.

Indika failed to make any recognitions at the house of K. G. J. Weerasinghe in Matara. He did not recognize the road to the house or in any manner lead the way to it; he showed no familiarity with the house itself when we reached it; and when inside he did not seem to recognize any of the rooms or objects in it. Nor did he show any sign of recognizing B. E. Abeynayake, the widow of K. G. J. Weerasinghe, or their adopted child, Padminie Yapa. For some reason Indika was tense and timid at the Weerasinghe house; he was reluctant to move around and go into the side rooms. Perhaps the long journey from his home had fatigued him. Certainly the residents of the house, B. E. Abeynayake and Padminie Yapa, received him amiably enough. Indika's anxiety at the house might have prevented him from making recognitions, but I think it more likely that he could not have done so in the best of moods because his memories seemed already to have largely faded at that time. He was then about five years and eight months old.

*The Correspondences between Indika's Statements and Behavior and the
Facts in the Life of K. G. J. Weerasinghe*

The reader may have asked himself how I came to identify K. G. J. Weerasinghe as the deceased person to whom Indika's statements referred in view of the fact that he gave no names for any members of the previous family. He mentioned only one proper name of a person, that of the servant Premadasa. But he did mention the name of the town where he had lived. (I consider the verification of the proper name of an elephant, Kethi, doubtful because it was given by only one informant in response to a leading question.) The emphasis given to elephants, and especially to a baby elephant, in Indika's statements suggested that we should commence our search among the owners of elephants in Matara.⁸ I have already mentioned that M. G. Danthawathie, who had

⁸ Although wild elephants are common in parts of Sri Lanka and trained ones are used in forestry work

come from Matara, had previously suggested the Weerasinghe family as most likely fitting Indika's statements best. But I wanted to be sure that no other family or person matched them better.

I spent considerable time in the Matara area making inquiries about the owners of elephants. The local authorities and other informants were not accustomed to visits by Americans and even less to visits by Americans enquiring about baby elephants. But they afforded us every possible assistance, and I can say that I am now quite positive that Indika's statements (and unusual behavior) refer to K. G. J. Weerasinghe and no one else.

When I first began learning about elephant owners in Matara, I was told that an official list was kept of such persons, and (in 1968) informants at a police station purported to give me some names from such a list. But later I learned from the *Kachcheri* (District Administrative Offices) that one did not need a license in order to own an elephant privately in Sri Lanka. One needed a permit in order to have a (trained) elephant on the street in a parade, and a hunter was required to notify the government if he captured and retained a wild elephant. Since elephants breed in captivity there was no reliable list of who had them. From officials at the *Kachcheri* (as well as at the police station), and from the main informants in Matara of the Weerasinghe family, we developed our own list of elephant owners in the Matara area.

Several elephant owners were said to have homes at a village called Akuressa, some 16 kilometers outside Matara and nearer the area of the forests where the elephants worked. Although Indika had seemed to make it quite clear that the previous life had been lived in the town of Matara, I went out to Akuressa and made some inquiries. But there was no railway anywhere close to it; and as Indika had mentioned that the house of the previous personality was near the railway, I thought this lack at Akuressa and the quite rural location disqualified all the elephant owners there.

In Matara itself there had been two other deceased persons who had kept elephants within the city. The first of these (named Amarasekera) seemed unsuitable because his house (later turned into a school) was about 2 kilometers from the railway line and railway station. But the second man had lived near the railway station, as had K. G. J. Weerasinghe. He was S. A. Wickramaratana, a judge who had owned a large house of a size and elegance that only wealthy people can possess. I called on his widow and she and her son-in-law went over the list of details we were trying to match. Members of the family had had elephants and S. A. Wickramaratana's sister had owned a baby elephant, although he had not. He had been rich and his house had electricity. He had a gun, but no money box. He drank alcohol and his wife objected to this. He had adopted a child, a boy. I became impressed by the details in Indika's statements that could apply to any well-to-do man in Sri Lanka and in many other countries. So I considered the applicability to S. A. Wick-

and for other tasks, private ownership of elephants is rare and keeping them in the city even rarer. These details are therefore about as specific as the keeping of a pet cobra, such as occurred in the case of Kumkum Verma (first volume of this series).

ramaratana of the thirty items of Table 11. I found that at least seventeen were correct for him and there were possibly others since I did not ask about the applicability of every detail to him. One statement (item 27) was incorrect for K. G. J. Weerasinghe but correct for S. A. Wickramaratana since he wore trousers. I found, however, several other facts of his life which led me to set him aside confidently as not being the person we were looking for. For example, he had never owned trucks nor any dogs after his marriage. He had no safe or money box. And the name Premadasa made no sense to the members of his family whom I interviewed. In contrast, the servant Premadasa was said by several informants to have been an important employee of K. G. J. Weerasinghe. (See items 19 and 20, Table 11.) Also important in rejecting S. A. Wickramaratana as the related previous personality was his membership in the Christian (Anglican) Church of Sri Lanka. As I shall describe below, Indika showed behavior much more compatible with that of a Buddhist than that of a Christian.⁹ Finally, I should note that S. A. Wickramaratana died about 1965, that is, three years *after* the birth of Indika. Now the case of Jasbir Singh (I. Stevenson, 1974, *Twenty cases*), as well as other similar ones of which I shall publish full reports later, should warn us that death of a person after the birth of the subject does not automatically (in my opinion) disqualify that person from being the deceased person to whom the subject's memories refer. But such temporal relationships should make us cautious in saying that we have identified the correct previous personality corresponding to the subject's statements.

I have indicated with asterisks in Table 11 all the items that I found to be correct for S. A. Wickramaratana. K. G. D. Weerasinghe, who seemed to me to be in as good a position as anyone to know who the elephant owners of the city had been, said he was positive that there were no families in Matara who had owned elephants during the years 1940–60 other than the Weerasinghes, the Amarasekeras, and the Wickramaratanas.

Indika's Behavior Related to the Previous Life

Circumstances and Manner of Indika's Speaking about the Previous Life. In 1968, Indika's father told me that he generally talked about the previous life in the evenings. He was not then said to talk in his sleep or seem to dream about the previous life. However, in 1970 his father told me that he was then apparently having nightmares about once every two weeks. At these times he seemed uncomfortable in his sleep, and would get up from his bed and try to walk. They could not understand what he said. Without more information we cannot conclude that the content of these nightmares related to Indika's memories of a previous life.

Indika often used the present tense in talking about the previous life. Once, when he suffered a minor injury to his lip, he wanted his mother to tell "his

⁹ The case of Gamini Jayasena (this volume) illustrates the apparent carry-over in a Buddhist child of behavior learned in practicing the Christian religion in a previous life.

wife." His mother said she did not know the address; Indika replied that she should give him a suit, implying that, properly dressed, he would go to Matara by himself to see "his wife." When his mother asked him the way, he said that he would go to Colombo and thence to Matara and that his car would be there. Indika asked his mother to send for "his wife" on other occasions when he felt unwell.

Sometimes Indika seemed to forget his present surroundings and act as if he were actually in Matara. He would say, for example: "Where is my money box?" "Where is my gun?" and "There is a dog. Let me shoot him." (This last remark occurred when a dog came onto the property where the Guneratnes lived; Indika seemed to imagine—almost hallucinate—that he had a gun.)¹⁰

Indika's mother said that on Sundays he would say: "I must go to Colombo to buy saris for my wife and clothes for my child." When his mother asked him if he knew how to buy saris, he said: "Don't worry. I know how to buy saris. And when I go home I can bring a sari for you." (K. G. J. Weerasinghe's wife said her husband knew how to buy saris for her and did so when he went to Colombo. See item 26, Table 11.) And as he described the play of the baby elephant blowing water at him, those listening to him thought he was reliving times spent with the elephants. His father said of these occasions: "Though his body appears to be here, his mind appears to be there," meaning in the previous life at Matara.

Indika never said how old the child (Padminie Yapa) of the previous personality had been, but when asked this question he stretched his hand up as high as he could to indicate that the child was considerably taller than he (Indika) then was. (Padminie Yapa was eleven years old when her adoptive father died, and Indika was less than six when he made this gesture.)

Indika used several words and phrases that his parents did not think he could have heard other people use by the time he spoke them. He mentioned, for example, "railway tracks" in relation to the previous personality's house in Matara. At the time he used these words he was about three years old. He had never seen a railway train or railway tracks. The nearest railroad station was 12 kilometers away. When Indika mentioned that "he" had taken alcohol in the previous life and that "his wife" had objected to this habit, his father asked him how "he" would ask for a drink of an alcoholic beverage. To this Indika replied: "Arraku bagayak," which is a colloquialism used in bars in Sri Lanka meaning "Pour me a small drink of arrack." His father did not think he had heard the Sinhalese (or English) word for arrack before.¹¹ This may be doubted since the word is widely employed both by those who use arrack and those who deplore it. But Indika's use of the complete phrase (quoted above) is very unusual for a small boy of his age.

¹⁰ Indika's mother said Indika was referring to a real stray dog that had come onto their property; but his father, who had seen no dog, thought that Indika hallucinated the dog. The point is not important with regard to Indika's belief that he had a gun, and, if he could find it, he would shoot the dog.

¹¹ Indika never asked for arrack himself. He only described drinking it in the previous life. His behavior in this respect should be compared with that of Sujith Lakmal Jayaratne and Mahes de Silva (this volume), who also remembered the lives of arrack drinkers.

Indika used another phrase that struck his parents as odd when he first began to speak about the previous life. Hearing his mother talking with her mother—they were apparently reminiscing—he said: “May I also tell an old story?” He used the phrase *parani kata* (English: “old story”) in making this remark. Permission being granted, he then astonished his mother by unfolding his claim to have a wife and child.

Indika’s father also did not think it likely that he would have heard the word *Benz* at the time he claimed to have had a car of that make in the previous life. However, Benz cars were among the important prizes offered in a state lottery conducted in 1965, the year before that in which Indika began speaking about the previous life. Since a good deal of publicity all over Sri Lanka accompanied the giving away of these Benz cars in the lottery, it is unlikely that even the remotest peasants had not heard about them.

On one occasion, when some friends of G. D. Guneratne were teasing Indika about his claim to remember even the license number of the car he said the previous personality had possessed, in which he was in fact incorrect (item 9, Table 11), he used the word *athipili*. Indika’s father took this to mean: “Do not tease me.” This expression was not known in Gonapola. I thought it might be a dialect word from the area of Matara, but I could not find anyone in that area who recognized it.

Indika also impressively imitated the use of a telephone by putting his hand up to his mouth (apparently to represent the receiver) and saying: “Hello.” *Hello* is used in answering the telephone in Sri Lanka (and was so used by K. G. J. Weerasinghe), but it is otherwise not said much by Sinhalese speakers. Yet Indika’s father sometimes greeted his friends with *Hello*, so this detail of Indika’s behavior was noteworthy only in his accompanying use of his hand in playing as if he were answering a telephone.

Indika’s Comparisons of the Previous Life with His Present Situation. Possibly Indika talked more about the previous life in the evenings because these provided greater contrasts with the life he seemed to be remembering.¹² For one thing, the Guneratnes lit oil lamps instead of turning a switch on the wall for electric light.

Meals, an important one of which occurred in the evenings, also provided crises for Indika. His family could afford to eat meat only about once a week. Indika would remind the other members of the family that he was used to having meat and fish more often. When meals failed to come up to his standards he became annoyed. He particularly complained of the limited quantities of food given to him. If served two pieces of fish, he would ask for four or five.

Indika also contrasted the smallness of the Guneratne house with the larger

¹² The subjects of these cases not infrequently seem to talk about the previous lives they remember more at one time of day than at another. Early mornings and evenings seem to be the most favored times. Probably different reasons underlie such preferences. For other examples of favorite times of the day for talking about a previous life, see the cases of Kumkum Verma (first volume of this series), Shamlinie Prema, Gamini Jayasena (this volume), and Ratana Wongsombat (fourth volume).

size and elegance of the one he said "he" had lived in. He complained of the shabbiness of his mother's clothes compared to those of his (previous) wife. Particularly startling to his parents were Indika's references to having had elephants, cars, and trucks, all possessions that only well-to-do people have in Sri Lanka. He told them "he" had "bundles of money." But all these boasts were mingled with some generous thoughts and one motive he expressed for wanting to go to Matara was that of obtaining money for his parents. He said if they would take him to Matara, "then I can give you money." He proposed to get money from his (previous) wife and give it to his mother. He also offered to bring her a sari from Matara. If a child tore his exercise book and cried, Indika would say to him: "Don't cry. I can give you another exercise book."

Indika's Wishes and Fears about Going to Matara. As already mentioned, at one time Indika expressed strong desires to go to Matara. He evidently felt a pull from there toward the money and other possessions of that life. When angered by something in his home, he would threaten to go there. By 1968, however, he had developed a fear of going to Matara. At this time his memories apparently had largely faded; he was not talking spontaneously any more about the previous life and had not done so for more than a year and a half. He may have feared that his parents would leave him in Matara, but this is conjectural since he did not say so. I think it is also possible that memories of domestic quarrels eventually repelled him from Matara more than those of wealth attracted him there. As I have mentioned earlier, when Indika's father brought him (in 1968) to Matara at the time I was there, Indika seemed rather tense and failed completely to recognize anything or any person, such as K. G. J. Weerasinghe's widow (B. E. Abeynayake) and adopted daughter (Padminie Yapa), in the house at Matara.

Other Behavior of Indika Related to the Previous Life. During the period when Indika talked most of the previous life, he also showed several other traits which I have not yet mentioned. He had a strong interest in motor vehicles of all kinds, and when he had an opportunity to see one or be in one he would examine it closely and critically. He pointed out the differences between these cars and those of the previous life.

Indika also showed an interest in elephants, and if one passed by when he was at school he would call out to it. His interests in other animals also corresponded to those of K. G. J. Weerasinghe. Thus he showed a fondness for dogs and cattle and he disliked cats.

White was the favorite color of both Indika and K. G. J. Weerasinghe.

When quite young Indika showed an interest in bhikkhus (Buddhist monks) and a solicitous respect for them typical of older, devout persons. At one time his family had a shop in the village of Gonapola and lived there when Indika was about three years old. There was a bus stop near the shop. Whenever Indika saw a bhikkhu standing in wait for the bus he would invite him to have a seat in the shop. His older sister did not show such concern for the welfare of bhikkhus. Indika also expressed opposition to killing. He said that although

he had a gun it was wrong to kill with it. His mother was sure that, although his family are Buddhists, no one had spoken to Indika about the evils of killing. However, like so many of us, he had mixed or alternating attitudes on the subject. As I mentioned earlier, he once saw—or thought he saw—a dog that had strayed onto the property near the Guneratne house and he wanted to shoot it. In 1973 I learned that he had some skill in hunting birds with a catapult which his father suppressed by removing his weapon.

Not long before my visit to his family in 1970, Indika had asked to go to the holy place of Kataragama. We cannot think of this as in any way specific since his parents (as many other persons in Sri Lanka) liked to visit Kataragama. The expressed wish does, however, agree with the other evidence that Indika had a strong interest in religion.

Indika showed four other traits that accord with similar behavior for K. G. J. Weerasinghe. First, he lost his temper very easily. Second, he had a marked interest in gambling as exemplified by his wish to buy lottery tickets. Third, he showed some fear of burglars that may have had a connection with the fact that K. G. J. Weerasinghe's home was entered by burglars and money was stolen from it during his lifetime. And finally, when Indika received any money, he saved it thriftily in contrast to his siblings, from whose hands it easily slipped away. If it is thought that such regard for money as Indika showed does not match the lavishness with which K. G. J. Weerasinghe spent and gambled his money, the answer is that he had first to accumulate what he later distributed. It will generally be found, I think, that persons who acquire wealth (as opposed to those who have it thrust on them by inheritance) have done so by carefully arranging during the early years of their lives for their income to exceed their expenses. It would be difficult in Sri Lanka to become a mudalali without following this simple rule which Indika practiced at an early age. Nor was it incompatible with his interest in lottery tickets.

Other Relevant Behavior of Indika

Like many other children subjects of these cases, Indika was a somewhat solitary child who liked to play alone and who preferred the company of adults to that of other children.

Indika's father told me that he had never shown any evidence of extrasensory perception apart from the memories of the previous life, if they are considered in that category.

Correspondences in Behavior between Indika and K. G. J. Weerasinghe

In 1968, when I learned that Indika's family had not met, or even adequately identified, a family with a member corresponding to Indika's statements, I recorded on a questionnaire that I had earlier devised for this purpose all the behavioral traits of Indika that seemed to his parents unusual and possibly related to the memories of a previous life. In making out this list, we compared Indika's conduct with that of his older sister, Shriyanie, or with that of other

children of his age. I have summarized in Table 12 the relevant behavior reported for Indika and the corresponding behavior for K. G. J. Weerasinghe. I recorded most of the more important items of this table before taking Indika and his father to Matara for the verifications and gathering of information about the related previous personality. I do not believe the very slight information the Guneratnes had already learned from M. G. Danthawathie about the Weerasinghe family could have influenced their answers to my questionnaire except for the fact, which she had told them, that K. G. J. Weerasinghe kept elephants. Therefore, I think that we can regard the information given by Indika's parents about his behavior as largely uncontaminated by any information they had about the previous personality.

The Attitudes of Indika's Parents toward His Statements and Behavior Related to the Previous Life

When Indika's statements and behavior related to the previous life were at their height, his parents were somewhat uneasy about his situation. His father

TABLE 12. *Correspondences in Behavior between Indika and K. G. J. Weerasinghe*

<i>Indika</i>	<i>K. G. J. Weerasinghe</i>
1. Interest in elephants *	Owned elephants and enjoyed feeding and playing with them
2. Interest in lotteries	Renowned gambler at cards; also bought lottery tickets regularly
3. Solicitous and respectful toward bhikkhus	Patronized and assisted bhikkhus and donated funds to temples
4. Eager to eat meat and fish	Meat and fish his favorite foods
5. Extremely interested in motor vehicles	Owned automobiles and trucks; wanted to buy better automobiles
6. Made invidious comparisons between humble circumstances of his family and luxury of previous life	Inclined to be boastful and to brag
7. Lost temper easily when annoyed **	Lost temper on slight provocation
8. Fondness for dogs	Dogs his favorite animals
9. Dislike of cats **	Disliked cats
10. Interested in cattle **	Owned cattle
11. White his favorite color **	White his favorite color
12. Habit of saving money **	Had accumulated great wealth

* Indika's family knew the previous personality had kept elephants before this item was recorded.

** These items were not recorded before the two families met. All other items were recorded before Indika and his father went to Matara and met the family of K. G. J. Weerasinghe.

told me they were reluctant to take him to Matara for fear that they might lose him. At that time he had been asking them to go there and when he was angry at them he would threaten to go to Matara. Later, as his memories (or their intensity) faded, and his attitude toward Matara changed from a desire to go there into a reluctance to do so, they felt more comfortable about taking him there. In 1968, Indika's father readily agreed to bring Indika with him to join us in Galle, and to go on with us from there to Matara for a meeting with the Weerasinghe family. After the visit of 1968 he did not take Indika back to Matara.

Indika's parents tolerated very well his complaints about the humbleness of their home as compared with the luxury he claimed to remember. They cannot have enjoyed listening each night to his demands for more meat and his references to shabby clothes and leaky lamps. And they must have thrilled even less to his talk about a Benz car and pet elephants. I think they deserve great credit for helping him make a happy adjustment to the circumstances of his modest situation, as it seemed to me he was doing in 1970 and 1973.

Comments on the Evidence of Paranormal Processes in the Case

I have already mentioned that this case belongs to the small group of cases in which a written record of the subject's statements was made before the two families met. Apart from some slight confirmatory information given to Indika's parents through M. G. Danthawathie, I myself first made all the verifications of Indika's statements and was also the first to compare his behavior with that of the previous personality, K. G. J. Weerasinghe. In this case, therefore, as in a few others, we can completely exclude a mingling of memories on the part of the families concerned as a factor giving rise to a spurious appearance of more concordance between the statements and behavior of the subject, on the one hand, and the actual facts of the life of the previous personality (and his reported behavior), on the other hand.

Concerning the possibilities for normal communication between the two families, I am as confident that this could not have occurred in this case as I am for any case in my collection. Indika's family rarely passed through Matara, and they had no friends or relatives there. K. G. J. Weerasinghe came up to Colombo from time to time to shop or for medical examinations. His affairs might have taken him to the village of Gonapola, but we do not know of his ever having visited it. Gonapola is not far from Colombo, but it is not on a main road and is rather difficult to reach by a secondary road. Indika's family did not actually live in the village of Gonapola itself but outside it, on a rather inaccessible rubber plantation.

If the two families had somehow met, one cannot easily imagine that they would have had any prolonged social intercourse since they belonged to quite different social and economic classes.

I can think of no reason why G. D. Guneratne and his wife would contrive the case. For a number of Indika's statements I obtained the corroboration

of his older sister, Shriyanie, or one of the family's neighbors, L. D. Y. Appuhamy. The latter said that he had talked at length with Indika. His account of what Indika told him followed the main outlines of what G. D. Guneratne and his wife had already told me that Indika had said. There were some of the usual variations in small details, but it seemed clear that he had heard Indika make very much the same statements that his parents had reported.

Indika's parents had made no move to obtain decisive verifications of his statements up to the time he was almost six years old, in 1968. Since he had threatened to leave them, they were afraid of losing him if they took him to Matara. Considering their humble condition and the wealth of the previous family, it may be thought that a temptation existed to exploit Indika's statements for extracting some financial gain for him and themselves. And yet I never heard that they had done so or tried to do so. Indika's parents had not taken him back to Matara between 1968 and 1976, which they would certainly have done if they had had any intention of asking for assistance from the Weerasinghe family. I am quite positive that Indika's father would never have considered such a step. He impressed me as being a person of integrity who, although not proud to be poor, was proud of doing the best he could without expecting special help from anyone else.

Indika's Later Development

Indika continued talking about the previous life for a somewhat shorter time than the average subject of these cases. He had stopped speaking spontaneously about it at the age of about four and a half. Since I did not first meet him until March 1968, when he was in his sixth year, the memories had by then already receded considerably. This may account for his complete failure to make any recognitions of people or places at Matara. Some other children whose memories lasted longer than Indika's have made recognitions at the places of the previous lives they remembered when they were older than Indika was in 1968.¹³

Indika entered school at the age of five. He was in the second class in 1970, when he was eight years old. His mother considered that he had been precocious and learned effortlessly, although he had not begun to speak until the age of two, an age later than that at which his older sister, Shriyanie, had first spoken.

In 1970, Indika seemed to be developing into an entirely normal, healthy boy. His parents had not questioned him about the previous life since 1968, and he had said nothing further himself. At this time Indika continued to show some of the behavior earlier noted which seemed related to the previous life. He still had a quick temper; not long before my visit he had threatened to stab a boy who, he thought, had insulted him. He still called for more and

¹³ Two examples of such children are Gopal Gupta (first volume of this series) and Suleyman Andary (third volume). They were, respectively, almost nine and more than thirteen years old when they made what have seemed to me significant recognitions at the sites of the previous lives they remembered.

better meat and fish. His mother remarked that he disdained sprats as a cheap variety of fish. Lotteries still interested him, and so also did the merit-making advocated by Buddhism.

As I mentioned earlier, Godwin Samararatne visited the Guneratnes in January 1972. At that time Indika had by no means fully adjusted to his humble surroundings. He still expressed disappointment when not given meat or when he otherwise felt dissatisfied with the family food. Sometimes he would not eat the food provided. He would never wear torn clothes, but discarded them. His maternal grandmother, who had some extra resources, was spending money on Indika to lessen the shock of his changed circumstances, as his family viewed his situation with them.

In March 1973, when I visited the family again, Indika (who was then almost eleven) was continuing to demand food of high quality and would not eat anything that displeased him. He also liked clean clothes, something rather unusual for a Sinhalese village child. His interest in lottery tickets and in automobiles had continued undiminished. He sometimes tampered with the controls of cars and tried to start them. He still showed a tendency to lose his temper easily. Asked what he wished to become in adulthood, he gave an answer that surprised no one: "Mudalali."

Indika was then in the fifth class of school and standing tenth in a class of thirty-four students. He was thus at a level with his peers and perhaps a little ahead of them. At this time he was no longer having nightmares, but his mother said he was having "heart trouble," a symptom of which was pain in his chest that came on especially when he stayed in the sun.

Indika's mother said that he did not refer to the previous life and only smiled when someone enquired about it. When we asked him a direct question, he said he no longer remembered anything of the former life. He did not even remember the name of the town (Matara) where he had earlier said that he had lived. His, then, was another case in which behavior that seemed related to the previous life persisted after the imaged memories had faded completely from consciousness.

On March 26, 1976, I was able to go to Gonapola, where I again met Indika and his parents. Indika, then nearing fourteen years of age, was enjoying good health. He was in the eighth class of school and stood tenth in rank in his class. His mother said that he did not talk about the previous life, and when I questioned him, he appeared not even to remember what others had told him he had said about it when younger. Of earlier traits that may have derived from the previous life, only a strong interest in elephants persisted. Indika had by this time adjusted completely to the circumstances of his family and no longer complained about their modest economic situation.

7. The Case of Sujith Lakmal Jayaratne

Introduction

THIS CASE belongs to the small group of those in which a written record was made of what the subject said about the previous life before any of his statements were verified. The Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana, a monk of Mt. Lavinia, where Sujith lived, wrote down sixteen of Sujith's statements about the previous life before he verified them.

The case is also particularly rich in behavioral features. At the time I investigated it, Sujith was just a little over three and a half years old and still strongly exhibiting unusual behavior characteristic of the person whose life he claimed to remember. I was able to witness some of this behavior myself.

Summary of the Case and Its Investigation

Sujith Lakmal Jayaratne was born in the hospital at Homagama, 24 kilometers west of Colombo, on August 7, 1969.¹ He was the only child of U. S. Jayaratne and his wife, Nandanie Sunethari. His parents separated and divorced soon after Sujith's birth, in November 1969. His father came once to see Sujith after his birth, but had not returned since. He had no part in the testimony for the case. Sujith remained with his mother, who was living with her mother, C. Piyaseelie Mendis. The other members of the household in 1973 were a younger sister of Sujith's mother, Lilanie Fernando, and her younger brother, whom I did not meet.

When Sujith was eight months old his mother accidentally discovered that he was afraid of lorries (trucks) and even of the word *lorry*, an English word that has been taken into Sinhalese. One day he was refusing to take his milk; when she happened to mention (in some side conversation) the word *lorry*, Sujith drank the milk. She thought he might have done so through some fear of lorries. Thereafter she exploited this by saying the word *lorry* whenever he refused to take milk. Indeed, the uttering of this word was the only way in which she could get him to take milk when he refused.

At this early age Sujith's family did not connect his odd reaction to the word *lorry* with a previous life. Sujith began talking in connected phrases when he was between one and a half and two years old. Almost immediately he began to communicate information about a previous life. For this he frequently resorted to nonverbal sounds, as of a railway engine, or gestures, as of a man walking with a cane. To indicate the number 2, he held up two fingers.

¹ I think this date accurate as it was the one recorded on a certificate given to Sujith's mother by the hospital and shown to me on October 14, 1973. Sujith was born prematurely after a seven months' pregnancy.

During this period Sujith was saying that “he” had lived in a place called Gorakana and had been known as “Gorakana Sammy.” He said his father was called Jamis² and had one bad eye. Someone had fallen off a train and become lame. Sujith further said that ‘he’ had worked with trains, but had also sold arrack (a distilled alcoholic beverage). He had a wife, Maggie, with whom he quarreled. One day after a row with her he had gone to a boutique for cigarettes and then had stepped out onto the road and been struck by a lorry. He had died immediately afterward. Sujith added numerous other details about members of the previous family and about Gorakana, the place where he said they had lived.

At this early age Sujith clamored to go to Gorakana. He also called for arrack and cigarettes and showed a marked fear of lorries; this then allowed the previous extraordinary effect on him of the word *lorry* to fall into place.

It happened that the older brother of Sujith’s maternal grandmother was the Ven. G. Gnanaratana, a monk in the nearby temple of Sri Sumanaramaya. He heard about Sujith’s remarks and then listened to some of them himself when Sujith’s grandmother brought him over to the temple. He mentioned the matter to a younger monk of the temple, the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana, who then became interested in verifying what Sujith was saying. Up to that point his family assumed that he was talking about a previous life, but as they knew nobody in Gorakana they had no certain knowledge that anything he was saying was true.

The Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana made written notes of many of Sujith’s statements. He recorded, in all, sixteen items during or immediately after talks with Sujith on March 10, 11, and 14, 1972. (He later made his Sinhalese notes available to me and they were translated into English.) At the third interview (March 14) Sujith had added three additional details, all the others having been recorded at the first two interviews. On March 13 (that is, the day before the last interview with Sujith preceding verifications) the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana went to Gorakana to search out a family corresponding to Sujith’s statements. He was unsuccessful on this occasion and came back to Mt. Lavinia thinking he had made no progress. However, in Gorakana (on March 13) he had met a girl called Kusuma Dabare (the name Kusuma had figured prominently in Sujith’s statements) and he had exposed to her some of the details stated by Sujith. She had not connected these with her family at the time. It is not clear whether she failed to do so out of fear of strangers whose business she did not understand or because she genuinely could not relate Sujith’s remarks to her family; the remarks included references to Gorakawatte as a section of Gorakana, and this was an old term unknown to her. Subsequently, she must have thought the matter over and consulted with members of her family in Gorakana. She then came to Mt. Lavinia on March 15, definitely confirmed some of Sujith’s statements, and asked to meet him. The Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana asked her to wait until he had completed

² *Jamis* is a Sinhalese adaptation of the English name *James*.

his investigations. He then returned to Gorakana on March 16 and 18. On these visits he succeeded in verifying nearly all the statements Sujith had made and incidentally learned much about Kusuma Dabare's uncle Sammy Fernando, whose life and death corresponded very closely with these statements. Sammy Fernando had been killed when struck by a lorry in Gorakana on January 29, 1969.

The news of Sujith's statements spread rapidly through Gorakana, and persons from that community began coming to Mt. Lavinia to see him. The Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana had some difficulty containing their enthusiasm and arranging for meetings between the people of Gorakana and Sujith that were reasonably orderly. He tried to plan a quiet meeting first between Kusuma Dabare and Sujith. He asked her to bring along just a few girls of about her own age with the thought that Sujith would be asked to recognize them and might pick Kusuma out of the group. But Kusuma arrived on March 30 with a platoon of ten other persons from Gorakana. The sudden appearance of so many strange people alarmed Sujith into a mute clinging to his mother and he only looked at Kusuma without saying anything. The following day (March 31) Kusuma returned with a more modest following of only four other persons and Sujith recognized her by name. Sujith also recognized another person, Kithsiri, in her party. Kithsiri was a nephew of Sammy Fernando.

In April 1972, various other relatives of Sammy Fernando came to Mt. Lavinia, where Sujith recognized them. Then, on April 20, the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana took Sujith to Gorakana, where he made some further statements and recognitions. A journalist of the Sinhalese newspaper *Silumina* accompanied them to Gorakana, and afterward he published an account of the case in *Silumina*, on April 23. On the same day accounts appeared in the English-language newspapers *Weekend* and *Observer*. Copies of these were sent to me, and I immediately wrote to Mr. E. C. Raddalgoda (one of my interpreters in Sri Lanka) and asked him to make a preliminary investigation of the case as soon as he could. With his usual diligence he had not waited for my instructions, but had gone to the site of the case on April 30 and had begun to gather information about it on my behalf. He obtained and had translated for me the above-mentioned notes made by the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana before he went to Gorakana for verifications. He also had translated another longer statement prepared by the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana which gave an account of the case up to early April 1972. Mr. Raddalgoda received this report on August 1, 1972. (It had been prepared from the rougher, dated written notes which the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana made while informants were talking or soon afterward.) Mr. Raddalgoda also took down in shorthand (on July 9, 1973) statements from Sujith, his mother, his maternal grandmother, a maternal great-uncle, and a neighbor of his grandmother.

During the summer and autumn of 1972, persons from Gorakana continued to visit Sujith and the flow had not entirely ceased by the time of my first

visit in March 1973. At that time I spent three days studying both sides of the case in Mt. Lavinia and Gorakana. In connection with my interviews in Gorakana I visited (and examined) the house of Jamis Fernando (still occupied by his widow, Lucia, and other members of his family), the nearby temple, formerly known as Kale Pansala, and the house where Sammy Fernando had lived with his wife, Maggie.

In October 1973, I returned to the area of the case and had second interviews with some of the informants of Sujith's family and some of Sammy Fernando's. In addition, I interviewed seven new informants, most of whom were relatives of Sammy Fernando, who were in a position either to verify some of Sujith's statements or to furnish information bearing on possible connections between Sammy Fernando's family in Gorakana and Sujith's in Mt. Lavinia. I also interviewed the Ven. G. Gnanaratana, Sujith's maternal great-uncle, who had originally "discovered" the case.

In the time I had before leaving Sri Lanka, I was unable to find two informants whom I thought it necessary to interview. But subsequently Mr. Godwin Samararatne, who, with Mr. Raddalgoda, had worked with me as an interpreter during my interviews, found these persons and took down statements from them. Still later, in the summer of 1974, Godwin Samararatne returned to the area of the case and had additional interviews about details with some of the principal informants for the case.

In March 1976, I visited Sujith and his family again and also had further short interviews with the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana and Maggilin ("Maggie") Alwis, Sammy Fernando's widow.

Persons Interviewed during the Investigation

In Mt. Lavinia I interviewed:

- Sujith Lakmal Jayaratne
- Nandanie Sunethari, Sujith's mother
- C. Piyaseelie Mendis, Sujith's maternal grandmother
- Ven. G. Gnanaratana Thera, monk of Sri Sumanaramaya Temple and Sujith's maternal grandmother's brother
- Lilanie Fernando, Sujith's maternal aunt
- Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana Thera, monk of Sri Sumanaramaya Temple
- M. Chandradasa Fernando, friend of Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana who accompanied him when Sujith was taken to Gorakana
- D. Gunasekera, neighbor of C. Piyaseelie Mendis
- T. Gunasekera, D. Gunasekera's son
- K. Karunakeran, neighbor of C. Piyaseelie Mendis
- Irene Alfonso, neighbor of C. Piyaseelie Mendis
- Anulawathie Fonseka, Sammy Fernando's youngest sister
- Victor Fonseka, Anulawathie Fonseka's husband

In Gorakana I interviewed:

Maggilin ("Maggie") Alwis, Sammy Fernando's widow
Kusumawathie Wijerama, Maggilin Alwis' niece
Martin Alwis, Maggilin Alwis' brother
Wijedasa Alwis, Martin Alwis' son
Sumana Alwis, Wijedasa Alwis' wife
Ven. Batugampola Ariyawansa Thera, monk of
Kande Vihara
W. Lucia Silva, Jamis Fernando's widow and Sammy
Fernando's mother
Milton Fernando, Sammy Fernando's brother
Margaret Silva, Milton Fernando's wife
Denny Fernando, Sammy Fernando's brother
B. Sunil Fernando, Sammy Fernando's son
Nandanie Fernando, daughter of Sammy Fernando
and Maggilin Alwis
Siri Nimal Rodrigo, Nandanie Fernando's husband
Kusuma Dabare, Sammy Fernando's niece
Sumana Dabare, Sammy Fernando's niece
B. Gunawathie Fernando, Sammy Fernando's younger
sister and W. Edmund Soysa's wife (see below)
Leslie Clarence Wijesekera, friend of B. Gunawathie
Fernando and nephew of Wimaladasa de Alwis (see below)
W. D. Princie Weerakody, distant relative of Sammy
Fernando
C. Romiel Fernando, friend and distant relative of
Sammy Fernando
Ven. Kapugama Dhamminda Mahathera, chief monk of
Sri Dharmarakshitaramaya Temple, formerly known
as Kale Pansala (Forest Temple)
Ven. Taldena Amithasara Thera, monk of Sri Dharmarakshitaramaya
Temple

In Moratuwa I interviewed:

Wimaladasa de Alwis, friend of Sammy Fernando and
neighbor of Sujith's family in Mt. Lavinia

In December 1973 and January 1974 respectively, Godwin Samararatne recorded statements from:

W. Wilson Perera ("Martin of Kandy"), Sammy
Fernando's second cousin (interviewed
in Kandy)

W. Edmund Soysa, B. Gunawathie Fernando's husband and
Sammy Fernando's brother-in-law (interviewed in Moratuwa)

In addition to the above interviews, E. C. Raddalgoda, on my behalf, obtained (in July–August 1972) statements from the Ven. G. Gnanaratana, the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana, C. Piyaseelie Mendis, Nandandie Sune-thari, and Irene Alfonso. He also recorded at this time a short statement from Sujith himself. Indications of these persons as informants in Table 13 may refer either to their interviews with me in March 1973 or to Mr. Raddalgoda's records of their statements to him in the summer of 1972.

*Relevant Facts of Geography and Possibilities for Normal Means
of Communication between the Two Families*

Mt. Lavinia, where Sujith and his family lived, is south of Colombo on the Galle Road and also on the ocean. As it is barely 5 kilometers from Colombo it may be regarded as a suburb; the houses are indeed of urban quality. Gorakana is another 12 kilometers farther south. Part of it runs along a portion of the Galle Road, which is the main highway south from Colombo, but the larger portion of Gorakana lies away from the beach and the highway. In 1973 it was a rather small village whose population I estimated at less than 1,500 persons. The house of Jamis Fernando and those members of the family still living there was in the village proper. That of Sammy Fernando was on the highway, about half a kilometer away.

Since both Mt. Lavinia and Gorakana are on a main north-south highway there would naturally be much traffic between them. Persons from Gorakana going into Colombo to shop would certainly pass through Mt. Lavinia on their way. They would not ordinarily stop there, however, unless they had friends or relations to visit.

My own inquiries as well as those of the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana failed to turn up any evidence that members of the two immediate families had known each other prior to the development of the case. Sammy Fernando's mother and younger sister specifically denied any such acquaintance. The Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana was convinced that Maggilin Alwis, Sammy Fernando's widow, did not know Sujith because of the detailed instructions he found it necessary to give her about how to come to the area of the house when he was making arrangements for her to visit Sujith in Mt. Lavinia. Maggilin Alwis told me she knew that one of her husband's sisters was living in Mt. Lavinia, but she could not give me her address.

Sujith's maternal grandmother told me that she had never traded in Gorakana. I thought that if some business had taken her in that direction she might have learned something about Sammy Fernando. It would have been surprising, however, if she had gone south to shop in Gorakana, since Mt. Lavinia is a larger place with better shops, and Colombo, with its large stores, is nearer to it than is Gorakana.

Sujith himself (at the age when he began talking of the previous life) had been out of his house and in the neighborhood, but he had not been as far as the main road, about 100 meters away. His movements would have been

well known to his mother and grandmother, and they would easily have learned if he had strayed for long into a neighbor's house or compound.

Although I did not discover any direct acquaintance between the two families, I did learn that Sammy Fernando's younger sister, Anulawathie Fonseka, was living in Mt. Lavinia. Her house was reached by a lane south of the road on which Sujith's family lived. However, as the two houses were both about the same distance from the main road, they were not more than 250 meters apart as the crow flies. Anulawathie Fonseka denied having known Sujith's family before the development of the case. She said that she heard about it first from people in Gorakana and that it took her a little effort to trace the child in Mt. Lavinia who was reported to be talking about a previous life. She then went to see Sujith and was recognized (perhaps doubtfully) by him. Sujith's mother and grandmother denied having known Anulawathie prior to Sujith's talking about the previous life and her (Anulawathie's) meeting with him.

Another informant, whom I met incidentally at the home in Gorakana of B. Gunawathie Fernando (another younger sister of Sammy Fernando), had a relative in Mt. Lavinia. This was L. C. Wijesekera, whose uncle, Wimaladasa de Alwis, lived in a house just behind that of Sujith's family. He (Wimaladasa de Alwis) had moved there in (approximately) 1971. L. C. Wijesekera said he had gone to Mt. Lavinia to visit his uncle about once a month but had never met Sujith's family prior to the development of the case. Sujith's mother and grandmother confirmed that, although they knew L. C. Wijesekera before the development of the case, he had never visited them until after that. Their statement may seem discrepant with L. C. Wijesekera's denial that he had ever even met Sujith's family before the development of the case. I have supposed that Sujith's mother and grandmother probably meant that they knew who he was, perhaps from seeing him in the neighborhood at the times he visited his uncle Wimaladasa de Alwis. But they seem to have had little or no direct contact with him.

The information furnished by L. C. Wijesekera obliged me to visit and talk with his uncle Wimaladasa de Alwis. He, it turned out, had been a friend and drinking companion of Sammy Fernando. He had lived in Mt. Lavinia for the past ten years. His present house there was less than 100 meters from that of Sujith's family, being roughly halfway between it and the Sumanaramaya Temple. As a physically close neighbor he was somewhat familiar with Sujith's family. Since, after the separation of Sujith's parents, they had no senior adult male resident in their house, Sujith's female relatives occasionally asked some favor of him—for example, to call a doctor for them. At such times he would visit their house, but otherwise did not do so. He said he had never talked with them about Sammy Fernando prior to the development of the case. Sujith's mother and grandmother confirmed the occasional visits of Wimaladasa de Alwis to their house and agreed that he never talked with them about Sammy Fernando prior to Sujith's doing so. Afterward Sujith may have recognized Wimaladasa de Alwis (as from the life of Sammy

Fernando), and he began to visit Wimaladasa de Alwis, seeking to renew, as he saw the matter, a friendship with an old drinking pal. I shall revert to this topic later when I consider Sujith's behavior. To complete the present relevance of Wimaladasa de Alwis, I will say that unless he and Sujith's family are deliberately falsifying the facts, and I do not think they are, it seems unlikely that he was a source from whom Sujith might have acquired his knowledge of Sammy Fernando by normal means. He provided, however, an excellent source from whom Sujith might have derived his information about Sammy Fernando paranormally.

I found still another resident of Gorakana with friends and relatives in Mt. Lavinia. This was C. Romiel Fernando, a friend and distant relative of Sammy Fernando. He was also acquainted with Maggilin Alwis and discussed the case with her after Sujith had visited Gorakana. He had not heard of the case before. Although he went to Mt. Lavinia from time to time, his visits were not social but in order to find work as a mason. He talked with friends who, he thought, might know of jobs he could be hired for, but he did not go into their houses. He did not know Sujith's family and had never visited Sujith. Nor did he know Anulawathie Fonseka, Sammy Fernando's youngest sister, who was living in Mt. Lavinia. From his account of his contacts in Mt. Lavinia it did not seem reasonable to consider him a source for normal transmission of information to Sujith or his family.

There were thus several residents in Mt. Lavinia with connections in Gorakana, one of them a member of Sammy Fernando's family—his own sister. There may well have been more such persons in Mt. Lavinia with relatives and friends in Gorakana. But I do not think any of them acted as normal channels to Sujith (or his family) of information about Sammy Fernando. Perhaps the best evidence for this comes from the fact that Sujith's family obviously did not have the slightest idea of whom he was talking and had taken no steps to verify his statements (although he had been making them for several months) before they came to the attention of the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana. He was a close associate, in the Sri Sumanaramaya Temple, of the Ven. G. Gnanaratana, Sujith's maternal great-uncle. The Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana told me that he had never heard of "Gorakana Sammy" before he went to search for him in Gorakana; and it seems certain that if Sujith's great-uncle (or other members of Sujith's family) had known where to find the person Sujith was talking about, they would have saved the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana the considerable trouble he had to take before he found the family of Sammy Fernando and was able to verify Sujith's statements with them.

The Life, Character, and Death of Sammy Fernando

Several favorable circumstances combined to permit collection of what I believe to be reliable information about Sammy Fernando. First, since he had died in January 1969, the informants who gave information about

him during the investigations of 1972–73 did not have to reach into deep recesses of memory as have informants for some of the other related previous personalities of these cases. Second, no special scandals, suspicions about the cause of death, distrust of the motives of the subject's family, or marked differences of socioeconomic circumstances entered into this case as they have in some others, for example, those of Sunil Dutt Saxena (in the first volume of this series) and Lalitha Abeyawardena (this volume), to mention two only. Such factors sometimes lead to evidence being given reluctantly, and even to its distortion and suppression. And third, the informants in Gorakana about Sammy Fernando seemed engagingly frank in their delineation of his character. They evidently had enough good feelings about him to admit his flaws.

B. Selvin Fernando, who was known as Sammy Fernando, and sometimes as "Gorakana Sammy", was born in Gorakana on January 3, 1919.³ He was the oldest son of a large family born to his parents, Jamis Fernando and his wife, W. Lucia Silva. He attended a local school in Gorakana up to the sixth class. In his childhood and youth he was, it seems, an amiable person who visited the local temple often and was well thought of by the monks there. One of them told me Sammy Fernando spent most of his time at the temple when he was a child.

When he became able to undertake adult work he was employed first in a bus company and then by the Ceylon Government Railways. He began to court the woman he was to marry in his mid-twenties. But the ardor of his attachment to her led to frequent absences from work, so that he was dismissed from the railway service at the age of about twenty-five. He nevertheless married Maggilin ("Maggie") Alwis, a beautiful woman somewhat older than he was. They had one child, a girl named Nandanie. Sammy Fernando also had a mistress, with whom he had at least one other child, a son, Sunil.

His discharge from the railway service left Sammy Fernando with little chance of other regular employment, and so he became a distiller and seller of illicit arrack. He had a still in the jungle compound behind his house (originally Maggie's), and, as his land extended to the side of a river, he had a convenient landing stage for the boat in which he transported his arrack to sell along the river.

It is the duty of each manufacturer to maintain the standards of his product that he sets for himself and that his customers require. To assure himself of the

³ This date was given on Sammy Fernando's horoscope, which was in the possession of the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana in March 1973 and was examined during my visit. Sammy Fernando's birth certificate (also obtained by the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana) gives the date as January 8, 1919. If it were important to decide which of these documents was the more accurate, I should unhesitatingly choose the horoscope. Birth certificates are a formality required by the government, and the person registering a birth (usually the father) may postpone doing so until he has only an impaired memory of the date to rely upon. Much more importance is attached to providing an exact date for the astrologer who will cast the horoscope of the child; it is recognized that unreliable data will vitiate his efforts. Families, therefore, often note on a slip of paper the exact date and time of a child's birth. The horoscope may not be cast until some time later, but it will (usually) be based on the earlier written record. In applying to register the birth with the government, the applicant may not bother to consult the written record or horoscope, and so discrepancies can easily arise.

high quality of his liquor Sammy Fernando took to sampling it, and eventually the distinction between testing and more abundant consumption became blurred. His intake of alcohol increased further because on his trips along the river to sell his arrack he thought it unnecessary to take anything else to quench his thirst as he journeyed from one customer to another. In this way Sammy Fernando gradually sank into clinical alcoholism.

Since the manufacture of arrack is a government monopoly in Sri Lanka, the police thought they should intervene in his activities from time to time and so they raided his place intermittently. He was caught *flagrante delicto* and imprisoned no fewer than eight times; but these measures failed to effect a cure, and he always resumed his practice. In truth, he knew the art of distilling well and his arrack was much in demand. Once he lost an entire cargo of it when his boat capsized, but this gave only a temporary setback to his trade, which he soon resumed.

When the police called at his premises Sammy prudently went peacefully with them. Toward other people, however, he was inclined to become physically violent when provoked, a habit to which his possession of a pair of knuckle-dusters testifies (item 55, Table 13). As with other alcoholics, his moods reflected the level of alcohol in his bloodstream. He was quiet when sober, but, as one informant put it: "He had a bad temper when drunk and he was invariably drunk." Then he shouted and at times became violent. His wife, Maggie, bore the brunt of his frequent outbursts, not, it would seem, for any specific offenses on her part, but because she was available to receive the discharge of his anger.

At such times a flood of obscenities gave additional emphasis to his anger. After scolding Maggie with invective, he sometimes proceeded to physical blows. Her diminutive stature and pacific nature made Maggie an unequal combatant in these frays, and she adopted the policy of leaving the house and walking down the road. Sometimes Sammy chased after her. Since in fact he rather rarely caught and beat her, she was escaping from one danger into a greater one. For it happens that the village road in that part of Gorakana is also the main highway between Colombo and Galle. But the drivers of trucks and buses think of it only in the latter sense and they hurtle their vehicles along the road with lethal velocity. As we shall see, one of them accounted for Sammy Fernando.

Sammy gave his daughter, Nandanie, the necessities she required but, it seems, never allotted her much affection or extra money. In contrast, he gave money rather liberally to his nieces, notably Kusuma Dabare, his favorite among them. After drinking, he would sometimes go around to his parents' house, where Kusuma was living, and ask for cooked food, which she would prepare. Since he visited his parents' home two or three times a week, he enjoyed some of the pleasures of two ménages.

Sammy was fond of children and generous to them and other persons, especially those in need. He gave to the poor and to bhikkhus, who belong to the poor by choice. He was so generous that at the time of his death

(according to his brother-in-law, Martin Alwis) he owned nothing of value but a ring and a belt (objects that figured in Sujith's recognitions; see items 53 and 54, Table 13) and two rupees. Martin Alwis did not include Sammy's knuckle-duster (item 55) in this inventory, perhaps because it had been on loan.

Despite the inevitable uncertainties of his income Sammy maintained himself in good clothes. He particularly liked to wear expensive shirts made of synthetic fiber ("Terrylene") with his sarongs. He had the habit of tying his sarong below the navel. (Most Sinhalese men who wear a sarong tie it above the navel, but many tie it below, as I found in my own informal observations of these variations in style.) He used to keep some money in the knot of his sarong and sometimes lost it from its loose retention there. He indulged himself in some other ways also, such as by smoking cigarettes instead of the cheap *bidis* which are all that the poorer consumers of tobacco can afford. Of the two major brands of cigarettes made in Sri Lanka he preferred Three Roses but condescended to smoke Four Aces also.

In matters of diet his preferences accorded with the habits of arrack drinkers. He relished hot spiced foods such as a preparation called *wade*, composed of dhal, chilies, and coconut oil. He also ate manioc, a type of yam much appreciated by drinkers of arrack. He enjoyed very hot curries and ate fish and meat.

Sammy Fernando was a skilled dancer and played both the rabana, a type of drum commonly used in Sri Lanka, and a much larger type of drum, a specimen of which was shown to me—actually the very one Sammy had played. He also played the Japanese mandolin and sang well.

He was generally indifferent to the outward forms of religion and in later life went to temples only under pressure. But his well-known generosity to other people showed a harmony with at least some of the precepts of his formal religion.

Sammy's death occurred on a day that seemed at first to be like every other one. He came home drunk as usual and began quarreling with Maggie. And as usual she set off down the road and he followed her. He was accompanied by his brother-in-law, Martin Alwis, and they stopped at a boutique to buy some cigarettes. Martin Alwis' attention was distracted by his purchase and he heard the sound but did not see the action of Sammy Fernando being struck by a lorry. In his drunken state Sammy had stepped onto the highway and had been knocked down by the lorry, which sped on. Martin Alwis took his brother-in-law to a hospital, where he died one or two hours later.

The accident and death of Sammy Fernando occurred on January 29, 1969, a date I verified in the records at the District Police Office in Panadura, south of Gorakana. He was just fifty years old. A large crowd attended his funeral, a fact which in a village of Sri Lanka indicates the popularity of the deceased as much as his eminence. Moreover, the poor, whom he had befriended, contributed so freely toward the cost of his funeral that his own family did not have to spend a rupee on it.

Statements and Recognitions Made by Sujith

We can be much more confident in this case than in most others that nearly all the statements attributed to Sujith (which I have listed in Table 13) really were made before the two families concerned met. Sixteen of the statements (asterisked in Table 13) were recorded in writing by the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana before he made any verifications. Many others are found in the written statements recorded by E. C. Raddalgoda from the main informants of Sujith's family in July 1972. (In March 1973, I reviewed with C. Piyaseelie Mendis the items of the statement she had given E. C. Raddalgoda the previous July, and she affirmed that they had all been stated by Sujith before he was taken to Gorakana.) The preceding remarks cover all the statements of items 1 to 35. Some doubt exists about how much Sujith said concerning the death of Sammy Fernando before the two families met. In the statement E. C. Raddalgoda recorded on July 9, 1972, Sujith's grandmother said Sujith had referred to a quarrel with Maggie as preceding the death of Sammy when he was struck by a lorry. However, in an interview on March 22, 1973, she said that prior to Maggie's first visit, of which I shall give a detailed report from the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana's notes later, Sujith had said only that he had gone to buy cigarettes and had been struck by a lorry.

The Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana's written statement (given to E. C. Raddalgoda in August 1972) contained some additional items which he had not written down before he began his verifications in Gorakana.

In Table 13 I have grouped the statements according to their topics to make them easier to understand. I have listed the recognitions according to my understanding of the time and place of their occurrence, although I am uncertain about the exact sequence of recognitions made by Sujith of persons from Gorakana who came to visit him in April 1972 and thereafter. (The informants sometimes gave discrepant statements about the chronology of these meetings with Sujith.)

An unexplained oddity of Sujith's statements is his failure to refer to Sammy Fernando's mother before he went to Gorakana. This contrasted with his frequent references to Jamis, Sammy's father. I naturally thought that Sammy had perhaps liked his father more than his mother. I obtained no confirmation of this conjecture from Maggie Alwis, who said that her husband had liked both his parents equally. It would have been impolite as well as futile to ask Lucia Silva, Sammy's mother, a direct question on this topic.

Sujith appears to have made an error in addressing Maggilin ("Maggie") Alwis directly as Maggie, which she told me Sammy had not done.⁴ When he was sober, she said, he addressed her bluntly as "Eh," meaning approximately "Hey, you!" And when he was drunk he called her "Lockie," a collo-

⁴ But the previous year she had told the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana that her husband had "always" called her Maggie. (See the extract quoted later from his notes.) I cannot explain the discrepancy between what she said on this matter on two occasions. Godwin Samararatne made an effort in the summer of 1974 to resolve it, but failed. In general, Maggilin Alwis' testimony seemed reliable and free of major discordances with what other informants said.

quial derivative of *loku* (meaning "older"); as Maggie was in fact older than Sammy, this expression salted her wounds. Maggie Alwis told me that Sammy referred to her as "my wife" when he spoke about her to other persons. But Sammy's mother, W. Lucia Silva, said that when he talked to her about Maggie he called her Maggie and sometimes Maggio, names Sujith had used.

Sujith made a considerable number of recognitions, but I have found the evidence of paranormal knowledge concerning them of uneven quality. Many of them occurred with a group—and sometimes a crowd—of other people around, and under these circumstances one cannot be confident that no cues were given to him. On the other hand, in all but one instance I myself interviewed the person Sujith was said (by that person and other informants) to have recognized. And contrary to my experience in some other cases, I found the testimony concerning Sujith's recognitions of people remarkably consistent, apart from variations in details. Moreover, Sujith's reported remarks on at least two of these occasions were so unusual as not likely to have been suggested in any way.

I have not listed in Table 13 the first recognition test given Sujith because it had indefinite results; but it deserves brief mention here. From one of his first visits to Gorakana (before Sujith had gone there) the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana brought back to Mt. Lavinia a group photograph that included Jamis Fernando, Sammy Fernando's father. He showed the photograph to Sujith, who put his finger on Jamis Fernando but said nothing. I saw a copy of this photograph (which showed the bad right eye of Jamis Fernando) and believe it is a copy of the one later shown to Sujith at Gorakana (item 48, Table 13). M. Chandradasa Fernando was also a witness of this episode.

Although Sujith satisfied many of the informants by the quality of his recognitions, he failed some tests to which he was put. He was unable to recognize in Gorakana the road to the house of Jamis Fernando. And he did not identify a *kris* (long dagger) that had belonged to Sammy Fernando. Sujith also did not give the name of Sammy Fernando's brother-in-law, Martin Alwis, although he recognized him indirectly by inviting him to have a drink in the Moratuwa tavern, a favorite drinking place of Sammy Fernando where Martin Alwis had drunk with him.

In his statements about Gorakana, Sujith evidently confused (or his listeners could not distinguish) details of the house Sammy Fernando's parents lived in and details of the house Sammy and his wife, Maggie, lived in. Thus he referred to the tiled roof of the former, and the lavatory, king coconut tree, and well of the latter. Both houses had a well at the rear, and both had had king coconut trees. But at the house of Sammy Fernando and Maggie the king coconut tree was near the well, whereas at his parents' house the king coconut tree was at the other side of the house in front of the main entrance. So I believe items 25 and 26 of Table 13 refer to the house where Sammy and Maggie had lived. Remembering that Sammy Fernando often visited his parents' house after his marriage, we should feel no surprise that details of the two houses and compounds became somewhat mixed in Sujith's statements.

TABLE 13. Summary of Statements and Recognitions Made by Sujith

Item	Informants	Verification	Comments
1. He was from Gorakana. *	<p>Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana, monk of Sri Sumanaramaya Temple Nandanie Sunethari, Sujith's mother C. Piyaseelie Mendis, Sujith's maternal grandmother</p>	<p>Maggilin ("Maggie") Alwis, Sammy Fernando's widow</p>	<p>To the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana, Sujith said directly that "he" was from Gorakana. To his mother and grandmother, however, he indicated this only indirectly by expressing a desire to go there and mentioning persons, such as his (previous) father, Jamis, who were there. He also referred to himself as "Gorakana Sammy."</p>
2. His name was Sammy.	<p>Nandanie Sunethari C. Piyaseelie Mendis K. Karunakeran, neighbor of C. Piyaseelie Mendis</p>		<p>Sujith sometimes called himself "Gorakana Sammy," one of the names by which Sammy Fernando was known.</p>
3. He lived in the "Gorakawatte" section of Gorakana.*	<p>Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana Ven. G. Gnanaratana, Sujith's maternal great-uncle</p>	<p>Milton Fernando, Sammy Fernando's younger brother</p>	<p>Ven. G. Gnanaratana said Sujith had given the name of the district as "Gorakagahawatte," which is insignificantly different from the name spelled out to me in Gorakana: "Gorakaghawatte." The area of Gorakana where Sammy Fernando's parents had lived had formerly been known by this name, but in 1973 the district had a quite different name: Ampityawatte.</p>
4. Jamis was his father. *	<p>Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana C. Piyaseelie Mendis</p>	<p>W. Lucia Silva, B. Jamis Fernando's widow and Sammy Fernando's mother</p>	<p><i>Jamis</i> is a variant of the English name <i>James</i> used by the Sinhalese.</p>

5. Jamis did not have one eye. *
 Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana
 C. Piyaseelie Mendis
6. He traveled by bus and by train. *
 W. Lucia Silva
7. He [?] had fallen down and become lame. *
 Milton Fernando
- By gesturing, Sujith indicated that Jamis' right eye was the defective one.
 W. Lucia Silva
 I could also see some abnormality (an opacity) of the right eye in a photograph of Jamis Fernando that was shown to me.
- Sammy Fernando took a bus to work when he was employed in the railway service.
 W. Lucia Silva
- When Sujith attempted to communicate the idea of this item to the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana, he said the single word *fall* and then gave an imitation of a person walking with difficulty and using a cane. The Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana did not know to whom Sujith might be referring in this way and thought the injured person might have been Jamis Fernando, Sammy's father, since Sujith had been speaking about Jamis earlier. He assumed the fall was from a train because Sujith had just been talking of trains.
 Nandanie Sunethari remembered Sujith as saying that one of Sammy Fernando's younger brothers, Milton, had fallen from a train and had injured his foot near the ankle.

NOTE: Statements recorded in writing by the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana before he had verified any of Sujith's statements are indicated with an asterisk (*).

TABLE 13 (cont.)

Item	Informants	Verification	Comments
7. (cont.)			The facts to which this item evidently referred are as follows: One of Sammy Fernando's younger brothers, Milton, had fallen from a train and had injured his back rather badly. He was put in a cast and eventually recovered. When he began to walk again he was lame and had to use a cane for two months. This accident occurred about five years before Sammy Fernando's death.
8. He had attended the "dilapidated school." *	Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana Ven. G. Gnanaratana C. Piyaseelie Mendis	W. Lucia Silva	The school Sammy Fernando had attended had in fact been in poor condition and had been known as <i>kabal iskole</i> , which means literally "dilapidated school."
9. Francis was his teacher. *	Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana Ven. G. Gnanaratana C. Piyaseelie Mendis	W. Lucia Silva	Sujith used the unusual but correct expression <i>Francis gurumase</i> in referring to the teacher.
10. He gave money to Kusuma. *	Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana	Kusuma Dabare, Sammy Fernando's niece	
11. Kusuma was at Gorakana.	Nandanie Sunethari C. Piyaseelie Mendis	Kusuma Dabare	Kusuma Dabare had grown up in her grandparents' house but was living in another house in Gorakana when I met her in 1973.

12. Kusuma was his younger sister's daughter.
 C. Piyaseelie Mendis
 Kusuma Dabare
 Kusuma Dabare was the daughter of Kamalawathie (one of Sammy Fernando's younger sisters) and Juanis Dabare.
13. Kusuma's hair was very long and thick.
 C. Piyaseelie Mendis
 When I met Kusuma Dabare her hair was still very long and luxuriant.
 Kusuma Dabare
14. Kusuma prepared string hoppers for him. *
 Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana
 Hoppers have a starchy root from which a flour is derived. This can be made into a paste and baked in the form of a small pancake. Or the paste can be pressed through a type of sieve and steamed to make "string hoppers."
15. He gave money to the Kale Pansala. *
 Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana
 Ven. Kapugama Dhamminda, monk of Sri Dharmarashitarāmaya Temple (formerly Kale Pansala) in Gorakana
 Sujith indicated this item indirectly. He asked his grandmother to give him money so that he and Kusuma could put it in the alms box at the Kale Pansala. One of the temples in Gorakana, now known as Dharmarashitarāmaya Temple, was until about 1910 known as Kale Pansala (Forest Temple). Older people of the community still referred to it by the former name. It was no longer (in 1973) in the jungle, but close to the village of Gorakana. Sammy Fernando had spent most of his time there when he was a child. It is only about 100 meters from his father's house.
16. There were two monks at the Kale Pansala. *
 Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana
 Ven. Kapugama Dhamminda
 Ven. Taldena Amithasara,
 I met both these monks at the Sri Dharmarashitarāmaya Temple

TABLE 13 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
16. (cont.)	C. Piyaseelie Mendis	monk of Sri Dharmarakshitar ramaya Temple	(formerly Kale Pansala) in Gorakana. When the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana asked Sujith how many monks there were at the Kale Pansala, he held up two fingers. In 1973 the temple still had only the two monks whom I met. Both had been there during the time of Sammy Fernando.
17. One of the monks there was called Amitha.*	Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana C. Piyaseelie Mendis	Ven. Taldena Amithasara	
18. His wife was called Maggie.	Nandanie Sunethari	Maggilin Alwis	Maggilin Alwis was commonly known as Maggie.
19. He had a daughter called Nandanie.	Nandanie Sunethari	Nandanie Fernando, Sammy Fernando's daughter	
20. He lived in a house with a tiled roof.	Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana	The roof of Jamis Fernando's house was tiled, as I saw myself in 1973.	Sujith stated this item before verifications were made, but it was not included in the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana's written notes dated up to March 14, 1972.
21. He bathed in cool water.*	Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana C. Piyaseelie Mendis	Martin Alwis, Sammy Fernando's brother-in-law Wijedasa Alwis, Sammy Fernando's nephew by marriage I saw the well at Sammy Fernando's house in Gorakana.	Tap water from a municipal supply was available in Mt. Lavinia. Such water is usually warm and certainly much warmer than the water of most village wells.

22. He bathed in the well.
C. Piyaseelie Mendis
Martin Alwis
Wijedasa Alwis
This statement adds little, since most (but not all) wells in villages are used for drinking and household water, and also for bathing.
23. The lavatory was beside the boundary. *
Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana
Martin Alwis
Wijedasa Alwis
The site of the former lavatory beside the fence along the property line at Sammy Fernando's house was pointed out to me in 1973.
24. His house was white-washed. *
Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana
In 1973 I saw that the exterior walls of Jamis Fernando's house had a cream-colored wash.
The word *sudu* (used in the Sinhalese notes of Sujith's statements) is ambiguously applied to objects (including people) that are called white, fair, or light in English. A cream-colored wash could therefore be described as *sudu*. According to Denny Fernando, Sammy's brother, the walls of the house had been partly white and partly cream-colored during Sammy's lifetime.
25. There was a king coconut tree near the well at his house.
C. Piyaseelie Mendis
I was shown the site behind Sammy Fernando's house where a king coconut tree had formerly stood.
The tree had been about 20 meters from the wall.
26. The well and king coconut tree were behind the house.
C. Piyaseelie Mendis
The well and the former site of the king coconut tree were shown to me behind the house of Sammy Fernando.
27. He could approach his house along a jungle footpath.
Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana
I saw that this was true both for Sammy Fernando's house and for that of his parents.
Sujith did not make clear which of the two houses he was referring to. I would suppose, however, that it was more important for Sammy Fernando to approach the house

TABLE 13 (*cont.*)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
27. (<i>cont.</i>)			where he made illicit arrack quietly in order to avoid being surprised by the police if, when he returned, they were already at his house; therefore, the route through the jungle at his own house would probably have been more memorable to him.
28. He smoked Four Aces cigarettes.	C. Piyaseelie Mendis	Martin Alwis	Sujith implied rather than stated this item by asking persons going to a boutique to bring him Four Aces cigarettes.
29. He ate bread and fish curry for breakfast.	Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana	Maggilin Alwis	Not a very specific detail; many Sinhalese have such a breakfast, although less prosperous villagers could not often afford food of this type.
30. He worked for the railways.	C. Piyaseelie Mendis	W. Lucia Silva	When asked what he had done (as work) in the previous life, Sujith imitated the noise of a railway engine. I am not sure that he ever put this phrase (railway engine) into words, but his grandmother understood him to communicate by these engine-like sounds that he had worked for the railways. The Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana heard Sujith making these sounds and said they resembled "kus-kus," an imitation of the noise made by a railway engine's escaping steam.

Sammy Fernando had not worked on the railways since the age of about twenty-five, thus about twenty-five years before his death.

31. He had climbed Adam's Peak.

Ven. Wattarappola
Nandaratana

Martin Alwis

Sujith made this remark after his visit to Gorakana. He said he (in the previous life) had found it cold at Adam's Peak, and he gestured to show the action of shivering. Sammy Fernando went there when approximately forty-five years old, about five years before his death. Martin Alwis accompanied him. Adam's Peak, also known as Sri Pada, is a high mountain of central Sri Lanka said to have been visited by the Buddha. It is an important site of pilgrimages.

32. He transported arrack in a boat.

C. Piyaseelie Mendis

Maggilin Alwis

Sammy Fernando could dock his boat for transporting arrack conveniently behind his house.

33. Once the boat carrying arrack sank in the river and all the arrack was lost.

C. Piyaseelie Mendis

Maggilin Alwis

This accident occurred about eight years before Sammy Fernando's death.

34. Afterward he traded in arrack again.

C. Piyaseelie Mendis

Maggilin Alwis

35. One day he quarreled with Maggie after drinking.

C. Piyaseelie Mendis

Maggilin Alwis
Martin Alwis

This and the next four items are from Sujith's description of how Sammy Fernando died.

TABLE 13 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
36. She left the house and went down the road.	Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana	Maggilin Alwis Martin Alwis	Sujith did not make this statement until the occasion of Maggie Alwis' first visit to him in Mt. Lavinia.
37. He went to a boutique for cigarettes.	C. Piyaseelie Mendis	Martin Alwis	Sujith sometimes said that Sammy went to buy bidis, sometimes that he went to buy cigarettes. Martin Alwis said that on this occasion Sammy Fernando had bought bidis, but he (Martin) had bought cigarettes.
38. A lorry ran over him when he was crossing the road.	C. Piyaseelie Mendis	Police records of Panadura Police Station Martin Alwis	Many of the boutiques in Southeast Asia are built extremely close to the roads, including main highways. Given the speed with which motor vehicles race down the highways, a drunken man stepping out of such a boutique onto the road has little chance of survival.
39. He died immediately.	C. Piyaseelie Mendis	Incorrect	After the lorry struck Sammy Fernando, Martin Alwis stopped a car and had him transported to a hospital in Panadura. He died there one or two hours after his admission, and thus <i>not</i> immediately. Sujith claimed to remember the position of Sammy Fernando's body after the lorry struck him. He imitated the position by lying on his back with one arm spread

out. Martin Alwis said that Sammy Fernando *was* lying on his back right after being struck by the lorry.

This occurred at Sujith's home in Mt. Lavinia. Kusuma Dabare was the first member of Sammy Fernando's family to learn about the case and the first to be recognized by Sujith. At Kusuma's first visit to him she came with ten other persons. Sujith became frightened and he said nothing. She then came again on the following day with her father and three other persons. This time Sujith called her by name and clapped his hands with joy on seeing her. Kusuma thought no one in Sujith's family knew who she was, but they could have easily informed themselves about her identity during or after her first visit and most probably did so. The Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana was not an eyewitness of Sujith's recognition of Kusuma, but reached the house soon afterward.

This recognition occurred on the same occasion as that of the preceding item. Sujith gave the name Kithsiri. His identity was unknown at the time, at least to the Ven. Wattarappola Nandara-

40. Recognition of Kusuma Dabare, Sammy Fernando's niece

C. Piyaseelie Mendis
Kusuma Dabare
Ven. Wattarappola
Nandaratana

41. Recognition of Kithsiri, Sammy Fernando's nephew

Ven. Wattarappola
Nandaratana

TABLE 13 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
41. (cont.)			<p>tana, who had to ask Kithsiri to confirm the correctness of what Sujith had said. Since the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana said he had not been a witness of Sujith's recognition of Kusuma Dabare, he must have reached the house after it and before the recognition of Kithsiri. I did not myself meet Kithsiri.</p>
42. Recognition of Sumana Dabare, Sammy Fernando's niece	<p>Sumana Dabare, Sammy Fernando's niece</p>		<p>Sumana Dabare, Kusuma's sister, went to visit Sujith in Mt. Lavinia and asked him if he knew her. He said: "Yes. When you were small I fondled you." He did not give her name.</p>
43. Recognition of Maggilin Alwis, Sammy Fernando's wife	<p>C. Piyaseelie Mendis Maggilin Alwis Nandanie Sunethari Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana</p>		<p>Maggilin Alwis came with other visitors from Gorakana to visit Sujith at Mt. Lavinia. The Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana had carefully instructed her not to tell Sujith's family who she was, but she seems to have ignored or forgotten his instructions. She said that she told Sujith's family who she was when she arrived. Sujith was present and probably heard her. Later Sujith began addressing Maggilin Alwis as "Maggio." No one had asked him to recognize her. He also at other times during the same visit called her both</p>

“Maggilin” and “Maggie.” From Nandanie Sunethari’s account of this meeting she apparently did not know or had forgotten that Maggilin Alwis introduced herself to the family when she arrived. This introduction was also not mentioned by C. Piyaseelie Mendis, but she was not asked about this specifically. I think we must assume, however, that Sujith could have heard Maggilin Alwis say who she was when she arrived at the house. This reduces the significance of the episode, leaving the only point of importance the fact that Sujith addressed this middle-aged and strange woman by such familiar terms as “Maggio” and “Maggie.” (See text for further details of what transpired at this meeting.)

44. Recognition of changes made in the road and fences near the Fernando property in Gorakana

W. Lucia Silva

This recognition (and those of the following items) took place at the home of Jamis Fernando and W. Lucia Silva in Gorakana. Sujith commented correctly that the road had been moved and fences put up that were not there in Sammy Fernando’s lifetime.

45. Recognition that an *ateria* tree had been re-moved from the compound

W. Lucia Silva

When Sujith visited this house he went to the place where an *ateria* tree had been during Sammy Fernando’s lifetime and said: “Where is the tree that was here?”

TABLE 13 (*cont.*)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
45. (<i>cont.</i>)			He did not call the tree by its name: <i>ateria</i> . I was shown the place in the compound where the tree had stood previously.
46. Recognition of W. Lucia Silva, Sammy Fernando's mother	W. Lucia Silva		Sujith addressed W. Lucia Silva as "Luciamma," which was <i>not</i> the style of address used by Sammy Fernando. He had called his mother just "amma." Evidently Sujith used the term to distinguish his mother, Nandanie Sunethari, from Sammy's mother, W. Lucia Silva. Sujith had not spoken W. Lucia Silva's name before he went to Gorakana.
47. Recognition of Sammy Fernando's drum	W. Lucia Silva		Sujith asked for the drum. It was brought from elsewhere. Sujith said it was his. It was too long for him to reach both ends with his hands. (It was shown to me in 1973 and I judged it about a meter in length, far too large for a small boy.) So he sat on it and beat one end of it.
48. Recognition of Jamis Fernando, Sammy Fernando's father, in a group photograph	W. Lucia Silva		In Gorakana, Sujith was shown a group photograph of I do not know how many persons. No one asked him to recognize anyone in it, although this was obviously the point of showing it to him. He spontaneously said: "Jamis tatha" ("Father Jamis") and indicated

Jamis Fernando with his finger. But Sujith had almost certainly already seen another copy of the same group photograph which the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana had brought to Mt. Lavinia from one of his first trips to Gorakana. (See text for further details of this first possible recognition of a photograph of Jamis Fernando.) The Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana said that Sujith, when he saw (in Gorakana) a *single* photograph of Jamis, said nothing but kissed it affectionately. M. Chandradasa Fernando, who accompanied Sujith and the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana to Gorakana, also said Sujith kissed a photograph showing Jamis Fernando alone. Apparently Sujith was shown two photographs at Gorakana.

The building in question (which I saw in 1973) consisted of a roof supported by an open frame. It was in the compound of the Jamis Fernando home in Gorakana. When Sujith saw it, he said: "This is where I danced." Sammy Fernando had danced there.

When B. Gunawathie Fernando heard that Sujith had been brought to Gorakana, she went to the Fernando house. When she got there, people pointed to her and

49. Recognition of the dance shelter at the house in Gorakana

W. Lucia Silva

50. Recognition of B. Gunawathie Fernando, Sammy Fernando, Sammy Fernando's younger sister

B. Gunawathie Fernando, Sammy Fernando's younger sister

TABLE 13 (cont.)

Item	Informants	Verification	Comments
50. (cont.)			<p>asked: "Who is this?" Sujith replied: "Nangi" ("Younger sister"). B. Gunawathie Fernando did not think anyone had guided this response. Sujith did not give her name.</p>
51. Recognition of W. Edmund Soysa, Sammy Fernando's brother-in-law	<p>W. Edmund Soysa, Sammy Fernando's brother-in-law B. Gunawathie Fernando</p>		<p>This recognition took place at the temple (Kale Pansala) in Gorakana during Sujith's visit there. W. Edmund Soysa remembered Sujith as going up to him and saying: "Machang, how is your leg?" (<i>Machang</i> means "brother-in-law," and so Sujith gave the correct relationship of W. Edmund Soysa to Sammy Fernando.) W. Edmund Soysa's wife, B. Gunawathie Fernando, recalled hearing Sujith say to her husband: "I see that your toes are still not cured. Why not get some medicine?" W. Edmund Soysa had had one (big) toe amputated consequent to an injury.</p>
			<p>In the temple where Sujith made this remark he had no footwear on, and so Sujith could easily see that he had lost a toe. The significance of the remark lies therefore in the familiarity he showed toward an older, strange man. Later, W. Edmund Soysa and his wife visited Sujith in Mt. Lavinia, and on this occasion he again addressed W. Edmund Soysa as "machang."</p>

52. Recognition of Sammy
Fernando's chair

M. Chandradasa Fernando,
friend of the Ven. Wattar-
appola Nandaratanana
Wijedasa Alwis
Nandanie Fernando

When Sujith reached Sammy
Fernando's house on the Colombo-
Galle highway at Gorakana, he
saw a particular chair that Sammy
Fernando had used. He did not say
anything, but went and sat on it
with his legs tucked up somewhat
in the manner of a man who was
drinking or drunk.
I was shown this chair in 1973.

53. Recognition of Sammy
Fernando's ring

Martin Alwis
Ven. Wattarappola
Nandaratanana

This and the following item
occurred at Sammy Fernando's
house. When Martin Alwis showed
Sujith this ring he said it was his,
took it, tried it on, and said it was
too large.

54. Recognition of Sammy
Fernando's belt

Martin Alwis
Ven. Wattarappola
Nandaratanana

Martin Alwis had the belt around
his shoulder. Sujith took it also
and said it was his. He tried it on
and commented that it was too
large for him. In 1973 I was shown
both the ring and the belt of this
and the preceding items.

55. Recognition of Sammy
Fernando's knuckle-duster

Ven. Wattarappola
Nandaratanana

Someone showed Sujith a knuckle-
duster that had belonged to
Sammy Fernando. Sujith said it
was his.

56. Recognition of Anula-
wathie Fonseka, Sammy
Fernando's youngest sister

Anulawathie Fonseka,
Sammy Fernando's youngest
sister

Victor Fonseka, Anulawathie's
husband, who accompanied her to
Sujith's house, supplemented and
corrected her memory of their
two visits to see Sujith. They went
there after hearing about the case
from persons in Gorakana. On the

TABLE 13 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
56. (cont.)			<p>first occasion Sujith just looked at Anulawathie and said nothing. They then identified themselves to the adults of Sujith's family and left. They returned some time later, and on this second occasion a member of Sujith's family asked him if Anulawathie's daughter, who had accompanied them, was his "nangi" ("younger sister"), but he said no and pointed instead to Anulawathie. Anulawathie weakened this recognition by telling Sujith's family who she was at the end of her first visit.</p>
57. Recognition of W. D. Princie Weerakody, distant relative of Sammy Fernando	<p>W. D. Princie Weerakody, distant relative of Sammy Fernando C. Piyaseelie Mendis L. C. Wijesekera, friend of B. Gunawathie Fernando</p>		<p>When W. D. Princie Weerakody went to Sujith's house a large crowd was assembled there. She stood outside the house, but Sujith somehow noticed her and said: "Come in. Come in." His mother then invited her to enter the house and she did so. Another (adult) visitor gave Sujith a lottery ticket which he turned over to Princie, saying at the time: "Princie." C. Piyaseelie Mendis' account of this episode accorded with that of W. D. Princie Weerakody, although she remembered Sujith saying, as he gave her the lottery ticket: "You are Princie," and not just: "Princie." L. C. Wijesekera did not notice</p>

Sujith giving Prinnie a lottery ticket, but he did remember Sujith saying: "You are Prinnie." It appears that Sujith had some doubts about his recognition; as Prinnie was leaving he asked quizzically: "Aren't you Prinnie?"

W. D. Prinnie Weerakody had gone to Mt. Lavinia accompanied by an aunt, and quite unannounced. She was convinced that no one at Sujith's house knew she was from Gorakana until Sujith mentioned her name.

58. Recognition of B. Sunil Fernando, Sammy Fernando's son

Nandanie Sunethari
B. Sunil Fernando, Sammy Fernando's son

B. Sunil Fernando was an illegitimate son of Sammy Fernando, not Maggilin Alwis' son. When he came to Mt. Lavinia to meet Sujith, Sujith did not at first recognize him. But after about fifteen minutes, as Sunil was leaving, Sujith addressed him, saying: "Come here, Sunil." Sunil had not introduced himself and was a complete stranger to Sujith's family. He said that Sujith's recognition of him gave him "a terrible shock" and that he had gooseflesh.

59. Recognition of W. Wilson Perera ("Martin Kandy"), Sammy Fernando's second cousin

W. Wilson Perera ("Martin of Kandy"), Sammy Fernando's second cousin

W. Wilson Perera was a second cousin and old friend of Sammy Fernando. He was about fifteen years older than Sammy. "Martin" was his pet name, and because he had lived in Kandy for many

TABLE 13 (cont.)

Item	Informants	Verification	Comments
59. (cont.)			<p>years he came to be known in Gorakana as "Martin of Kandy." He said that he went to Sujith's house with Anulawathie Fonseka (who had already met Sujith) and a younger brother. As he and Anulawathie Fonseka entered the house of Sujith's family, Anulawathie asked Sujith who "Martin of Kandy" was. Sujith immediately replied "Martin bappa." <i>Bappa</i> strictly means a paternal uncle, the father's younger brother, but it may be applied loosely to any older male relative. "Martin of Kandy" promptly rewarded Sujith with some toffees he had brought. Victor Fonseka described a recognition of "Martin of Kandy" by Sujith, but I am not sure he was referring to the same occasion as that W. Wilson Perera described. The latter had not mentioned Victor Fonseka as being with him when Sujith recognized him.</p>

Sujith knew at least two names of places that were no longer current in Gorakana, but that had been formerly used and were still known to elderly persons of the village. These were the name Kale Pansala (item 15, Table 13) for the Dharmarakshitaramaya Temple and the name "Gorakawatte" (really Gorakaghahawatte) for the part of the village where Sammy Fernando's parents lived (item 3, Table 13).

Sujith used an unusual phrase when he spoke of Sammy Fernando's schoolteacher as "Francis gurunnanse," which means in English "Francis teacher" or "Francis master." The practice of using part of a teacher's name with the title *gurunnanse* is uncommon in Sri Lanka at present; but the appellation was quite correct for Sammy Fernando's teacher.

Readers of these case reports will notice that the subject's statements tend to cluster around the events of the last part, often just the last year or last month, of the previous personality's life. But occasionally the memories reach far back to some event that occurred many years before the previous personality's death. Sujith provided examples of such a wide temporal range of the events he was seeming to remember. On the one hand, he had details correct about the death of Sammy Fernando. But he also talked about Sammy Fernando's school and named a schoolteacher correctly. He indicated Sammy Fernando's work on the railways, although Sammy had been discharged from the railway service about twenty-five years before his death. Sujith also referred to the sinking of a boat laden with arrack (which occurred eight years before Sammy's death) and to the accident when Sammy's brother Milton Fernando fell off a train (which occurred five years before his [Sammy Fernando's] death).⁵

Sujith's Behavior Related to the Previous Life

Circumstances and Manner of Sujith's Speaking about the Previous Life. Sujith did not seem to talk about the previous life at one particular time of day more than any other. He was observed, however, sometimes to talk about it immediately after awakening from sleeping. For example, one night he woke up everyone in the house and said: "Do you know that I was run over by a lorry and that is how I died?" He then went back to sleep, apparently without waiting for their reply. On another occasion, he woke the family up and said he wanted to go to Gorakana. Then he went back to sleep again.⁶

Sujith talked a great deal about the previous life; in mere volume of utterances (many of them repeated often) he perhaps said as much as any subject of these cases about the previous life. He punctuated his remarks with requests—demands virtually—to be taken to Gorakana. A neighbor (K. Karunakeran) heard him say one day: "This is not my home and I wish to go

⁵ For other examples of subjects who remembered events occurring many years before the death of the related previous personality, see the cases of Kumkum Verma (in the first volume of this series) and Lalitha Abeyawardena (this volume).

⁶ For other instances of subjects who seem to relive events of the previous life during sleep, see the cases of Prakash Varshnay (I. Stevenson, 1974. *Twenty cases*) and Suleyman Andary (the next volume of this series).

to Gorakana." And on another occasion she had observed Sujith waving at a car (that was not a taxi) and saying: "Stop the taxi. I want to go to Gorakana."

Since Sujith began to talk about the previous life at a very young age, he did not have the verbal and grammatical equipment to express all his memories clearly. He mispronounced some words. For example, when he was first speaking, he said "Golakana" instead of "Gorakana" and "lollia" instead of "lorry."⁷ Some other words were supplemented with gestures, as when he indicated the number two by holding up two fingers. And when asked about his occupation in the previous life he imitated the sound of a railway engine to suggest that he had worked for the railways (item 30, Table 13). When trying to describe the person who had fallen and become lame, he imitated someone walking with a cane (item 7, Table 13).

Sujith frequently used the present tense in describing the situation at Gorakana. Thus he said: "Jamis *is* at Gorakana," "Kusuma's hair *is* very long," and so on. However, his use of the present tense (although a feature shown by many other subjects of these cases) should be interpreted with some caution because it is possible that at the age when he first spoke about the previous life, and even in March 1973, when I first met him, he was not yet able to distinguish past and present with regard to *any* events, not just those of the previous life. Indeed, some of Sujith's sentences recorded by the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana were as primitive as we should expect from a child of his age. At least two had no subjects, and the tendency of listeners and even translators to supply a subject from their own inferences led at first to some confusion. For example, Sujith said: "Went by bus got into train." He followed this by making what was taken for the sound of a train. He had not said who was the subject of this action, but it could later be understood that he was talking about the previous personality, who, during his employment in the railway service, used to take a bus to the place of his work. There he worked in engines and so "got into" trains (item 6, Table 13). Sujith also said the single word *fall* (also without a subject) and then imitated a lame person walking with a cane (item 7, Table 13).⁸ Although Sujith had not given a subject for this event, it was thought that he was referring to Jamis Fernando, Sammy Fernando's father. And although he had not said from where the person had fallen, it was again assumed (this time correctly) from the context that the fall had been from a train. (I even went to Gorakana myself with

⁷ The Sinhalese have assimilated the English word *lorry* into their language, but pronounce it *lorria*. Therefore, Sujith's error was only in the difficulty he had in sounding *r*.

⁸ In some other cases of this type informants have reported the subjects' use of gestures and other actions to supplement imperfectly developed speech. See, for other examples, the cases of Imad Elawar (I. Stevenson, 1974. *Twenty cases*), Kumkum Verma (in the first volume of this series), and Ruby Kusuma Silva (this volume). A. R. Luria and F. I. Yudovich (1959. *Speech and the development of mental processes in the child*. Trans. O. Kovasc and J. Simon. London: Staples Press) found such synpraxic speech unusually prominent in a pair of twins with retarded development of speech. They stated: "Amorphous speech, not excluded from direct activity, is proper to the normal child of one and a half to two years of age" (p. 77). I doubt if it is more common among the subjects of these cases than among other children of the same age. It may arise whenever remembered visual images are not associated with adequately denoting words.

the mistaken impression that I would learn that Jamis Fernando had fallen off a train. In fact, Sujith's mother had already said that he had identified Sammy Fernando's younger brother, Milton, as the person who had fallen off a train, but I had forgotten this.) When we found that not Jamis but Sammy's brother Milton had fallen from a train, we reexamined the original notes of the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana and found that Sujith had not said (to him at least) who had fallen or even (explicitly) that the fall had been from a train.

Despite his lack of development in grammatical speech, Sujith left no doubt that his images of Gorakana were of people and places as they had been during the lifetime of Sammy Fernando. He said, for example: "Jamis *is* at Gorakana," although Jamis Fernando had died in September 1970. And on another occasion he said: "When I start earning I will give . . . to Kusuma," as if Kusuma had been congealed in time and ready at that very moment for a visit from Sammy Fernando just as she had been five years earlier. This last quoted sentence did, however, show some awareness of Sujith's present situation (expressed in the qualifying phrase "When I start earning") that he somehow distinguished from the remembered past with Kusuma in it. On the other hand, he did not intend his felt generosity toward Kusuma to wait indefinitely, and when his mother enquired about why he was concealing various articles in the house he said he wanted to take them to Kusuma. Further evidence of Sujith's entrapment in the past occurred when he became annoyed over not being given some of the objects that had belonged to Sammy Fernando, such as the belt and ring that he had recognized in Gorakana.

When Sujith went to visit the house of Jamis Fernando in Gorakana he showed an awareness that a fence and road had been moved near the property. But of greater interest were his reactions to Sammy Fernando's parents. He addressed W. Lucia Silva as "Luciamma." Sammy Fernando had not called his mother by her first name but had addressed her as just "amma," the Sinhalese word for mother. W. Lucia Silva thought Sujith was trying to sort the two mothers out and did it by labeling her as "Luciamma." When Sujith got into the house he quickly discovered that Jamis Fernando was not in the assembled group. He then went all over the house looking for him and returned with the comment: "Jamis *tatha neh*," meaning "My father Jamis is not here." This was how he learned that Sammy Fernando's father had died.

In March 1973, Sujith's identification with the previous personality remained undiminished and his family said that up to that time there had been no falling off in his remarks about the previous life. When asked directly: "What is your name?" he replied: "Sammy." This was followed by a further exchange with the interpreter.

INTERPRETER: What did you drink? [Past tense used here.]

SUJITH: Arrack.

INTERPRETER: What did you do after drinking arrack?

SUJITH: I assaulted Maggie.
 INTERPRETER: Why did you assault Maggie?
 SUJITH: Because I was drunk.

This little conversation demonstrated the clarity of Sujith's memories, and also a degree of insight shown perhaps more often by children than by adult alcoholics.

A dramatic scene occurred on the occasion of the first visit to Sujith of Sammy Fernando's widow, Maggie Alwis. The Ven. Wattarappola Nandarātana was convinced that Sujith's family did not know the identity of Maggie Alwis when she came to Mt. Lavinia. He contrived the meeting with careful advance instructions to her as to how she should behave. Sujith's grandmother evidently thought that Sujith had recognized Maggie Alwis spontaneously. But she (Maggie Alwis) candidly told me she had introduced herself to the family when she arrived and in the presence of Sujith, who could well have overheard her. Knowing how easily arrangements for controlled recognitions can miscarry (see the report of the case of Faruq Faris Andary in the next volume of this series), I think we should accept her account and not regard Sujith's possible recognition of her as an important item bearing on the question of paranormal knowledge on his part. These considerations, however, do not detract from the significance of his familiar behavior toward this strange elderly lady whom he called by intimate names such as Maggie and Maggio. With this background I shall now quote directly (with slight editing) from the translation of the Ven. Wattarappola Nandarātana's statement furnished in August 1972, a few months after the event:

On April 3, 1972, Maggilin Alwis called at the child's house accompanied by a couple of other ladies of the same age group. For about twenty minutes the child did not speak. Thereafter he suddenly called out "Maggie" to one lady and said: "Maggie is going down the road." We enquired from the lady whether she was named correctly.⁹ She said that her late husband always called her Maggie, and that when he came home drunk and picked a quarrel with her, she always walked down the road. After this the child ran inside the house. During his absence I got all the visitors into a room unseen by the child and I myself remained on the veranda. The child came out after a few minutes and very excitedly started calling out: "Where is Maggilin? Where is Maggilin? Went to Gorakana. Went to Gorakana." He started running about in the house and dashed into the room where the ladies were. "I love you Maggie. I love you Maggie," he said to Maggilin. The lady started crying and embraced the child lovingly. Then the child said: "Look what you did to me. Look what you did to me." We enquired of her what this meant. She explained that on the day Sammy Fernando met his death, he came home roaring drunk and started to quarrel with her. She fled down the road and he started chasing her and was knocked down by a lorry.

⁹ Since the Ven. Wattarappola Nandarātana already knew the identity of Maggilin Alwis, his question was evidently intended partly for the benefit of others present who did not know her and partly perhaps to clarify for himself whether her husband had in fact addressed her as Maggie. See also n. 4 above for discussion of discrepancy in Maggilin Alwis' statements about the names by which her husband had addressed her.

Later when the party, along with Maggilin, were leaving [to return] to Gorakana, the child became restive and wanted to go along with them.

In October 1973, Sujith was still talking about the previous life with apparently undiminished vigor and his mother did not think he had lost any of his memories of it. However, although when younger he had asked to be called Sammy, by October 1973, he was accepting Sujith as his name.

Sujith's Habits of Food and Drink. Sujith often asked for arrack and when someone was known to be going to a boutique he would commission him to bring arrack and Four Aces cigarettes for him. When given something to drink such as water or a carbonated beverage, he would habitually sit with his legs crossed or drawn up and drink from the bottle. Two informants who had seen Sammy Fernando drinking arrack seated on a chair with his legs drawn up had also observed Sujith adopt exactly the same posture when he took the inadequate substitute of aerated water. After drinking, Sujith would make a sound in his throat similar to that of arrack drinkers and would also wipe his mouth as they do to remove traces of the liquid that might be too hot.¹⁰ After this Sujith would sometimes weave around like a drunkard. And at times he would also throw himself on the floor and say: "Bila," an expression which means literally "having drunk." Sujith's habit, as it seemed to be, of mimicking a drunkard did not require even the stimulus of a carbonated drink. The day before one of my visits to his family in October 1973, he had fallen down to the ground and said: "I am drunk"; but before doing this he had not taken any soda drink or other "pseudo arrack."¹¹

There were no smokers of tobacco or drinkers of arrack in Sujith's family and he could not have copied these habits from any member of it, although he might well have seen an occasional drunkard in the street.

Sujith did not show the furtiveness of a solitary drinker. He wanted others to participate in his pleasure and was observed to offer drinks (arrack in his mind, but simple nonalcoholic beverages in theirs) to visitors from Gorakana who came to see him. It was noticed, however, that he did not distribute

¹⁰ The sound is actually a substantial belch to get rid of the air which the arrack drinker swallows. He drinks rapidly because the liquid feels hot to his lips, tongue, and throat. In doing so he swallows air and relieves himself of it afterward.

¹¹ Sujith's imitation of the behavior of an intoxicated person even though no alcohol had been taken resembled the behavior of the trance personality Jensen, who in response to the suggestion of having some brandy went through the motions of drinking some and then gave a colorful imitation of a drunkard. (See I. Stevenson. 1974. Xenoglossy: A review and report of a case. *Proc. A.S.P.R.* 31:1-268.)

The more I observe cases of the reincarnation type the more the behavior of some of the subjects reminds me of that of persons in deliria. One encounters several similar features in both groups: the confused sense of time, including the tendency to relive the past as if it were still the present; the tendency to repetition and perseveration; the constricted range of topics spoken about; and the substitution of associated images for the correct one. This last feature, in the subjects of the reincarnation type cases, gives rise to a considerable number of statements that are not quite right as stated, but correct for someone else or correct with some modification. Some apparent instances of these errors of association result from faulty reporting by informants, but I am confident that others come from the mixing of images in the mind of the subject.

hospitality indiscriminately; he knew which ones of Sammy Fernando's acquaintances would welcome the opportunity to join him in a drink. When one drinking companion of Sammy Fernando came to Sujith's house, Sujith startled him by saying: "Sunil, shall we have a drink?" Martin Alwis (Sammy Fernando's brother-in-law, who had often drunk arrack with him) was also honored by Sujith with an invitation to a drink. In his case, Sujith suggested they go to the tavern at Moratuwa that had been a favorite drinking place of Sammy Fernando and where Martin Alwis had drunk with him.

Wimaladasa de Alwis, an old friend and drinking companion of Sammy Fernando, lived within about 100 meters of Sujith's house. (I have earlier mentioned his limited acquaintance with Sujith's family prior to the development of the case.) It does not appear that Sujith accomplished any specific recognition of Wimaladasa that occurred on one definite occasion as did some of the recognitions I have recorded in Table 13. Sujith, however, acted toward Wimaladasa as if they should resume the friendship of Sammy Fernando and Wimaladasa which had been inconveniently interrupted by the lorry that killed Sammy. He addressed Wimaladasa by his name instead of using a more deferential and indirect form of address as a small child in Sri Lanka should certainly employ with an older man. One day Sujith suggested to Wimaladasa: "Let's take a drink." Sujith had also asked him for arrack more bluntly. Wimaladasa took Sujith to shops and treated him to aerated water, which he sometimes drank in the posture already mentioned.

Sujith also demonstrated a precocious sensitivity about the consumption of arrack by other persons. In October 1973, a visitor came to his family's house who gave no signs of abnormality to the adults present. But Sujith, with customary candor, asked the visitor: "Haven't you taken some arrack?" The somewhat discomfited caller acknowledged that he had and asked Sujith how he knew this, to which Sujith replied: "You smell of arrack."

The abstemious habits of his family had compelled Sujith, as he saw the matter, to apply to neighbors for drinks of arrack. At least one of them had obliged, but had desisted on the intervention of Sujith's grandmother.

Sujith showed some unusual dietary preferences which accorded with his desire for arrack. Thus he frequently requested wade, manioc, and hot curries. The adults of his family ate wade and occasionally manioc, but they were not major items of diet for them and certainly would not usually be given to a small child.¹²

Sujith also tried to smoke cigarettes. Once he took a cigarette from a journalist's box and asked his mother for a light.

Sujith's Habits of Dress. A Sinhalese boy of Sujith's age would not ordinarily be given a sarong to wear. But Sujith asked for one and was allowed to wear

¹² Sujith's mother said that during her pregnancy with him she had experienced a somewhat unusual interest in eating wade and manioc, but had not wished to drink arrack. For other examples of similar, but more pronounced altered appetites during pregnancy, see the cases of Gamini Jayasena (this volume) and Bongkuch Promsin (in the fourth volume of this series).

it at times. He also borrowed sarongs from neighbors. His mother and grandmother then observed that he tied the knot of a sarong below the navel. Wijedasa Alwis and Siri Nimal Rodrigo both mentioned that Sujith also wore his short pants below his navel. Sammy Fernando tied his sarong below the navel.

Sujith, when he wore a sarong, pulled a tuft of it out at the top so that it protruded. When asked about this portion he said it was where he kept money. Sammy Fernando had kept money in a fold at the top of his sarong and sometimes lost it from there.

Sujith also asked for expensive shirts of synthetic fiber ("Terylene"). His family acceded to this request, and I met him one day wearing a Terylene shirt when he went with his family to visit his great-uncle, the Ven. G. Gnanaratana, at the Sri Sumanaramaya Temple.

Sujith's Phobias. I have already mentioned Sujith's unusual response, when still a suckling infant, to the word *lorry*. As he grew older and had a chance to see lorries, he showed a marked fear of them about which several informants commented. His grandmother said he was "very frightened of lorries and jeeps."¹³ A neighbor (T. Gunasekera) said he observed Sujith's fear when a lorry passed; he covered his ears with his hands. The Ven. Wattarappola Nandarataana said that Sujith was "mortally afraid of the sound of lorries." He observed that when Sujith saw someone get into the driver's seat of a stationary lorry he would say that it would run away. He had further noticed that if someone asked Sujith if he would like to go to Gorakana in a car he would accept, but if it was proposed to go there in a lorry he refused.

Sujith's grandmother said (in March 1973) that when he was younger he had shown some fear of trains. This had decreased by that time and had never been of the same magnitude as his fear of lorries.

It would perhaps exaggerate to apply the word *phobia* to a certain vigilance Sujith showed with regard to policemen. His aunt Lilanie Fernando noticed, however, that when he was young he would sometimes go inside the house when he saw policemen. Then he would ask her if they had passed the house.

In general, Sujith seemed bold and quite lacking in the inhibitions that many small children show. I described earlier how he became frightened on the occasion when Kusuma Dabare first came to the house at Mt. Lavinia with ten other persons. But apart from this episode, and the fears I have described above in this section, Sujith seemed generally free of all timidity.

Sujith's Tendency to Violence. Sujith's family said that he was somewhat given to violence. He beat on the adults of the family if frustrated, but in general pre-

¹³ Sujith's fear of jeeps may have had a connection with the previous life. The police in Sri Lanka use them especially in making raids and taking away persons to be arraigned. For Sammy Fernando, police jeeps must have been a familiar and unpleasant sight because, as I explained earlier, the police sometimes came to interrupt the business of his distillery.

ferred to assault other persons. I myself observed him once spit on his grandmother. On the occasion of another visit we made to his home there were some other persons present, neighbors I presumed, and Sujith began to kick one of the men with great zeal and persistence. On another occasion, when Godwin Samararatne and I were sitting peacefully on the veranda of the house of Sujith's family, he walked over to Mr. Samararatne and hit him with his fist. The Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana said that sometimes Sujith would push his mother into a corner and then pummel her, saying that this was how the police assault. His aunt Lilanie Fernando said that when scolded he would sometimes threaten to stab the offender with a knife.

It will perhaps be appropriate to mention under this heading the observation of the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana that Sujith used obscene words. I thought it would have been indelicate to penetrate deeply into the detailed vocabulary and origin of his gutter language, but given the respectable character of his mother and grandmother, his stock of indecent epithets seems almost to have the significance (in their household) of a xenoglossy. Yet I cannot exclude the possibility that Sujith received some training in vulgarity from the neighbors.

I do not wish to leave my readers with the impression that Sujith was a little monster. He had endearing qualities also. If we saw some tendency on his part to administer summary punishment to those who thwarted him, we also learned about his generosity and observed it ourselves. I have already mentioned his liberality with drinks, and some biscuits that we once brought him were spontaneously offered to us by Sujith with hostlike dignity.

Sujith's Attitudes toward Persons Known to Sammy Fernando. In describing above Sujith's cordiality toward the drinking companions of Sammy Fernando I have already said much on the topic of this section. It remains to emphasize his attachment to Maggilin Alwis, whose visits seemed always to give him pleasure.

As have some other subjects of these cases, Sujith sometimes tried to club the members of his family into compliance by threatening to run away to the previous home. He was apt to do this when he was angry at his family, but largely gave up the practice when he became older. However, in July 1973, when he was nearly four years old, he announced one day his plans to go to Maggie's house and not return. He was not then angry at his family so far as they could tell. He added that he would sleep at Maggie's house and, although he did not specify just where in her house he would sleep, his family thought he had in mind something more than the refreshment of a night's repose.¹⁴

¹⁴ For other examples of precocious sexuality apparently related to memories of a previous life, see the cases of Imad Elawar (I. Stevenson. 1974. *Twenty cases*) and Bongkuch Promsin (in the fourth volume of this series). In the instances of such behavior known to me the related previous personality has always been a person who died during the usual years of greatest sexual activity, that is, between the period of the late teens and late middle adulthood.

Other Behavior of Sujith Related to the Previous Life. Sujith's grandmother said that he was fond of singing, which I found easy to believe because during much of the time we were with him he was shouting in a loud voice. This did not correspond to my idea of singing, but Godwin Samararatne said Sujith's words were those of a song.

Since children in Sri Lanka may be taught and learn the principles of Buddhism at an early age, I was interested to hear about Sujith's reaction to whatever instruction in religion he had received. He had shown no reluctance to go to the temple and indeed seemed to like to visit it. He did, however, resist worshiping the monks in the usual way of Buddhists. And he asked not to be taught the *pancha sila*, or five principal precepts of Buddhism. Since the fifth precept of the *pancha sila* requires Buddhists not to drink intoxicating beverages, Sinhalese Buddhists who drink alcohol cannot listen to them without feeling uncomfortable.¹⁵

To aid review of Sujith's behavioral traits which corresponded to similar ones in Sammy Fernando, I have listed these side by side in Table 14.

TABLE 14. *Correspondences in Behavior between Sujith and Sammy*

<i>Sujith</i>	<i>Sammy</i>
1. Requests for arrack	Was an illicit producer of arrack and drank it excessively
2. Unusual demands for foods such as wade, manioc, and hot curries	Enjoyed wade, manioc, and hot curries
3. Requests for cigarettes	Smoked cigarettes instead of the cheaper bidis
4. Wanted to wear a sarong knotted below the navel and Terrydene shirts	Wore his sarong knotted below the navel; wore Terrydene shirts
5. Tendency to hit and kick other persons when frustrated	Tendency to become physically violent when drunk
6. Use of indecent language	Shouted obscenities when drunk
7. Lack of inhibitions	Had reputation for being completely fearless
8. Reluctance to worship monks and learn <i>pancha sila</i>	Indifference to outer forms of religion
9. Fond of singing	Was a good singer and dancer
10. Phobia of lorries	Was knocked down and killed by a lorry
11. Generous to others	Generous to others, especially children, the poor, and bhikkhus

¹⁵ For further information about the *pancha sila* and the part they play in Buddhism, see the report of the case of Ratana Wongsombat and references cited there (in the fourth volume of this series).

Other Relevant Behavior of Sujith

One informant commented on a similarity of physical appearance, particularly of the ears, between Sujith and Sammy Fernando. And both W. Lucia Silva and B. Gunawathie Fernando were impressed by the similarity of their gaits. Sujith was darker in complexion than Sammy Fernando was. When Sujith's family told him he was dark he resented this.

In March 1973, Sujith had not yet started to school. He had no siblings and his family therefore did not have readily available models for comparing his intelligence with that of other children of his age. His grandmother judged him average in intelligence.

Reports of Possible Extrasensory Perception on the Part of Sujith. On one occasion Sujith had an apparitional experience. The Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana related it to a discarnate personality that was thought to have been trying to "possess" Sujith's mother, but Sujith's vision did not include any details confirming this conjecture.

In March 1973, Sujith's grandmother reported two instances of possible extrasensory perception on his part of events in Gorakana. Once he said that the school there had been damaged in some way. Two days *later* (as they learned afterward) a coconut tree fell on the school. On another occasion, Sujith mentioned to his family that Maggie had not visited them for some time and said that she might be ill. When Maggie next came to visit him she was told about this remark and said that in fact she had been ill at about the time Sujith had made it. However, since she seems to have become a rather frequent visitor at Sujith's house after the case developed, her failure to come would eventually give rise to a normal inference that she was perhaps ill. I learned at that time of no other claimed experiences with extrasensory perception on the part of Sujith.

In October 1973, I enquired again about evidence of extrasensory perception on the part of Sujith. Maggie had continued to visit Sujith, but he had not made any more predictions about her arrival. Another episode, however, was suggestive of paranormal knowledge on his part. The family had a frequent visitor who had stopped coming to see them. They remarked on this in Sujith's presence and he said the man had died. Later they learned that this was true.

Observations of the Behavior of the Adults Concerned in the Case

As Buddhists, Sujith's mother and grandmother found no difficulty in believing that he was talking about a previous life. And they evidently took some pleasure in having such an unusual child in their midst. They seemed more amused than annoyed by Sujith's requests for arrack, cigarettes, wade, and manioc. They probably enjoyed the many visitors who came to them after news of the case reached Gorakana and then, following publication of accounts

of it in the newspapers, a larger public. But I learned of no evidence that they had tried to exploit it for personal gain. If such motives had occurred to Sujith's mother and grandmother (and I do not think they ever did), a realization that Sammy Fernando's family had nothing to give them would quickly have diminished their expectations. And if that had not been sufficient to quench avarice, there was the surveillance of the nearby monks in the Sri Sumanaramaya Temple, one of whom was Sujith's own great-uncle who had first brought the case to the attention of persons outside the family.

The various members of Sammy Fernando's family whom I interviewed in Gorakana were perhaps less enthusiastic about the case than was Sujith's family, but all cooperated fully and patiently with my investigation as they had done earlier with that of the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana. The list of informants that I have given above shows that I interviewed a rather large number of persons in Gorakana. Not a single one of them questioned the authenticity of the case in any way. Most of the informants in Gorakana had met Sujith only once or twice, either on visits to Mt. Lavinia or when he came to Gorakana. Only Maggie Alwis had formed a more lasting attachment to him. She visited him rather often, and I found her at the house of Sujith's family when I went there myself one day.

During my travels I have occasionally met persons whose beliefs are so unstable that they can be influenced by new facts or observations that come to their attention. Siri Nimal Rodrigo, Sammy Fernando's son-in-law, was an eccentric of this type who seemed to do at least some of his own thinking. He remarked: "I am a Roman Catholic and do not believe in rebirth, but from what I saw of Sujith and his recognitions I am convinced that he is Sammy reborn."

Comments on the Evidence of Paranormal Processes in the Case

This case is certainly one of the strongest known to me because of the recording in writing of sixteen items stated by Sujith before they were verified. These were the more important items and they were sufficient to identify the previous personality. However, even without this feature the case would still have considerable merit because the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana and E. C. Raddalgoda made written records of much other important testimony within a few months of the main developments in the case.

The case seems to me also refreshingly free of the various complexities that have led in some cases to hesitation and other impedance in the giving of testimony. Apart from some mild and entirely understandable satisfaction on the part of Sujith's family in having such a case among them, I found no trace among the informants of any personal investment in it that could have biased their testimony. And considering the unusual demands which Sujith was making on them, his family might be pardoned for balancing these with the gratification of thinking that he was an unusual child—which he certainly was.

Sujith was the only child of his parents, but there were other children of the neighborhood with whom he could be compared. The comparison could extend much farther, however, for I doubt if any child has shown as vividly as he has the several types of behavior that characterize the conduct of alcoholics. That he could have learned such behavior from the people immediately around him seems unthinkable. That he exhibited it so fully seems to me to add both to the authenticity of the case and to its evidence of paranormal processes.

Sujith's Later Development

In March 1976, I visited Sujith and his family again in Mt. Lavinia. I also had short interviews with the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana (in Mt. Lavinia) and Maggie Alwis (in Gorakana) in order to learn what they could tell me about Sujith's later development. Sujith's grandmother was away at the time of my visit to him, so the information from his family that I obtained came from his mother only.

At this time Sujith was more than six and a half years old. In December 1974, he had begun to attend a Montessori school. He had then transferred to a standard school and was in the first class at the time of my visit in 1976.

Nandanie Sunethari said that Sujith no longer talked about the previous life. He had ceased to do so gradually during the years since my last visit. He had lost his previous phobias of trucks and policemen in 1975. Sujith had also become more tranquil, and his mother said he never hit anyone else without provocation. His language had become sweeter. I could notice a change in his behavior myself. During our visit he was somewhat restless, but quite subdued compared with his conduct on earlier occasions.

Sujith still showed residues of some habits possibly related to the previous life he had remembered. First, when he noticed other persons drinking arrack, he would propose to take some himself. Second, he still favored Terrydene shirts and still wore his short pants below his navel. The school Sujith was attending required the pupils to wear a standard uniform of a white cotton shirt and blue short pants. Upon returning home Sujith would sometimes relieve himself of this costume and get into a Terrydene shirt.

Sujith no longer asked to go to Gorakana, but still had some contacts with Sammy Fernando's family. Thus, Kusuma Dabare, Sammy's favorite niece, was to be married in May 1976, and she had invited Sujith and his family to attend her wedding. Concerning Sujith's recent meetings with Maggie Alwis I received discrepant accounts. Sujith's mother said that Maggie still visited him and that Sujith seemed pleased with her visits. But Maggie herself complained that Sujith had become rude to her, so much so, in fact, that although his mother and grandmother always received her cordially, she found herself no longer wishing to visit Sujith himself. Perhaps he *had* become less friendly toward Maggie, and this in turn might have wounded her and made her less interested in visiting him.

Comments on the Interval between Sammy Fernando's Death and Sujith's Birth

Sammy Fernando died on January 29, 1969, and Sujith was born on August 7, 1969, thus a little more than six months later. (As I have mentioned, Sujith's mother said he was born after seven months of pregnancy.) The short interval between Sammy Fernando's death and Sujith's birth has been thought a disqualifying objection to the case by some persons who think that reincarnation cases must accommodate to current orthodoxy in biology. A dispute on this point arose in the newspapers of Sri Lanka, where some Rationalist and Buddhist polemicists vehemently buffeted each other for a time. For me, this controversy seemed concerned with a side issue. Cases of the reincarnation type, if accepted as authentic, challenge orthodox biology on assumptions far more important than the minimal length of pregnancy that can produce a viable infant.

The theory of reincarnation as such, at least as I conceive it, allows for variations in the period of gestation at which a discarnate personality may become associated with a new physical body. I am aware that adherents of certain religions adopt less flexible positions, and I have elsewhere described those of the Jains of India (in the first volume of this series) and of the Druses of Lebanon (third volume).

The dispute mentioned above which focused on the short interval between Sammy Fernando's death and Sujith's birth seemed to include the belief of some partisans that a discarnate personality could only become linked with a newly conceived physical body, an idea corresponding to that of the Jains of India. If that were universally true, then the viability of a fetus after just a little more than six months of pregnancy would become a pertinent point. It is generally recognized that fetuses of less than seven months gestation have a poor chance for survival after birth. The exact age of a premature infant, in weeks of gestation, may be difficult to determine due to irregularities in menstruation and other sources of error. There seems little doubt, however, that occasionally babies have survived after birth at the end of pregnancies which, judged by the weights of the babies, could not have lasted more than six months.¹⁶

It happens, however, that according to Buddhist teachings, the karmic effects of the previous personality should influence the new body (of the

¹⁶ In the nineteenth century several reports were published in the medical literature of infants born after six months or less of gestation who had survived such early delivery. See, for example, Anonymous. 1882. Geburtshilfliche Klinik des Professor Späth. *Allgemeine Wiener Medizinische Zeitung* 27:221; W. T. Baker. 1850. Remarks on premature birth with a case in which a child, born in the beginning of the sixth month, was reared. *Medical Times* (London) 2:249-50; and I. H. Moore. 1880. Early viability. *Medical Times and Gazette* 2:8. For more recent cases of the survival of infants born after short gestational periods, see N. McWhirter and R. McWhirter, eds. 1974. *Guinness book of world records*. New York: Sterling Publishing Co. (but no citation of medical literature is there given); and J. S. Monro. 1939. Premature infant weighing less than one pound at birth who survived and developed normally. *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 40:69. For information about the generally accepted relationships between the gestational age of a newborn infant and its weight at birth, see L. M. Hellman and J. A. Pritchard. 1971. *Obstetrics*. 14th ed. New York. Appleton-Century-Crofts.

subject) from the moment of conception on. Thus, strictly speaking, a subject should not have memories of someone who has died *after* the conception of his body. This "rule" is generally followed in the cases of the reincarnation type in Buddhist countries. In view of the Buddhist teachings on this matter it is very much to the credit of the monks who studied this case, notably the Ven. Wattarappola Nandaratana, that they judged it on the basis of empirical evidence rather than on that of transmitted doctrine.

In non-Buddhist cultures where cases of the reincarnation type frequently occur, such as among the Druses of Lebanon, Alevis of Turkey, and Haidas of British Columbia, the subject's birth often occurs within a few days of the previous personality's death and sometimes on the very same day. For some examples of this type, see the next volume of this series.

8. The Case of Mahes de Silva

Summary of the Case and Its Investigation

MAHES DE SILVA was born in the Colombo Lying-In Hospital on March 15, 1965. His parents were W. W. de Silva (who was Chief Instructor, Electronics Training School, Sri Lanka Air Force) and his wife, Piyaseelie.¹ Mahes had an older brother, Piyal, born in 1958, and a younger sister, Anusha, born in 1967. At the time the case developed, Mahes' family lived in the Korallawella section of Moratuwa, south of Colombo.

Mahes began to talk when he was about two years old; at almost the same time he began making references to a previous life. He said: "I am Dolly Silva of Panadura." (His parents learned later that "Dolly" was his inadequate pronunciation of "Jolly," the nickname of the subsequently identified previous personality of this case.) He would also say at about this time: "Let us go and see our Nallee at Panadura." He did not say who Nallee was.

Between the ages of two and four Mahes talked often about the previous life he was remembering and thereafter began to speak less and less about it. He never did mention many details about the previous life; in the number of statements he made about it the case is much less rich than the others in this volume. However, Mahes made repetition compensate for the lack of variety in his statements. He reiterated his stock phrases: "I am Dolly Silva of Panadura" and "Let us go and see our Nallee at Panadura." Eventually these and a few other remarks carried enough conviction to his parents so that they began to mention them to other members of their family.

When Mahes was about two and a half he noticed some bottles of alcoholic beverages—either whiskey or gin—at the home of a maternal uncle, Premadasa Fernando, and his wife, Princie Dias Fernando. He said: "I used this stuff," and took the bottle in his hand. Princie Fernando learned enough about Mahes' statements concerning the previous life to conclude that he was talking about the life of her "uncle," Jolly de Silva. She wanted to take Mahes to the house where Jolly de Silva had lived, which was then occupied by Jolly de Silva's daughter, Nalene de Silva Peiris, and her husband and children. But Mahes' mother, Piyaseelie de Silva, did not then wish to pursue the matter further.

About three years later the two families did finally meet. It seems that more than one person to whom Mahes' mother talked may have brought them

¹ W. W. de Silva worked at Jaela, which is to the north of Colombo in the direction of Katunayaka, site of the international airport of Colombo. Mahes was conceived when his family was living at Katunayaka.

together. But the following connections were certainly made. As mentioned above, Princie Fernando knew about Mahes' statements concerning the previous life. She had lived in Panadura from 1936 to 1942. Princie mentioned the matter to someone in Panadura who told Nalene Peiris about what Mahes had been saying. Since Nalene Peiris' father was Nicholas de Silva, but almost universally known as Jolly (not Dolly), she became curious about the relevance of Mahes' statements to her father, who had died some years earlier. She then enquired from a friend, Usha Fernando, who was married to another of Piyaseelie de Silva's brothers, Piyasena Fernando. Usha Fernando, without at that time knowing that Mahes had been saying anything about a previous life, asked Piyaseelie de Silva if she had heard of a child in Moratuwa who was talking about a previous life in Panadura. Piyaseelie de Silva replied that the child in question was her own son. When word of this reached Nalene Peiris she wanted immediately to meet Mahes and went to the de Silva house where she found he was out. Soon thereafter, Mahes and his mother went to Panadura to the home of Usha Fernando. She and her husband, Piyasena Fernando, were then living less than 100 meters from Jolly de Silva's house, and Usha Fernando took Mahes and his mother to it. There they met Nalene Peiris and her family. This meeting led to a verification of everything that Mahes had been saying about the previous life. The two families continued to exchange visits thereafter.

According to Nalene Peiris, she first met Mahes (at her house) in October 1970. By this time he was five and a half years old and had stopped talking spontaneously about the previous life. He nevertheless made two noteworthy recognitions at the Peiris house in Panadura, which had formerly belonged to Nicholas ("Jolly") de Silva.² Moreover, he quickly formed a strong attachment to Nalene Peiris and her son, Brian, while at the same time showing a marked coolness toward Nalene Peiris' husband, Hilary, with whom Jolly de Silva had had strained relations.

A cousin of Piyaseelie de Silva, A. D. Fernando, who lived near Kandy, heard about the case and mentioned it to Mr. Godwin Samararatne, who went to the area of the case and made a preliminary investigation of it on February 21, 1971.

On my next trip to Sri Lanka in March 1973, I took up the investigation with Godwin Samararatne, but we made little progress at that time. This was partly because Nalene Peiris was ill then and partly because there was lack of time in my schedule for this stay in Sri Lanka. In October 1973, I was back in Sri Lanka and was then able to extend the interviews we had with informants in both number and scope. In addition to talking with all the qualified informants I could meet in Moratuwa and Panadura, I interviewed Princie Fernando (and her husband) in Wattegama, near Kandy, and also a sister and niece of Jolly de Silva whom I met in Colombo. By the time of these interviews, Mahes was more than eight years old and there was little

² No one seems to have called Nicholas de Silva by his official first or given name. I think that it will therefore be more appropriate if from this point on I refer to him as Jolly de Silva.

to be learned from him directly except that he was an unusually intelligent child.

Subsequently, in December 1973, Godwin Samararatne had a second interview with Princie Fernando concerning certain details of her connections—both genealogical and social—with Jolly de Silva and his family. Then in the summer of 1974 he obtained some additional information about details in further interviews with Mahes, his mother and older brother, and Nalene Peiris.

In March 1976, I visited Mahes and his family again in Moratuwa and had follow-up interviews with them.

This case has never been published in newspapers or elsewhere. It has remained a private one observed only by the members of the families concerned, who were, however, graciously willing to open it up for a detailed examination.

The main informants of both families spoke English, although sometimes their lack of familiarity with my accent made them wonder if I did. At such times, and also with some of the minor informants, Godwin Samararatne intervened with either Sinhalese or a repetition of my English warmed up with a Sinhalese rhythm comprehensible to the persons we were interviewing.

Persons Interviewed during the Investigation

In Moratuwa I interviewed:

Mahes de Silva

W. W. de Silva, Mahes' father

Piyaseelie de Silva, Mahes' mother

Usha Fernando, Mahes' maternal aunt by marriage

P. Seelawathie Fernando, Piyaseelie de Silva's
sister and Mahes' maternal aunt

S. T. Fernando, childhood friend of Jolly de Silva

Tekla de Silva, Jolly de Silva's sister-in-law

In Panadura I interviewed:

Nalene Peiris, Jolly de Silva's older daughter

Hilary Peiris, Nalene Peiris' husband

Brian Peiris, son of Hilary and Nalene Peiris

Ven. Pandit Balangoda Pannaloka Thera, monk of the
Vidayaraja Pirivena Temple

Jacob de Silva, friend of Jolly de Silva

In Wattegama, near Kandy, I interviewed:

Premadasa Fernando, Piyaseelie de Silva's brother
and Mahes' maternal uncle

Princie Dias Fernando, Premadasa Fernando's wife
and Mahes' maternal aunt by marriage

In Colombo I interviewed:

Gertrude Somawathie de Silva Arsecularatna,
 Jolly de Silva's sister
 Kamela de Silva Salgado, Jolly de Silva's niece

*Relevant Facts of Geography and Possibilities for
 Normal Means of Communication between the Two Families*

Moratuwa is a small town due south of Colombo and about 12 kilometers from it. It lies partly on the Colombo-Galle highway. The section known as Korallawella, where Mahes and his family lived, extends south and west to the beach on the Indian Ocean. During the years when Mahes was talking about the previous life, his family lived in Korallawella about half a kilometer from the main Colombo-Galle highway. Subsequently they moved to another house (still in the Korallawella area) about half a kilometer farther from the highway and almost on the beach. At Moratuwa the Colombo-Galle highway turns east before going south again to reach Panadura, which also straddles the highway. Panadura, a large village, is about 6 kilometers from Moratuwa and thus about 18 kilometers from Colombo. In Panadura, Jolly de Silva's house (subsequently occupied by his daughter Nalene and her husband, Hilary Peiris) was right on the main highway.

Usha Fernando, Piyaseelie de Silva's sister-in-law, had lived in Panadura during the lifetime of Jolly de Silva and knew him quite well. Her house then was only about 250 meters from his. After her marriage Usha and her husband lived in Panadura at least up to October 1970, when Mahes first met Nalene Peiris, Jolly de Silva's daughter. Usha Fernando, however, could not have been a source of normally conveyed information for Mahes. She had no acquaintance with Mahes' family until her engagement and marriage to Piyaseelie de Silva's brother. Their marriage, which was arranged through a broker, took place on January 20, 1969. By that time Mahes was saying little or nothing about the previous life and Usha was not a firsthand witness for any of his statements concerning it.

Princie Dias Fernando, the wife of Piyaseelie de Silva's brother Premadasa Fernando, had an earlier connection with both families. Her mother and Jolly de Silva's wife (who was also Nalene Peiris' mother) were first cousins. Princie Fernando's mother was also a first cousin of Tekla de Silva, who married Jolly de Silva's older brother Arthur. She was thus related to Jolly de Silva in two ways. These connections made her, in the loose references of Southeast Asia, Jolly de Silva's "niece." She lived in Panadura between 1936 and 1942 in a house about 3 kilometers from his. During this time she knew him quite well, although she was no more his favorite niece than any other girl in a similar relationship. Princie Dias married Premadasa Fernando in August 1957, and she lived with her husband in Korallawella (Moratuwa) between then and 1970. Afterward she and her husband moved to Wattergama, near Kandy, where I met them in October 1973. Although she prob-

ably knew all the facts about Jolly de Silva stated by Mahes, she denied ever having mentioned him to Mahes' parents before Mahes did so.

Nalene Peiris said that she had relatives in Moratuwa whom she visited, but that she had never met Mahes' parents prior to the development of the case.

Piyaseelie de Silva's father had cousins in Panadura, and when notes were compared after the two families had met it turned out that these persons lived about 3 kilometers from Jolly de Silva's house. They had not known Nalene Peiris.

Considering the physical closeness of Moratuwa and Panadura, which are almost neighboring towns separated by a river, it would not surprise me to learn that the two families concerned had other connections of which I did not hear. But even if they had, I would still not think that the immediate families knew each other, or about each other, before Mahes had talked about the previous life and, for that matter, before he had stopped doing so. If this had not been so, I am sure that Mahes' family would have initiated inquiries concerning the truth of what he had been saying much earlier, or they would have been able to judge its accuracy by themselves. As it was, they did not know to whom Mahes was referring and did nothing to find out until the meeting between the two families which took place, as I have described, when Mahes was already about five and a half years old. By that time he had stopped speaking spontaneously about the previous life.

The Life, Character, and Death of Jolly de Silva

Nicholas ("Jolly") de Silva was born in Panadura on August 28, 1904. He was the youngest of a large family and, perhaps because of this position, subsequently became his mother's favorite child. His grandfather had been a notable landowner of the area on whom the British had conferred the title of *Mudliyar*. The family continued to own property in Panadura in the succeeding generations and would certainly be considered in the upper middle classes with regard to wealth and influence. Jolly de Silva's father died when he was four; this must have increased his dependence on his mother, to whom he became particularly attached.

Jolly de Silva attended St. John's College, Panadura, and Royal College, Colombo. These were private schools of the type founded in British dominions and colonies during the days of their raj and modeled after the English "public" schools. I am not sure how long he continued with formal education. At some point he passed the Senior School Certificate Examination. Subsequently he obtained some training in mechanical engineering. He then worked for several different companies in succession up to the time of the outbreak of World War II.

In 1932 he was injured while riding on a train. He was sitting (or perhaps standing) near a door and reading when the door suddenly flew open while the train was moving. He fell out and was rather badly injured, remaining

unconscious for two days. Among his injuries he fractured "a bone in the knee" not further specified by his daughter, who was not then born and must therefore have heard about the accident much later. (But the fact of the accident was corroborated by Tekla de Silva, Jolly de Silva's sister-in-law, who was then already married to his older brother.) He was admitted to a hospital and eventually recovered without lameness or other apparent sequelae of his severe injuries. It appears that Jolly de Silva did *not* afterward have a phobia of trains. Princie Fernando said that Jolly de Silva's sister Tekla had told her that he did not want to ride trains again after his accident. But when I talked with Tekla de Silva she did not recall this reluctance. So he may have had some fear of trains after the accident, but not a phobia. His daughter and son-in-law agreed that he rode trains whenever he found them convenient. And Jacob de Silva, his close friend, confirmed this.

He married in about 1934 and he and his wife had two daughters. The older, Nalene, was born in 1935, the younger, Iranganie, seventeen months later. His marriage seems to have been a happy one; perhaps the best evidence of this is the loyalty to him of his wife during the financial difficulties through which they passed after he returned from fighting in World War II.

In 1941 Jolly de Silva's mother died. As already mentioned, he had been deeply devoted to her. At the cremation of her body he violated Buddhist custom and took some of her ashes home.³ His mother apparently had the right to the disposal of the house and surrounding property and in her will she left these to Jolly de Silva. His brothers and sisters did not consider this unjust because all of them had long since moved out of the house and seem to have been in prosperous circumstances on their own. World War II was then being fought and Jolly de Silva volunteered for service in the British army overseas. He held the ranks of corporal and then sergeant in Greece. He took with him a box containing some of his mother's ashes which somehow became lost while he was overseas. A troopship on which he was traveling was sunk and he was in danger of drowning. If he subsequently developed a phobia of the sea the fact was unknown to his daughter Nalene, whom I questioned on this point. He was once nearly killed in Greece while manning an anti-aircraft gun. Despite such adventures he returned from the war unscathed. After demobilization he experienced great difficulty in finding a satisfactory place in civilian life. Some of his relatives disappeared during his times of hardship, but found their way back when he later became affluent. He finally obtained a position with the Ceylon Transport Board, which owns and runs the many buses serving Sri Lanka. He worked in the supply department of the C.T.B. His remarkable knowledge of mechanical parts and equipment together with his efficiency advanced him in this work and he became, before his retirement, assistant supplies officer.

³ According to Buddhist custom in Sri Lanka, ashes of a deceased person should be kept in an urn at a temple. It is considered inauspicious to have them at home if only because they might there be available for use in "black magic."

His wife died in 1953 and thereafter his older daughter, Nalene, ran his household and, in more ways than are customary for women, "looked after him." His younger daughter, Iranganie, married in 1958; she and her husband immediately moved to Ampurai (on the east coast of Sri Lanka) and played almost no further part in the life of Jolly de Silva except for occasional visits. Nalene married on May 18, 1959, but did not leave her father's house; instead her husband, Hilary Peiris, moved in with them. Jolly de Silva's household then consisted of himself, his daughter and son-in-law, and (subsequently) their two children, Brian and Mahesa.

Prior to his daughters' marriages Jolly de Silva had retired voluntarily from the Ceylon Transport Board. This occurred when he was about fifty-three years old, in 1957. He must have reached an adequate level of prosperity by this time; his purchase during this period of a rather expensive automobile, a Standard, further supports this conjecture. After his retirement, he stayed at home principally engaged in social activities and, above all, in drinking alcohol. He often played cards with friends, but if they were not available, he found the game of patience solacing. He also took some part in community affairs. Once he stood as a candidate in an election for the Urban Council of Panadura and lost. He was generally regarded as a community leader, and when some parochial enterprise required a group effort he seemed better able to organize it than other persons.

From all the evidence available to me Jolly de Silva was a person of quite superior intelligence. He read widely and the episode of his injury on the train was characteristic of his fondness for reading. Moreover, he collected books and had assembled a considerable library. His daughter Nalene showed me what she described as the mere residue of his library, but this remnant itself consisted of three ample shelves of books. He had a much better knowledge of the English language than most Sinhalese persons who have not studied abroad; friends consulted him about the phrasing of their letters in English, something I found easy to appreciate after his daughter let me read a postcard he had sent home from Greece; it showed an excellent usage of English.

He was somewhat inclined to impatience and impulsive action. Politeness did not prevent him from a frank exposure of his feelings if something displeased him. He had some reputation for implementing threats against people who misbehaved according to his standards, and he once assaulted a young man who was taunting some young women on the street with obscenities. His son-in-law Hilary Peiris said no one trespassed on their property during Jolly de Silva's life and thieves found it sensible to stay away from the house.

Generosity contributed an important portion to the character of Jolly de Silva. He was a friend of the poor and loaned money freely—carelessly indeed. After his death his family could not collect 3,000 rupees in debts owed to him for which, unfortunately, he had obtained insufficient documentation. The cliché about "giving the shirt off one's back" could apply literally to his liberality. On one occasion he gave three shirts to a man who expressed a

need for them. Perhaps Jolly de Silva's own dislike of wearing shirts made this kind of gesture easier for him, but it still had a charitable quality. His conduct of his own financial affairs seemed somewhat haphazard, and he was known to have signed a whole checkbook in advance of filling in the names of the payees and amounts; this was supposedly in order to save himself the bother of doing so later. Yet he was scrupulously honest about repaying anything he borrowed himself and never defaulted on a commitment to other persons. His son-in-law said he kept his promises rigidly even when drunk.

He had a profound interest in Buddhism. Apart from its fifth precept,⁴ which proscribes the use of alcohol and other intoxicants, he followed its teachings closely. When he volunteered for service in the British army during the Second World War the conflict between the Buddha's teaching of non-violence and the definitely contrary attitude shown during military engagements troubled him greatly, and he feared the consequences for himself of any injuries or deaths he might cause. He supported the temple in Panadura (as did other members of his family, I should add) and engaged there in discussions on religion with the monks. His knowledge of Buddhism commanded sufficient respect so that they might sometimes seek his opinion on a particular matter. In the morning he listened regularly to the bana preaching (Buddhist sermons) on the radio. He meditated but never displayed the fact of doing so, which remained unknown to most of his associates. He was a firm believer in rebirth and it formed a central theme of his discussions with the monks. He expressed to the Ven. Pandit Balangoda Pannaloka the wish to be reborn in the locality of Panadura.⁵

Jolly de Silva was a sociable person—and indeed a gregarious one. He enjoyed the company of his friends although he was discriminating in their selection. For them he more or less kept open house, or entertained them with equal cordiality at the Panadura Club. His pervasive cheerfulness had earned him the nickname Jolly and all informants agreed that the name suited him admirably. At one time I thought that the joviality attributed to him must have been a mask held on only by the alcohol that he consumed excessively and that I shall consider presently; but this proved incorrect because I learned that he had already earned the nickname Jolly in his childhood. One informant—a close friend of many years—said he got the nickname when “very small.” And his older sister Gertrude Arseculeratna said he got it “as a small child.”

⁴ See the report of the case of Sujith Lakmal Jayaratne, p. 275.

⁵ Here occurred one of the rare exceptions to my general experience that Theravada Buddhists do not usually express openly a desire for particular circumstances of their next rebirth. They do not deny that wishes may influence the next life, but they give much more emphasis to other factors, especially the effects of moral conduct. Their attitude contrasts markedly with that of some other groups, such as the Tlingits of Alaska and the Igbo of Nigeria, many of whom strongly believe that one's wishes can influence the conditions of one's next incarnation. For further information about their beliefs, see I. Stevenson, 1974. Some questions related to cases of the reincarnation type *Journal A.S.P.R.* 68: 395–416, and also references cited therein.

I cannot say just when Jolly de Silva crossed the frontier between social drinking and alcoholism. It appears, however, that even when he was still employed by the Ceylon Transport Board (before his retirement from it in 1957) he felt the need for sustenance when at work and drank surreptitiously at the office. At that time his wife had the duty of feeding him when he was drunk; upon her death in 1953, their daughter, Nalene, took on this responsibility. Although Jolly de Silva must have been deeply involved with alcohol prior to 1953, after his retirement he had more free time and alcohol got a tighter grip on him. As happens in such cases, both his consumption and his disorderliness increased apace. He liked some liquid with meals and alcoholic beverages proved handy for this need; if he had to take a pill they could be used to wash it down. His daughter Nalene would have found it difficult to decide whether she preferred her father to drink at home or in his club. But she did not have to make this choice, for he did both. If at home, he invited friends for drinking and card playing and their activities cannot have tranquilized the household; if he drank at his club, he would return home very late (by what means of conveyance I do not know) in a state bordering on stupor. He would collapse on his bed; Nalene would then have to take off his shoes and, if he did not pass into a state of comatose sleep, would have to prepare a meal and feed him. Nearly all men have some capacity for getting women to attend to their needs, but I must say that the talents of Jolly de Silva in this respect would arouse the envy of most of them. First his mother, then his wife, and finally his daughter successively gave him the most indulgent care. But ingratitude was not part of his make-up and he returned warm affection to them all.

Every alcoholic has a rationalization for his helpless captivity. Jolly de Silva's was unusually succinct: "You die if you drink and you die if you don't drink. My policy is to drink and die."

Like most advanced alcoholics Jolly de Silva evaluated a beverage according to its proof of alcoholic content rather than for such lesser qualities as taste. He had, however, preferred whiskey until the price rose; he then turned to arrack, which has even fewer health-giving properties than whiskey. On one occasion he was admitted to a hospital but averted delirium tremens by arranging for someone to bring him arrack in bottles ordinarily used for orange juice. Since arrack itself is often produced with a somewhat orange color this subterfuge evaded the lax attention of the hospital authorities and perhaps, at that point, actually prolonged his life. During the last year of his life he was drinking black arrack, a particularly poisonous concoction.

Members of his family knew perfectly well that Jolly de Silva was practicing a slow suicide on himself, but they felt powerless to stop him. His son-in-law, Hilary Peiris, made known his displeasure concerning Jolly de Silva's conduct and his exploitation of his daughter. These objections cannot have increased the harmony of the household. In any case, they were completely futile. Jolly de Silva ignored all advice and all reproaches. A little quiet refection with companions, as he saw his social activities, could do no harm. And so he con-

tinued drinking unabated, without realizing, or acknowledging, his parlous condition. We come, therefore, to the topic of his final illness and death.

During the last years of his life he suffered from what his daughter and son-in-law described as "asthma." From the medical information available to me I cannot firmly decide whether this asthma was of the bronchial type or that related to cardiac failure. Eventually the latter type (so-called cardiac asthma) seems to have set in, for my informants described his attacks as coming mainly at night and they said that sometimes he could not lie down to sleep: these are characteristics of "cardiac asthma." Moreover, Nalene Peiris used the phrase "cardiac asthma" in describing her father's condition to me, and I presume that she picked it up from some medical man attending her father, perhaps her father's nephew, who was his physician when he died. (It is also possible that he had both types of asthma.) He was frequently observed sitting on his bed in a position to brace his labored efforts to breathe. The posture is well-known in sufferers from asthma. Nalene Peiris said her father sometimes sat that way when he was *not* having asthma and the posture became fixed in her mind as specially characteristic of him.

One of Jolly de Silva's brothers who was a physician had earlier remonstrated with him about his use of alcohol, but this had no effect. Eventually the anxiety of his family grew to alarm. They persuaded him to enter the hospital for what they presented to him as a "check-up" while in their minds it was hoped that, once he was in the hospital, they could initiate radical treatment. He entered the Colombo General Hospital early in June 1964. About four days later his condition became worse—unexpectedly, it seems. I conjecture that the abrupt withdrawal of Jolly de Silva's supplies of alcohol may have had something to do with this deterioration. At any rate his strength, instead of improving, declined. One day he required oxygen during a crisis of some kind; afterwards he seemed depressed but did not talk about dying. His condition then seemed grave, but not dangerous. Nevertheless, he continued to lose ground and died on June 23, 1964, nineteen days after his admission to the hospital. He was a little less than sixty years old.

I was unable to obtain more precise information about the cause (or causes) of his death because the physician (who was also his nephew) in whose ward he was treated and died had emigrated from Sri Lanka.

Statements and Recognitions Made by Mahes

As I have already mentioned, Mahes made few statements about the previous life. He mentioned only four names: Dolly (later, Jolly), Silva, Nallee, and Panadura. Furthermore, he showed a tendency to repeat the same phrases: "I am Dolly Silva of Panadura," and "Let us go and see our Nallee at Panadura." He made very few other statements about the previous life. He never mentioned Jolly de Silva's real name, Nicholas, and he never spoke the name of Jolly de Silva's younger daughter, Iranganie. These omissions, however, harmonize with what we know of Jolly de Silva. No one seems to have used his real name,

the nickname applied to him when he was a child having stuck throughout the rest of his life. And his younger daughter, Iranganie, was quite subsidiary in his life compared with Nalene, his older one.

In contrast to most subjects of these cases Mahes made no statement related to the mode of death of the previous personality or events leading up to it.

By the time Mahes was taken to the home of Jolly de Silva in Panadura, he was about five and a half years old and had already passed the peak of his fluency as regards statements (and presumably memories) of the previous life. He made only two clear recognitions at the de Silva (Peiris) house in Panadura. It happened that his mother had taken Mahes to Panadura two or three times for medical treatments during the younger age period when he was talking most about the previous life. Yet on these occasions he showed no signs of recognizing anything in Panadura.

In Table 15, in which I have listed the statements and recognitions attributed to Mahes, I have grouped all the statements together and followed them with the two recognitions. So far as I know, Mahes made all the statements before the two immediate families became acquainted.

Mahes' Behavior Related to the Previous Life

Circumstances and Manner of Mahes' Speaking about the Previous Life. Mahes made so few statements about the previous life that we have insufficient grounds for useful generalizations about stimuli for them. A few of them were obviously stimulated by the sight of some object that reminded Mahes of a similar one in the previous life. His father's corroded and battered old car, for example, reminded him of the elegant Standard owned by Jolly de Silva. Similarly, the paucity of books in his home seems to have made him remember, or at least refer to, the ample library Jolly de Silva possessed. And the sight of a bottle of whiskey (or gin) in his uncle's home led him to say that he had taken "such stuff."

When I asked Mahes' mother whether he spoke about the previous life more at one time of day than at another, as have some other subjects of these cases, I received the somewhat disconcerting reply that he spoke "throughout the day. He would start in the morning and go on all day." Some parents of these subjects find at least partial relief from the persistence with which their children talk about the previous lives they remember in the variety and often startling novelty of the topics presented to them. Mahes' parents did not receive this grace. It must have required some fortitude for them to listen daily to nothing but a repetition of his claim to be "Dolly Silva of Panadura" and his craving to see "our Nallee at Panadura." The brunt of this fell on Piyaseelie, since her husband could escape to his work. At peak volume, Mahes' talk about the previous life lasted only two years or less.

TABLE 15. *Summary of Statements and Recognitions Made by Mahes*

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. His name was "Dolly" Silva.	Piyaseelie de Silva, Mahes' mother W. W. de Silva, Mahes' father P. Seelawathie Fernando, Mahes' maternal aunt Princie Dias Fernando, Mahes' maternal aunt by marriage	Nalene Peiris, Jolly de Silva's older daughter	When very young, Mahes could not pronounce "Jolly" and said "Dolly" instead. Later he said "Jolly." He seems to have omitted (at least some of the time) the "de" part of the family name, but I have found this an apparently optional habit among adults also. P. Seelawathie Fernando mentioned that (in her presence) Mahes had only given the name Jolly. It appears that she had not heard him lisping "Dolly."
2. He lived in Panadura.	Piyaseelie de Silva W. W. de Silva P. Seelawathie Fernando Princie Dias Fernando	Nalene Peiris	
3. He had [a daughter] "Nallee."	Piyaseelie de Silva W. W. de Silva Princie Dias Fernando	Nalene Peiris	Mahes never specifically identified "Nallee" as "his" daughter of the previous life. He would refer instead to "our Nallee at Panadura." In fact Jolly de Silva did not address his daughter as Nallee; he called her "duva" (English: "daughter"). It seems possible that Mahes, when speaking most about the previous life at the age of three, could still not pronounce adequately the full name and so got out only "Nallee."

4. He had injured his knee in a train accident.

Piyaseelie de Silva
P. Seelawathie Fernando

Nalene Peiris

P. Seelawathie Fernando stated that Mahes had said that he (in the previous life) had fallen off a train in Panadura. The accident did not occur in or near Panadura, but between Welawatte and Bambalapitiya, much nearer to Colombo. Mahes' remembrance of this accident is an example of a rather rare type of memory in these cases, that referring to an event that occurred long before the death of the related previous personality. For another example, see the report of the case of Sujith Lakmal Jayaratne (this volume), who also remembered a train accident, although in his case one happening to the brother of the previous personality.

5. He was a month in the hospital after his accident.

Piyaseelie de Silva

Nalene Peiris

Nalene Peiris said her father was in the hospital following the train accident, but she did not know for how long he had remained there.

6. He took alcohol.

W. W. de Silva
Princie Dias Fernando
Piyaseelie de Silva

Nalene Peiris
Hilary Peiris, Jolly de Silva's
son-in-law
Jacob de Silva, one of Jolly
de Silva's close friends

Piyaseelie de Silva was a secondhand informant for this item. The other two informants differed as to whether Mahes had been stimulated to make this remark by seeing a whiskey or a gin bottle. (Jolly de Silva would have known both.) In any case, when Mahes saw such a bottle he said, in the words of Princie Fernando: "I used such stuff." He took the bottle in his hand. W. W. de Silva remembered different words, but the same sense

TABLE 15 (*cont.*)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
6. (<i>cont.</i>)			of what Mahes had said. Mahes made the statement at the home of Prince Fernando and her husband. Mahes' father is a strict teetotaler and Mahes could not have seen such bottles in his home.
7. The house he had lived in was bigger [than that of Mahes' family].	Piyaseelie de Silva P. Seelawathie Fernando	Verified by me on comparing the two houses in 1973	Jolly de Silva's house is fully twice the size of that occupied by Mahes' family during the period when he was speaking most about the previous life.
8. The house he had was better [than that of Mahes' family].	W. W. de Silva	Verified by me on comparing the two houses in 1973	Jolly de Silva's house was a better one, as well as being larger, than that of Mahes' family.
9. He had many books there.	Piyaseelie de Silva P. Seelawathie Fernando	Nalene Peiris Also my own comparison of the numbers of books in the two houses	At the de Silva house the residue of Jolly de Silva's library contained many more books than I saw at the house of Mahes' family.
10. He had better books [than those in Mahes' home].	W. W. de Silva	Doubtful; see comment.	Judgment on this item depends on what we mean by "better." Mahes' father had some books and they were in good condition. They were mainly about technological subjects. Jolly de Silva had a much more diversified library.
11. There was a machine—a <i>sekkuwa</i> —that went round and round.	W. W. de Silva Piyaseelie de Silva	I saw a portion of this machine in the compound of the de Silva house in Panadura.	The machine in question was a kind of grindstone used in extracting coconut oil. A harnessed animal

provided the force by walking around the machine in a circle. The machine was very old. Nalene Peiris said that she had never actually seen it in operation herself. The word *sekkuwa* appears to be quite unusual nowadays and machines of this type are not known in Moratuwa. It may even be doubted if any of them are still used. Piyaseelie de Silva said she had not heard Mahes apply the word *sekkuwa* to what he tried to describe, but her husband said that he had.

12. The machine was behind the garden.

W. W. de Silva

Nalene Peiris

The ruins of the *sekkuwa* that I saw were some distance behind the house in the rear compound of the property. Nalene Peiris said that in her father's time there had been a garden between the house and the *sekkuwa*.

13. He had had a better car than his father's.

Piyaseelie de Silva
W. W. de Silva

By comparison of statements of Hilary Peiris, Godwin Samararatne, and W. W. de Silva concerning the cars in question; and by study of a photograph of Jolly de Silva's car

I was shown a photograph of the rather elegant Standard automobile that Jolly de Silva had purchased in 1957-58. W. W. de Silva said that he had had an old car of which he was about the tenth owner. It was about twenty years old when he finally got rid of it; he had not maintained its appearance. Godwin Samararatne saw this car when he first visited Mahes' family in February 1971.

TABLE 15 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
14. Recognition of the photograph of Jolly de Silva's grandfather	Brian Peiris, son of Hilary and Nalene Peiris		The photograph of this patriarchal figure, founder of the family's fortunes, was still hanging in the living room of Jolly de Silva's house when I visited it. When Mahes first visited the house, Brian Peiris pointed to the photograph and asked Mahes if he could say whose it was. To this Mahes replied: "My grandfather."
15. Recognition of Jolly de Silva's room in the house at Panadura	Brian Peiris		When Mahes entered the room that Jolly de Silva had occupied, he said: "This is my room." He then sat on the bed with his arms out at his sides and hands on the bed in the posture that was habitual to Jolly de Silva. (See text for further details of this posture.)

Mahes' Attitude toward Members of Jolly de Silva's Family. Mahes showed (during the years between three and four) a strong desire to go to "Nallee" at Panadura. When he met her he does not seem to have shown any special sign of recognition, but he immediately became fond of her and remained so afterward. Mahes told his mother he loved Nalene as much as he loved her. Once his mother got him to stop crying by saying that if he did not do so she would not take him to see Nalene; the success of this ploy obliged her then to take him to see her in Panadura. When visiting in Jolly de Silva's house Mahes moved around very freely, although he was usually shy in other people's houses.

When Jolly de Silva's younger daughter, Iranganie, came to visit Mahes he was glad to see her; but he evidently did not show with her the pleasure that he manifested in the company of her older sister, Nalene, who had been Jolly de Silva's favorite daughter.

When Usha Fernando joined Mahes' family by marrying one of his mother's brothers, Mahes gave no sign of recognizing her although she had known Jolly de Silva well. But Mahes did develop a fondness for her and showed more affection for her than did his brother and sister.

As for Hilary Peiris, one of Jolly de Silva's two sons-in-law, Mahes responded to him with positive dislike and avoided him. On two occasions when Hilary Peiris went to Mahes' home for a visit, Mahes hid himself and would not emerge. He said: "I like Nalene, but I do not like Hilary. I cannot come out." This rejection of Hilary did not extend to his children, who were, after all, Nalene's also. Mahes enjoyed playing with Brian and Mahesa Peiris.

Mahes' Phobias of Trains and the Sea. The Colombo-Galle railway line runs through Moratuwa between the beach and most of the houses. Mahes showed by his emotional responses a fear of trains (when they passed) even before he could speak.

While he was still an infant in arms, when a train would pass, he would cling tightly to his mother (or whoever was carrying him) and cover his eyes.

Mahes also showed a marked fear of the sea and would not go in it. He even showed anxiety in the presence of a large basin of water.

These phobias of Mahes diminished as he grew older. They corresponded with events in the life of Jolly de Silva—a severe injury when he fell out of a moving train, and a near drowning when a troopship he was traveling on was sunk. The intense phobias of trains and the sea shown by Mahes seem to have exceeded any corresponding fears manifested by Jolly de Silva after his accidents. He appears to have had some fear of trains after the occasion when he fell out of one, but he resumed traveling by train. And he does not appear to have had any marked fear of the sea; certainly he never talked about any such fear in a manner to impress his daughter Nalene with it.

Neither Mahes' older brother nor his younger sister showed phobias of trains or the sea.

Other Behavior of Mahes Related to the Previous Life. Mahes disliked wearing a shirt and would take his off when he came into the house. He resisted wearing a shirt even when ill. Jolly de Silva had a similar habit; and he would also not even wear an undershirt when advised to do so by his physician.

At the time of Mahes' first visit to Jolly de Silva's house, Nalene Peiris offered him some sweets. When Mahes' mother, Piyaseelie de Silva, saw these she remarked, with perhaps more haste than tact, that Mahes would not eat the sweets being served. She then explained that of sweet things he only ate one called *thala guli*. Nalene immediately replied that *thala guli* was the only sweet her father ate. Mahes had another habit related to eating that also deserves mention here. He always ate with a glass of water in his hand. This trait seemed to correspond, in style if not in content, with one of Jolly de Silva. For Jolly de Silva liked to have liquids available when he ate and invariably had water, soup, or some alcoholic potation to supplement whatever the solids of a meal provided.

Mahes' mother said he liked to go to the Buddhist temple but was not unusually religious. However, at school Buddhism seemed to be his best subject and he had earned a grade of 100 percent in it in 1973. Mahes' older brother, Piyal, did not have a corresponding interest in Buddhism. That of Mahes went beyond a mere acceptance of religious doctrines already packaged; he asked his father penetrating questions about, for example, the respective bad actions done in their previous lives by whatever personalities now inhabit the bodies of stray mongrel dogs and those of Alsatians.⁶ Their antecedent crimes must, he thought, have been vastly different.

Mahes was also intensely interested in mechanical objects and processes. He asked for books on such subjects, showered his father with questions about them, and declared that he would later become a mechanical engineer.

Although Mahes favored books on mechanical subjects, he read more widely and found the resources of his father's small number of books insufficient for his needs. His mother said (in 1973) that when school ended for the day Mahes would go to the local library and borrow another book. Princie Fernando mentioned that Mahes wished to go to Panadura not only to see Nalene but because of the books available there. He said: "I have a big bookshelf there. I want to go and read." I should add that Mahes' father, although he did not own many books, did read a lot, although mainly on technical subjects.

Mahes was known in his family as having a good sense of humor and some penchant for jokes. He was not, however, by my judgment, what one would call a jolly person. Nor did his parents claim this. Courteous, polite, and good-humored he was; but not jolly. We must therefore record this aspect of his personality as differing from that reported for Jolly de Silva.

⁶ To understand this example, the Western reader should know that there are, for all practical purposes, only two types of dogs in Sri Lanka. The first type are mongrels who have no homes and wander around eating carrion until their inevitable death under the wheels of a racing bus or taxi. Anyone who actually keeps a dog in his house as a pet usually has an Alsatian, although a few other purebred dogs are also found. Since the owners are nearly all wealthy, these Alsatians may live in better economic circumstances than many humans.

Mahes showed an extraordinary attachment to his mother. Considering the devotion most mothers offer their children, no one can feel surprise that children usually show fondness for them. Here, however, we are not concerned with awarding medals for meritorious conduct, but with trying to decide whether the attachment to their mothers of Mahes and Jolly de Silva exceeded that usual in their culture; I think it did. I have already indicated that Jolly de Silva breached rather strong traditions in Sri Lanka by preserving for himself a portion of the ashes of his mother's body which he later carried in a box to Greece and there lost. So much I think for the evidence on his side. As for Mahes, it is best perhaps to take most of our information on this point from his father rather than his mother. He said that Mahes monitored her movements very carefully; he did not like her to leave the house (even when he was at school) without his awareness and, one presumes, his permission. He vigilantly noticed new objects that appeared in the house which provided evidence that his mother had been out shopping when, according to him, she should have been at home where he thought she was. If he was not at school he liked to go everywhere she went, if at all possible. Mahes' mother said that he showed little worry when he himself became ill, but became greatly concerned when she did.

In the handling of money Mahes showed a circumspection totally lacking in Jolly de Silva. The latter was casual, I might almost say irresponsible, in the way he distributed his money; generosity was one of his virtues, but thrift was not. Mahes, however, was careful; so much so that his mother applied the phrase "a bit stingy" to him. Yet she added that he had generous tendencies. He gave gifts to the poor and garments to needy children. Like Jolly de Silva, Mahes had also literally given "the shirt off his back." Piyaseelie would not single Mahes out from her other children in this respect; she found them all compassionate to the less fortunate.

Mahes' mother emphasized that he had the faculty for honesty and reliability developed to a high degree. He was true to his word and expected no less from others. He did not like to borrow from other persons—not even a newspaper. His father had a somewhat different view of Mahes' conduct in such matters. He had noticed that when Mahes borrowed his tools he sometimes returned them and sometimes did not. He had often found it necessary to rebuke him about this sort of thing. Because of these discrepant judgments on the part of Mahes' parents it would be wrong to say that his character corresponded closely with that of Jolly de Silva as regards the reliability and sense of total responsibility toward the belongings of other persons that informants attributed to Jolly de Silva. I may add that Mahes is far too young for anyone to suppose that he will not yet develop this virtue, but in view of his father's statements, it would be false to claim that he now has it.

Piyaseelie de Silva told me that Mahes generally preferred a sitting posture with his arms spread out from his body and his hands resting on the furniture where he sat so that they supported or braced his trunk. This was precisely the position favored by Jolly de Silva, particularly when he had attacks of

asthma, but at some other times also. As I have mentioned, it was the posture Mahes assumed when he entered the bedroom of Jolly de Silva's house in Panadura and sat on the bed. For Nalene Peiris, Mahes' assumption of this posture as he sat on Jolly de Silva's bed in Panadura provided the most convincing evidence that Mahes had memories of her father.

Mahes once mentioned that he had taken alcoholic beverages. But this seems to have been his sole reference to that indulgence on the part of Jolly de Silva. And he never asked for alcohol. On the contrary, he declared its consumption "a bad habit."

For most of the traits about which I could obtain apparently valid information, Mahes' behavior corresponded closely to that reported for Jolly de Silva. But for some traits I found either no matching or ambiguous testimony. Such traits included reliability with regard to other persons' property, interest in card games and, above all, craving for alcohol. In his lack of interest in alcohol, Mahes' case certainly invites comparison with that of Sujith Lakmal Jayaratne (this volume), who as a small child desired it keenly and openly solicited it from neighbors when he found that his own family would not supply him. If we assume reincarnation as the best interpretation for both these cases, I find it easy to conjecture why the craving for alcohol would be carried into the next life for Sujith Lakmal Jayaratne but not for Mahes de Silva. But as part of my effort to make this book a careful record of facts relatively free of speculations, I shall not offer these interpretations here.

In Table 16 I have summarized the behavior of Mahes that corresponded with that attributed to Jolly de Silva; I have included in this table the several mentioned traits about which reports of their behavior did not show concordance between the two personalities.

Other Relevant Behavior of Mahes

I have already mentioned that Mahes impressed me as being a person of superior intelligence. His performance at school confirmed this judgment. In 1973 he was attending the Prince of Wales School in Moratuwa and was then in the third class. The previous year he had been ranked second in a class of forty students.

Neither of Mahes' parents had noticed in him any evidence of extrasensory perception apart from the memories of the previous life.

Comments on the Evidence of Paranormal Processes in the Case

The investigation of this case brought out more evidence of family relationships, although they were rather distant ones, between the subject and related previous personality than one usually finds in Sinhalese cases. Of the two persons having some knowledge of both immediate families, Usha Fernando could not have been an intermediary for information passing normally to Mahes since she only entered the family when he was nearly four and had

already been talking substantially about the previous life for close to two years. And Princie Fernando, who might have provided a line of communication through her knowledge of both families, denied that she had ever spoken about Jolly de Silva to Mahes' parents before Mahes did. I see no reason to challenge her memory or her honesty in this matter and no more reason to question

TABLE 16. *Correspondences in Behavior between Mahes and Jolly*

<i>Mahes</i>	<i>Jolly</i>
1. Fondness for reading	Fondness for reading; collected and read books on a wide variety of topics
2. Generous with personal possessions	Generous to friends and the poor
3. Conflicting testimony of informants about sense of responsibility	Unusually responsible and reliable once his word had been given
4. Dislike of wearing shirts	Dislike of wearing shirts
5. Favorite sweet: thala guli	Favorite sweet: thala guli
6. Habit of wanting liquids with his meals	Ate meals with water, soup, or an alcoholic beverage
7. Knowledgeable about Buddhism	Knowledgeable about Buddhism
8. Interest in mechanical things; ambition to become a mechanical engineer	Well informed about mechanical and engineering subjects
9. Posture preferred of sitting with arms stretched out and hands resting on furniture to give support	Habitual posture of sitting with arms stretched out and hands resting on furniture to give support
10. Unusually attached to his mother	Unusually attached to his mother
11. Fondness for Nalene Peiris	Nalene Peiris his favorite daughter
12. Dislike of Hilary Peiris	Had strained relations with his son-in-law Hilary Peiris
13. Severe phobia of trains when young	Had had a severe injury from an accident while riding on a train
14. Severe phobia of water	Almost drowned when a ship he was on was sunk during World War II
15. Equable in mood, but not "jolly"	Jovial nearly all the time; universally thought to be appropriately nicknamed "Jolly"
16. Not interested in alcohol	Addicted to alcohol, which hastened his death
17. Not interested in playing cards	Played cards nearly every day
18. Careful in handling money	Careless, almost carefree, in handling money

the claim by the immediate families concerned that they had no personal acquaintance prior to the first meeting between them that was brought about through the curiosity that Mahes' statements aroused.

In the Introduction to this volume I drew attention to the large percentage of subjects in Sri Lanka who do not remember sufficient details in number or specificity to permit verification of their statements. Mahes did not remember many details, but he did recall four proper names—Jolly, Silva, Nalene, and Panadura. These were just sufficient to establish the identity of the person whose life he was remembering. His other imaged memories were scanty, and there were few of them additional to the proper names just mentioned. In contrast, however, Mahes showed abundant behavioral memories. No single one of these nor all of them together could be regarded as specific for either Mahes or Jolly de Silva. But much of Mahes' behavior that seemed related to the previous life was unusual in his family, which reduces the likelihood that he acquired it from imitating his parents or older brother. I am myself sufficiently impressed by the similarities in behavior between Mahes and Jolly de Silva to think that if Mahes had had fewer imaged memories so that the identification of Jolly de Silva as the related previous personality had been in doubt, we might have found support for deciding that he was the correct related previous personality in the similarity between his behavior and that of Mahes.⁷

Mahes' Later Development

Mahes talked about the previous life he was remembering with greatest intensity between the ages of two and four. Thereafter he talked less and less about it, and by the time he actually met Nalene Peiris at the age of five and a half he had apparently forgotten most of what he earlier remembered, which had never been much.

In October 1973, Mahes' mother said that he had had the phobia of trains only when young and had lost it by that year. He had, however, preserved his fear of the sea and still would not swim in the nearby ocean. His father, on the other hand, thought that Mahes had continued to have an irrational fear of both trains and the sea.

In all other respects Mahes, who was eight years old in the autumn of 1973, was developing as an entirely normal boy. He continued to have an interest in Nalene Peiris and had visited her in the spring or early summer of that year—evidently between my first and second visits to study the case. He was not, however, so absorbed in the previous family as some of the subjects of these

⁷ In the case of Indika Guneratne (this volume), the resemblances in behavior between Indika and K. G. J. Weerasinghe reinforced the identification of the latter as the correct related previous personality. It would be rash to use these behavioral correspondences as the *sole* basis for making such an identification, but I foresee that they may contribute more importantly to this in future cases and especially when they happen to include unusual features such as the special posture adopted by Mahes and Jolly de Silva or the unusual interest in snakes shown by Kumkum Verma (first volume of this series) that related to the keeping of a pet cobra by the previous personality of her case.

cases have been; and yet he was not totally cut off from its members and the comfort they could provide, as some others have been. If a child remembers a previous life, then some infrequent but friendly contact with the family of the previous personality seems to me not injurious and perhaps helpful for his further development. So far as I could tell, no smothering possessiveness on the part of either Piyaseelie de Silva or Nalene Peiris flawed their approach to Mahes' claim to remember a previous life; jealousies of this type have sometimes marred the attitudes of the adults concerned in other cases and, in my opinion, to the detriment of the subject as well as themselves. Such disharmonies were happily absent in the present case.

In 1973 Mahes was enjoying good physical health and he had not, up to that time, had any symptoms of asthma.

In March 1976, I met Mahes and his parents again at their home in Moratuwa. Mahes was eleven years old and attending school in the sixth class. He said that he had forgotten the previous life completely except for "remembering that he had lived in that house with Nalene." Visits between Mahes and Nalene Peiris had become much less frequent than they had been earlier. Nalene continued to be fond of Mahes and sent word to his home inviting him to visit her. But he found himself busy at school and his visits to Panadura had become reduced to one a year. He had visited Nalene at the time of the Buddhist New Year in April 1975 and intended to go again on the same occasion in 1976.

Mahes persisted in being unfriendly with Nalene's husband, Hilary. The latter tried to be friendly with him, but according to Mahes' mother, Mahes would never talk to him.

Mahes had preserved two traits that seemed to be related to the previous life. He still preferred to wear no shirt. At the time of my (unannounced) arrival at his house in 1976 Mahes was shirtless and, when he saw me, quickly disappeared and emerged again with a shirt on. He also continued unusually fond of books, especially those dealing with technical subjects and science. His father, a radio engineer, showed mingled pride and frustration as he described the almost endless questions about technical matters that Mahes expected him to answer. In all other respects Mahes was indistinguishable from other intelligent Sinhalese boys of his age.

9. The Case of Warnasiri Adikari

Summary of the Case and Its Investigation

WARNASIRI ADIKARI was born on November 9, 1957, at Kirikita, near Weliweriya, about 32 kilometers northeast of Colombo. His parents were Julis Adikari (a farmer) and his wife, B. A. Roslin Nona. Warnasiri was the first child of the family. A younger brother, Upavansa, was born early in 1960. By 1970, Warnasiri had five younger brothers.

When Warnasiri was a little more than four years old, he began to talk to his father about a previous life that he said he had lived in the village of Kimbulgoda, some 8 kilometers from Weliweriya. His father remembered the first occasion of Warnasiri's speaking of the previous life as occurring when he was playing with a car tire. He was rolling it and saying: "Now you must take me to Kimbulgoda and stop near the culvert." A little later Warnasiri said to his father while playing: "Father, Kimbulgoda is my village." His father asked Warnasiri: "If Kimbulgoda was your village, where was your house?" Warnasiri then said it was close to the school, beside the main road, and mentioned that it was painted blue and was better than their house. He added various additional details about the previous life at this time and later.

Warnasiri also spoke, with much less detail, of three other lives that he claimed to remember and I shall describe what he said about them in a later section.

Julis Adikari knew nothing of the person Warnasiri claimed to be, but after some delay decided to take his son to Kimbulgoda. Before he could do this, however, word of the child's statements spread to Kimbulgoda. A resident there, Emma Nona, had some relatives who lived in Weliweriya, and she heard about the statements of Warnasiri and mentioned them to her sister, T. Ranaweera. The latter recognized similarities between Warnasiri's statements and facts in the life of her son. This son, Ananda V. Mahipala, was born on October 26, 1926, and died suddenly on October 26, 1956. T. Ranaweera visited Weliweriya in the spring of 1962 and met Julis Adikari, but did not meet Warnasiri on this occasion. He was then away, but he had said earlier that his former mother would visit him in three days' time, an accurate prediction of the visit and time interval. T. Ranaweera's conversation with Warnasiri's father increased her wish to meet Warnasiri, and she invited him and his father to visit Kimbulgoda.

They returned her visit some two weeks later. Warnasiri had previously indicated the general location of the house of his claimed previous life in Kimbulgoda. When he and his father arrived at the village, he led the way to the site of the previous house, but it had been torn down. Then they went to a neighbor's house. Amid a crowd of women who assembled there, Warnasiri

recognized T. Ranaweera as his mother of the previous life, despite attempts by other women present to draw him toward them. Warnasiri asked T. Ranaweera about some of the possessions of her deceased son and correctly identified several of them.

Shortly after this first meeting between Warnasiri and Ananda Mahipala's mother, an account of the case appeared in the *Ceylon Daily News* of June 28, 1962. In this way the case came to the attention of Francis Story. He went twice to the two villages, in July and August 1962, to investigate the case at first hand and to witness a test of Warnasiri's ability to recognize other members of the deceased man's family, especially his sisters. In this test, Warnasiri initially failed. During the time when Francis Story was watching what Warnasiri would do when asked to recognize Ananda's sisters, he definitely did not recognize them. But in 1965, one of these sisters asserted that when the tension and attention of the anxious observers had abated and the people present began talking about other things, someone again asked Warnasiri if he could recognize his sisters. Thereupon he went to Iranganie and Vinitha, two of Ananda's sisters, and took their hands. Francis Story did not see this episode. Iranganie, who was one informant about these recognitions, was satisfied that Warnasiri had, by his gesture and behavior, recognized her. Her mother, T. Ranaweera, was equally convinced (in 1965) that Warnasiri had recognized Iranganie and Vinitha in 1962 as soon as people in the crowd around him had stopped watching him.

Warnasiri met T. Ranaweera on one other occasion in 1962 (before the first visit of Francis Story) and at that time asked her about another of the possessions of the deceased Ananda.

In 1965 Francis Story returned to the area (with some different interpreters) to recheck the testimony and record developments in the case since his earlier visit. He learned that Warnasiri had made in the meantime a few additional statements about the life of Ananda Mahipala.

In July 1966, when I was in Sri Lanka, Francis Story and I worked on the case together. We visited both the family of Warnasiri Adikari and that of Ananda Mahipala, the deceased personality Warnasiri claimed to have been. Prior to this review of the case, we had obtained a translation into Sinhalese of an earlier draft of our first report of the case,¹ including the list of statements and behavior related to the previous life that the informants had attributed to Warnasiri. We showed this translation to the two chief witnesses of the case, Warnasiri's father and Ananda's mother. They read the list, made a few minor changes of unimportant details, and signed it as according with what they remembered of the facts. Table 17 below reproduces this list and gives several additional items.²

¹ F. Story and I. Stevenson. 1967. A case of the reincarnation type in Ceylon: The case of Warnasiri Adikari. *Journal A.S.P.R.* 61:130-45.

² Table 17 contains all the items of the list published earlier and also items 28 and 30, not included in the earlier report of the case. In addition, items 24 and 25 of Table 17 formed part of a single item in the earlier list but have been divided here for greater precision in reporting them.

In our 1966 investigation a few further details were added to the testimony and some (usually minor) corrections of previous testimony were made.

In November 1970, Francis Story and I returned to Kirikita, where we had further interviews with Warnasiri's parents mainly concerning his further development. We also visited Warnasiri himself, who was then attending a school in a village (Radhawana) not far from where he was living with a paternal aunt.

In March 1973, Warnasiri was staying at the Siriwardhanaramaya Temple in Gonahena, near Webada, where he was studying in preparation for ordination as a Buddhist monk. I visited him there and talked with him and the chief monk of the temple, the Ven. E. Pannasiha. We discussed principally the persistence of Warnasiri's memories of the previous life and his plans to enter the Sangha, the order of Buddhist monks.

I followed with interest the preparations for Warnasiri's ordination but could not attend the ceremony, which took place on August 29, 1973. Godwin Samararatne was present and sent me a report. A considerable crowd watched a ritual rather more elaborate than occurs at the ordinations of most monks. Speakers drew the audience's attention to Warnasiri's memories of previous lives. Godwin Samararatne took advantage of his visit to the area to ask some additional questions of informants for me.

In 1974, Godwin Samararatne visited Kimbulgoda again and was able to meet D. J. Dehiwatte, who had been a neighbor and close friend of Ananda Mahipala's family for many years and had known Ananda well. She furnished additional information about Ananda's life and character. Also in 1974, Julis Adikari answered some questions about details in correspondence with Godwin Samararatne.

In March 1976, Godwin Samararatne and I visited Warnasiri at his temple in Gonahena and learned of his further development since I had last met him.

Persons Interviewed during the Investigation

In Kirikita, Francis Story alone, or he and I together, interviewed:

Warnasiri Adikari

Julis Adikari, Warnasiri's father

(interviewed in 1962, 1965, 1966, and 1970)

B. A. Roslin Nona, Warnasiri's mother

(interviewed in 1965, 1966, and 1970)

Isabella Kumarapelie, Julis Adikari's mother and Warnasiri's grandmother (interviewed in 1965)

In Kimbulgoda, Francis Story alone, or he and I together, interviewed:

T. Ranaweera, Ananda V. Mahipala's mother

(interviewed in 1962, 1965, and 1966)

Iranganie Mahipala Pieris, Ananda V. Mahipala's younger sister (interviewed in 1965 and 1966)

D. A. Ranaweera, relative of T. Ranaweera (interviewed in 1962 and 1966)

R. K. Dharmaratne, close friend of Ananda V. Mahipala (interviewed in 1962 and 1966)

Swarna Jayawardena, Ananda V. Mahipala's younger sister (interviewed in 1962)

H. Albert Pieris, Ananda V. Mahipala's brother-in-law (interviewed in 1965)

The last two persons interviewed in Kimbulgoda were interviewed only once by Francis Story. They were minor witnesses and contributed little to the investigation of the case.

I also interviewed the Ven. E. Pannasiha at the Siriwardhanaramaya Temple in Gonahena. He was not an informant for the case as such, but only about Warnasiri's later development and plans to become a monk. I met him in 1973.

In 1974 Godwin Samararatne interviewed (at Kimbulgoda) D. J. Dehiwatte, a neighbor and close friend of Ananda Mahipala's family.

When Francis Story visited the Adikari family in 1962, Warnasiri's mother, B. A. Roslin Nona, was extremely shy and withdrew from the room where he was talking with her husband. (Such behavior is common among Asian women, especially the village women, in front of strangers.) Her testimony was therefore not obtained at that time. In 1965, however, she was less timid and Francis Story was able to talk with her. In 1966 she was even more affable and spoke quite freely, as she did again in 1970. On the common points touched upon, her later testimony corroborated that given earlier by her husband as to the statements and other behavior of Warnasiri.

*Relevant Facts of Geography and Possibilities for Normal Means
of Communication between the Two Families*

As already mentioned, the two villages of Kirikita and Kimbulgoda lie about 8 kilometers apart. Access from one to the other is not difficult, although in Sri Lanka this does not mean that many acquaintanceships occurred between persons in the two villages. In 1962 Julis Adikari said that he had never visited Kimbulgoda before he first took Warnasiri there. He stated that he and his wife knew no one in Kimbulgoda and had never spoken to Warnasiri about the place prior to his declarations concerning his previous life there. T. Ranaweera similarly said she had known nothing of the family of Julis Adikari, and knew no one connected with it. She had been to Kirikita, but had no connections there and no interest in the village. As already mentioned, her older sister, Emma Nona, had some relatives in Weliveriya from whom she first heard about Warnasiri's statements. I did not learn whether Emma Nona's relatives heard

about the case directly from the Adikaris or secondhand from other informants. Julis Adikari stated that he and his family did not know Emma Nona personally.

In 1970 I asked Julis Adikari if he had in the meantime thought of any other connections between his family and Ananda Mahipala's family in Kimbulgoda. He said that he had learned that the two families were distantly connected by marriage. A maternal cousin of his (Julis Adikari's) who had lived in Kirikita had married a niece of T. Ranaweera. The marriage had taken place sometime in the period of 1950-55. The couple had married on their own, in contrast to the usual style of marriage in Sri Lanka, which is parental arrangement. Julis Adikari had not attended the wedding. His cousin had not lived in Kirikita since his marriage, and it therefore seems most unlikely that he could have been a channel for information about Ananda Mahipala reaching Warnasiri.

The Life and Death of Ananda Mahipala

Ananda Vijayamudali Mahipala was born on October 26, 1926. He was the oldest child in a family with five younger daughters and no other son. His father, D. M. N. Mahipala, was a headmaster of a school. His mother, T. Ranaweera, was also a teacher. The family belonged to the middle classes.

After completing his schooling (to what level I do not know) he found no settled occupation and seems to have been largely supported by his parents. His mother said that he engaged in "social work" in Kimbulgoda; but as it is quite a small place there cannot have been much scope for this, and I suspect the phrase was a euphemism for his occasional assistance to other persons of the area. He owned and drove an automobile and hired it out to others so that he earned some income in this way. He also sold pineapples which he carried around in his car.

His father died in 1953. His mother continued to work as a schoolteacher. He was evidently strongly attached to his mother and his sisters.

We could not learn much about Ananda's character, and his mother's doting tenderness toward her deceased son rendered her almost useless as a witness about his personality. He seems to have had a generally equable nature, but was susceptible to outbursts of temper if crossed. He had a good sense of humor and enjoyed calling people nicknames, having two also himself. After his mother, the principal object of his affection seems to have been his automobile, for which he was a skilled mechanic.

D. J. Dehiwatte regarded him as a sort of village playboy who occupied himself mainly with entertainments and other personal pleasures. She did not consider him in any way an unusually religious person, although she did confirm T. Ranaweera's report that he had engaged in helpful neighborhood activities that could be subsumed under the idea of "social work." She also said that Ananda had been extremely popular and had had many devoted friends.

Ananda had a gun and hunted crows. His mother would not admit that he

shot bigger game, but it seemed probable that as a devout Buddhist she wished to protect her son from any suspicion of such a deplorable activity as hunting. In 1973, Godwin Samararatne learned from Ananda's younger sister, Iran-ganie, that he had in fact shot hares.

When he was just thirty Ananda died very suddenly on October 26, 1956. He came home, had an early lunch of rice curry, and almost immediately thereafter became ill. He lost consciousness rapidly and could not be revived. His mother, who was at her school, was sent for and he was taken to the hospital. He died in the early afternoon of the day he became ill. T. Ranaweera said that the cause of death was "thrombosis," presumably referring to a coronary artery thrombosis, which, if sufficiently extensive, could have brought death rapidly. This diagnosis received support from the statement of Ananda's brother-in-law, H. Albert Pieris, who said he had died "after complaining of a pain in the chest."

Statements and Recognitions Made by Warnasiri

In Table 17 I have listed all the statements and recognitions attributed to Warnasiri by the informants. Items 1-13 are statements Warnasiri made before the two families concerned had met. Items 14-20 occurred during Warnasiri's first visit to Kimbulgoda, although it seems probable, from the statements of B. A. Roslin Nona in 1966, that Warnasiri had mentioned a bicycle and almirah (items 19-20) before he went to Kimbulgoda. Item 21 occurred during one of Warnasiri's later visits to Kimbulgoda in the summer of 1962. Items 22-32 were reported and noted after the first investigation of the case by Francis Story in 1962. They may have less value than the other items because of this later recording. However, I understood from the testimony of Warnasiri's mother in 1966 that items 27 and 29 definitely occurred before the two families had met. Warnasiri told his father item 23 between 1962 and 1965.

Warnasiri attributed his death (in the previous life) to eating some "beautiful fruits" (item 11). Ananda had rice curry for lunch on the day he died. His mother, T. Ranaweera, did not know whether he had eaten fruits earlier in the day.³ It is, however, extremely unlikely that these would have caused his death, although it is conceivable that he had inadvertently eaten something poisonous with them.

³ The detail of some food taken or some other seemingly unimportant event occurring just before death occurs often in cases of the reincarnation type. The cases of Ravi Shankar Gupta, Parmod Sharma (I. Stevenson. 1974. *Twenty cases*, and Zouheir Chaar (in the third volume of this series) provide other examples. Perhaps food taken or something done just before death becomes specially fixed in the memory because of the intensity of the experience of dying. Dostoevsky commented on the trivial details noted by men about to be shot of which he himself had personal experience. In the present case, a surviving Ananda, finding his body dead, might have cast around for a plausible explanation of such a sudden death and attributed this superstitiously to something he had recently eaten. Such misplaced assignments of blame in illness and death occur commonly in the East, but also in the West. I have drawn attention to incorrect, or at least unsubstantiated, assignments of causes of death by the subjects in the cases of Swarnlata Mishra, Jasbir Singh (I. Stevenson. 1974. *Twenty cases*), and Sunil Dutt Saxena (first volume of this series).

TABLE 17. *Summary of Statements and Recognitions Made by Warnasiri*

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. His mother lived in Kimbulgoda, but his father had died.	Julis Adikari, Warnasiri's father B. A. Roslin Nona, Warnasiri's mother	T. Ranaweera, Ananda's mother	Ananda's father, D. M. N. Mahipala, had died in 1953, three years before Ananda died.
2. His mother in Kimbulgoda was fairer and fatter than his [present] mother.	Julis Adikari B. A. Roslin Nona	Verified by my observations and comparisons of the two women	
3. His mother in Kimbulgoda had more money than his [present] parents.	Julis Adikari	T. Ranaweera	Warnasiri was so conscious of the wealth of the previous life that he asked his father several times why he (Julis Adikari) did not buy a car. B. A. Roslin Nona confirmed that Warnasiri had asked his father to buy a car, a sign of an expectation of prosperity. Ananda himself had had a car. This was verified by other persons who had known Ananda besides his mother. Judging by the homes the families lived in at the time I first met them in 1966, I have no doubt that Ananda Mahipala's family was more prosperous than Warnasiri's.
4. In his previous life he had stored some money in a drawer at home.	Julis Adikari T. Ranaweera	T. Ranaweera	Some money had been stored in a drawer at the time of Ananda's death, as indicated by Warnasiri. According to T. Ranaweera, however, the money was hers, not Ananda's.
5. The house of his former life was beside the main road near the school.	Julis Adikari	T. Ranaweera	This house had been taken down after the death of Ananda and we therefore could not examine it. The

verification about it came from T. Ranaweera only.

See comment for item 5.

See comment for item 5. From knowledge of Warnasiri's house and the description of the house that was torn down, I believe that this was an accurate statement.

See comment for item 5. The guava tree had been planted by Ananda and another boy. In 1965 T. Ranaweera stated that Warnasiri still talked much of the guava tree.

See comment for item 5. Also verified by Francis Story when he visited the site of the former house of the Mahipalas.

Gotukola is a local vegetable. A gotukola seller in Kimbulgoda was called "Uncle Gotukola." We were unable to verify this item independently. No informant in Kimbulgoda could recall a person known as "Uncle Gotukola," but Julis Adikari insisted that earlier T. Ranaweera had verified this item to him. His wife, B. A. Roslin Nona, also said it had been verified.

Ananda died suddenly, and his death was attributed to heart failure. According to B. A. Roslin Nona,

Julis Adikari
B. A. Roslin Nona

Julis Adikari
B. A. Roslin Nona

Julis Adikari
Isabella Kumarapelie,
Warnasiri's paternal
grandmother

Julis Adikari

Julis Adikari

Julis Adikari
B. A. Roslin Nona

6. The house was blue, and had a tile roof.

7. The house was a better one than the house of his [present] parents.

8. A guava tree grew in front of his house.

9. The house was near a culvert.

10. In Kimbulgoda there was a person who sold gotukola and who was known as "Uncle Gotukola."

11. In the previous life he had died from the effects of eating some "beautiful fruits."

T. Ranaweera

T. Ranaweera

T. Ranaweera

T. Ranaweera

Julis Adikari

Unverified; almost certainly incorrect

TABLE 17 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
11. (cont.)			Warnasiri had said he (in the previous life) had died after eating "small fruits."
12. After eating the fruits, he had gone home, eaten breakfast, and died suddenly.	Julis Adikari	T. Ranaweera	Ananda did become ill after eating some food and died within a very short time. He ate the meal in question about 10:00 A.M. It was in fact an early lunch rather than a breakfast.
13. After his death he was reborn as a son of his present mother, but died soon after birth; his body was placed in a cardboard box at the hospital.	Julis Adikari	Julis Adikari	Ananda died on October 26, 1956. In the same month, B. A. Roslin Nona gave birth to a baby boy who died an hour after birth at the Government Hospital in Dompe. The infant was born in the seventh month of the pregnancy. Warnasiri was born a little more than a year later, on November 9, 1957.
14. Recognition of the school in Kimbulgoda	Julis Adikari		T. Ranaweera had taught at this school for many years. The school might have been recognized as one from the road. It was, however, set well back from the road and did not look conspicuously like a school.
15. Recognition of the site of Ananda's house	Julis Adikari		See comment for item 5. Passing the school, Warnasiri led his father on the way to the house another half a kilometer; when they reached the site of the house, he said: "The house is not here."

16. Recognition of T.
Ranaweera, Ananda's mother

Julis Adikari
T. Ranaweera

This house had been pulled down after the death of Ananda, and T. Ranaweera had moved to another one. See also the following item.

This recognition occurred at a house in Kimbulgoda where the group had stopped as they were trying to find the correct house. They were invited to have tea at this house. While they were there word was spread in Kimbulgoda that Warnasiri had come and many persons, including T. Ranaweera, came to see him. Warnasiri was then asked whether his previous mother was in the group and he readily picked T. Ranaweera out of the crowd of women who had assembled. The only other comments or suggestions made consisted of efforts by other women present to draw him to them, saying: "Come here: I am your mother." All these he ignored, going straight to T. Ranaweera. She then took Warnasiri on her lap and afterward carried him to her house. There he said: "You are my mother, but this is not the house." T. Ranaweera had moved to another house after the death of her son, Ananda. T. Ranaweera and her deceased son had been extremely fond of each other.

In 1962, D. A. Ranaweera said that he had witnessed the unprompted recognition by Warnasiri of Ananda's mother. In 1966, however, he denied

TABLE 17 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
16. (cont.)			that he had been present at this recognition. I cannot explain this change of testimony.
17. His previous mother had had teeth.	T. Ranaweera	T. Ranaweera	Warnasiri said to T. Ranaweera at their first meeting: "Where are your teeth, mother? You used to have teeth." T. Ranaweera had had her teeth extracted after the death of Ananda.
18. Initial failure to recognize Ananda's sisters when they were presented to him in a group of other young women; later reported to have recognized two sisters of Ananda, Iranganie and Vinitha	Initial failure observed by Francis Story on the occasion Iranganie Mahipala Pieris, Ananda's younger sister T. Ranaweera		Warnasiri's initial failure was possibly due to anxiety aroused in the child by the stilted, artificial manner of the participants and by a considerable crowd of persons who stared at him. According to Iranganie Pieris (in 1965), Warnasiri did later correctly recognize her and her sister after the initial tension of the staged event had abated. It seems, however, that Iranganie asked Warnasiri a leading question, namely: "Am I your sister?" to which Warnasiri said: "Yes." T. Ranaweera said (also in 1965) that Warnasiri went to Ananda's sisters, Iranganie and Vinitha, and took them by the hand. She said no one made any sign to help him do this. She also said Warnasiri did this only after the crowd had stopped staring at him and talked among themselves.

19. He had a bicycle.
Julis Adikari
B. A. Roslin Nona
T. Ranaweera
Warnasiri asked for this bicycle during his first visit to Kimbulgoda. Ananda had had a bicycle; his mother had sold it after his death.
20. He had an almirah [closet].
Julis Adikari
B. A. Roslin Nona
T. Ranaweera
Warnasiri also asked about this almirah during his first visit to Kimbulgoda. B. A. Roslin Nona stated that Warnasiri had earlier said he had had an almirah in the previous life. She was not a witness of his asking about it in Kimbulgoda.
21. He had a toy drummer.
T. Ranaweera
Julis Adikari
T. Ranaweera
Warnasiri mentioned this toy drummer first during one of his visits to Kimbulgoda (after the first one) in the summer of 1962. At that time he asked T. Ranaweera: "Where is my drummer?"
T. Ranaweera at first did not know what Warnasiri meant when he asked for the drummer, but on searching through some old things she found two clay toys that had belonged to Ananda, and one of these was the figure of a Kandyan drummer. According to B. A. Roslin Nona, Warnasiri had kept the drummer, which T. Ranaweera had given him, among his toys. It was shown to Francis Story in 1965 and to me in 1966.
22. He drove a Morris Minor car.
Warnasiri (1965)
H. Albert Pieris,
Ananda's brother-in-law
Iranganie Mahipala Pieris
R. K. Dharmaratne,
close friend of Ananda
Testimony of 1965. Ananda had owned a car, but it was an Austin 40 model. His father, however, had owned a Morris car and Ananda had driven this car.

TABLE 17 (cont.)

Item	Informants	Verification	Comments
23. He had been in an automobile accident, running into a bus at Waturagama.	Julis Adikari	Unverified	Testimony of 1965. T. Ranaweera said that Ananda had never been in a serious automobile accident. She might not have known of a minor accident.
24. He had been called "Sudu Mahattaya."	Julis Adikari Warnasiri (1965)	T. Ranaweera D. A. Ranaweera, relative of T. Ranaweera	Testimony of 1965 and 1966. Ananda had been sometimes called by the nickname "Sudu Mahattaya," which means roughly "fair-skinned master."
25. He had also been known as "Ukkung Mahatta."	Warnasiri (1966)	T. Ranaweera	Ananda also had the nickname "Ukkung Mahattaya." <i>Ukkung</i> means "baby"; <i>Mahatta</i> is a colloquial abbreviation for <i>Mahattaya</i> .
26. Failure to recognize a photograph of Ananda	T. Ranaweera		Testimony of 1965. The details of the attempt to test recognition of this photograph were not given.
27. He had sisters at his home.	B. A. Roslin Nona	T. Ranaweera Iranganie Pieris	Testimony of 1966. The item had not been mentioned earlier, but B. A. Roslin Nona indicated that it was among the statements Warnasiri had made before any verifications had taken place. Ananda had five sisters.
28. He had no brothers.	Warnasiri (1965)	T. Ranaweera	
29. His mother was a schoolteacher.	B. A. Roslin Nona	T. Ranaweera	Testimony of 1966. As with item 27, B. A. Roslin Nona indicated that Warnasiri had made this statement

before any verifications had taken place, although it seems not to have been mentioned or recorded before 1966. See also item 14 for recognition of the school where T. Ranaweera taught.

30. His father's name was Mahipala.

Warnasiri (1965)

T. Ranaweera

31. Recognition of another photograph of Ananda

Francis Story witnessed this recognition in 1965.

Testimony of 1965. A photograph of Ananda as a young man was shown to Warnasiri. He was asked: "Who is that?" and he said at once: "That is myself." Witnesses of the two families said he had not been shown this photograph before.

32. Recognition of a photograph of Ananda's sister Padma Perera

Francis Story witnessed this recognition in 1965.

Testimony of 1965. On being shown a photograph of Padma Perera as a child, Warnasiri said: "That is she," and pointed toward Padma Perera, who was present. Padma Perera had grown up and her features had changed considerably since this photograph had been taken. Francis Story said that he would not himself have been able to identify Padma Perera from this photograph. Witnesses of the two families said that Warnasiri had not previously been shown this photograph of Padma Perera. No person present told or hinted to Warnasiri the identity of the persons in the photographs of items 31 and 32. Padma Perera was not otherwise an informant for the case.

Items 31 and 32 have a special importance because they are two recognitions Warnasiri made of photographs in the presence of Francis Story. No one gave Warnasiri any hint as to the people he recognized in the photographs, which, according to informants of Ananda's family, he had never seen before.

Warnasiri's Statements about Memories of Other Lives. In addition to his statements about the life he recalled in most detail, that of Ananda Mahipala, Warnasiri said he remembered three other lives.

The first of these occurred before the life of Ananda Mahipala. He said that he had been the son of a potter of low caste (as potters are in Sri Lanka) living in Kelaniya, a town just north of Colombo. He did not want to become a potter and so took a job as a dental mechanic in a Chinese shop. He said his finger had been injured on a wheel used for grinding teeth. Warnasiri made somewhat conflicting statements at different times concerning the occupation of the person who lived in Kelaniya. In 1962 his father stated that Warnasiri had said he owned a boutique at Kelaniya, near the temple, and had gone to a shop owned by a Chinese. (The detail of actually working in a Chinese shop as a dental mechanic was given also by Julis Adikari, in 1965.) Warnasiri had said that in this life he used to go boating on the river at Kelaniya (Kelani Ganga), and once the boat overturned and he drowned.

The details given by Warnasiri were not sufficient to permit any definite verification of the life he said he had lived in Kelaniya. This presumably would have ended before 1926, the year of Ananda Mahipala's birth. Inquiries at Kelaniya elicited memories from one informant of the existence of a Chinese textile shop in Kelaniya during the 1920s. And two elderly persons said they remembered a boating accident in which someone had drowned at about this time.

Following the life in Kelaniya, according to Warnasiri's chronology, he had been reborn in Kimbulgoda as Ananda Mahipala. T. Ranaweera said that Ananda had not remembered a previous life. In other words, only Warnasiri later claimed to remember the life in Kelaniya. Ananda might have recalled it and not mentioned it, but this seems unlikely in a Buddhist country. Warnasiri told me in 1973 that during the life of Ananda he had not remembered the previous life in Kelaniya.

Warnasiri said that after the death of Ananda Mahipala (on October 26, 1956), he had been reborn as a son to Julis Adikari and B. A. Roslin Nona, but had died soon after birth. His body was placed in a cardboard box at the hospital. According to Julis Adikari, these statements accorded with events in the life of the Adikari family. B. A. Roslin Nona had given birth to a baby boy born in October 1956. He was her first child and died about an hour after his birth at the Government Hospital, Dompe. The baby was born after seven months of pregnancy.⁴ I tried to verify these statements at the Government

⁴ The hypothesis of reincarnation by itself implies nothing as to when a personality assumes occupancy of a new physical body. For practical purposes I have adopted the convention of applying the word *reincarnation* to those cases in which the presumed previous personality died not later than the

Hospital, Dompe. Unfortunately, there was no record there of the birth of a baby to B. A. Roslin Nona in 1956. But Dr. D. K. P. Senarath of the staff of the hospital, who had the records searched for me, said that an infant who had died almost immediately after birth would be regarded as effectively stillborn and the birth not registered. Dr. Senarath was at first skeptical concerning the use of cardboard boxes for burial of infants since he believed that wooden boxes were invariably used for their coffins. But, after consulting a hospital orderly about the matter, he said that it seemed that cardboard boxes were sometimes used since the receptacles were provided by the infant's parents. Julis Adikari, however, stated that the body of their dead baby was disposed of by the hospital staff. Neither he nor his wife knew whether the body had been put in a cardboard box before burial, and so this detail is unverified.

Warnasiri also claimed (in 1966) to recall a previous life as a hare which ate leaves and had been shot. He said he had lived this life near the Adikari house in Kirikita. He gave no other details about it. Warnasiri's father said (in 1970) that he had spoken of the life of a hare as if it followed that of the infant who died almost immediately after birth at Dompe; but Warnasiri himself said (also in 1970) that the life as a hare came *before* the baby's life at Dompe. In Warnasiri's mind the life as a hare that was shot derived from Ananda's shooting of hares and could be regarded as a consequence of such misconduct.⁵

Warnasiri's Behavior Related to the Previous Life

Warnasiri exhibited, according to his father, a considerable identification with Ananda. He repeatedly asked his father to take him to Kimbulgoda. He insisted that his former mother loved him more than his present one did. After the first meeting with Ananda's mother, Warnasiri asked to see her again and refused to eat until his father agreed to take him. Once when another

moment of the subject's birth. If the previous personality died *after* the subject's birth, as in the case of Jasbir (I. Stevenson. 1974. *Twenty cases*), the term *possession* may be more appropriate. In most Asian cases of the reincarnation type the interval between the death of the previous personality and the birth of the body of the new personality is more than a year, although it is rarely more than ten years. But in a small number, a shorter interval occurs so that conception and some embryonic development of the body of the second personality must have occurred before the death of the first. And in Druse cases the subject's birth sometimes takes place on the same day (the Druses would say at the same instant) as the previous personality's death. For illustrative cases and further details about the Druse belief in reincarnation, see the third volume in this series.

⁵ One could hardly expect any evidence to support Warnasiri's claim of having been a hare, and none was offered. I have no doubt that he believed he had had a life as a hare just as earnestly as he believed he had had one as a human being called Ananda Mahipala. The memory of having been a hare could have arisen as an illusion of memory based on the Buddhist expectation that Ananda, who had shot hares, deserved to be reborn as one. I am inclined to assimilate this part of Warnasiri's experiences to Wijeratne's delusion of being a bird (I. Stevenson. 1974. *Twenty cases*) and to Gopal Gupta's idea that he had lived an "intermediate life" in London (in the first volume of this series). For a discussion of the Buddhist belief in the possibility of rebirth in subhuman animal bodies, see the Introduction to this volume and references cited therein. This topic should be kept quite separate from the question whether rebirth in subhuman animal bodies does in fact occur.

boy said he would attack Warnasiri's "good mother" (that is, T. Ranaweera), Warnasiri became angry and assaulted him. T. Ranaweera said that Warnasiri at one time had the habit, when he was given some delicacy, of putting aside a portion to give to her. She heard of this from Julis Adikari. We did not ask him about this and he did not mention the detail in his spontaneous testimony. But he stated that Warnasiri insisted he loved the previous mother more than his own mother. In 1965 he was still often asking to be taken to the previous mother. He continued making comparisons between her and his own mother up to about 1968. Sometimes he referred to the previous mother as just that, using the equivalent Sinhalese phrase: "issera amma." At other times he referred to her as "honda amma" (English: "good mother") and sometimes also talked about her as "Kimbulgoda amma."

Up to 1966 Warnasiri also showed a lively interest in automobiles, a passion difficult to account for solely on the basis of opportunities in his own family, which owned no automobile. On several occasions Warnasiri asked his father why he did not get a car. This request would not be so unusual in a boy of the city as it was in a village child. Even if it is not interpreted as evidence of unusual interest in automobiles, it may be seen as showing expectations of affluence (for a Sinhalese villager) on the part of Warnasiri. Warnasiri seemed also to have some precocious knowledge (for a boy of eight, as he was in 1965) of how to drive an automobile. Ananda drove a car and we were told that he was skilled as a mechanic.

Ananda, it will be remembered, had a gun and hunted. He is known to have shot crows and also larger game such as hares. In 1973 Warnasiri could not remember shooting hares, but said he remembered having said he had done so when younger. He attributed being reborn as a hare to the fact that, as Ananda, he had shot hares. He would not kill any living thing, not even insects. And he would not allow his younger brothers (of whom he had five by 1970) to kill them.

Ananda was a meat eater. He ate fish, chicken, mutton, and beef. In contrast, Warnasiri was essentially a vegetarian, although he sometimes ate fish reluctantly. In this respect he differed from his parents, who were not vegetarians. They ate fish often, and on rare occasions chicken, mutton, beef, and pork.⁶

Warnasiri's Attitude toward His Memories of Previous Lives. As already mentioned, Warnasiri said he could recall four previous lives anterior to his birth. To his father, Warnasiri several times expressed disgust with being reborn again and again and said that he wished to become a monk and make an end to it all.⁷ For

⁶ The infrequency of their eating meat almost certainly derived from their being unable to obtain or afford it rather than from other causes.

⁷ Buddhism teaches that release from the cycle of death and rebirth can be attained only by the development of nonattachment to the elements of terrestrial existence. The release from desire for the circumstances of incarnated existence may be sought and achieved in meditation, which Buddhist monks practice and teach. For a further discussion of this belief and pertinent references, see the introductory chapter of this volume.

a time he had the habit of throwing rubbish into a well at his home. When questioned about this, he said that he wanted to fill up the well, build a house at that site for his parents, and then leave them to become a monk. His father had great difficulty in checking this habit. Indeed, at one point he thought he could not do so and sent Warnasiri away to stay with relatives in the hope that this would break his habit of throwing things into the well. As has been seen, Warnasiri continued in his wish to become a monk and was eventually ordained.

Other Relevant Behavior of Warnasiri

When Francis Story saw Warnasiri in 1962 he appeared to be an extremely serious, shy, and indeed withdrawn child. He seemed at times to be abstracted from his surroundings, staring blankly into space. He spoke reluctantly and in single, disconnected words. But his father testified that he was quite intelligent. In 1965 and 1966 Warnasiri was happier and more communicative. In 1970 he talked easily with us when we visited him in Radhawana village, where he was attending school. In 1973 I visited him at the temple in Gonahena, where he had gone to prepare for his ordination as a monk. On that occasion he seemed at first reticent; thinking that curious bystanders were inhibiting him, we asked them to move away, and, when they did, Warnasiri became more relaxed and communicative. I could then see that he had matured considerably. By this time he was a youth of sixteen and a half and had a greatly increased self-confidence compared with his demeanor of three years earlier.

Warnasiri's mother said he had never shown any evidence of extrasensory perception. An apparent exception was his prediction, mentioned earlier, that the previous mother would visit him when she did.

The Behavior of Other People Concerned in the Case

Ananda's mother, T. Ranaweera, came to believe firmly that Warnasiri was her dead son reborn.

Warnasiri's parents also accepted him as talking about a previous life that he had really lived, and they tolerated well his invidious comparisons of his present situation with that which he claimed to remember from the principal previous life. They seem not to have opposed his wish to become a monk on any grounds other than the need for assistance with the work of Warnasiri's father as a farmer.

Comments on the Evidence of Paranormal Processes in the Case

I have been unable to find any motives or opportunities for fraud on the part of the informants for the case. In 1965 the earlier impression of their integrity was further strengthened when it was proposed to attempt hypnotic regression

of Warnasiri. (This endeavor, which was conducted with interpreters, failed.) When Francis Story suggested and explained hypnosis to Warnasiri's parents, they readily agreed. They understood the possibility of revelations by Warnasiri, if hypnotized, and would hardly have agreed to this procedure if they feared that some information unfavorable to themselves would emerge from the experiment. Furthermore, our two principal informants, Julis Adikari and T. Ranaweera, signed after reading (in Sinhalese) a draft of Table 17, which then listed items 1-26, and 31-32.

Although Warnasiri's statements about the previous life depicted a more prosperous existence than that of his present family, we found no evidence that he or his family had profited or could hope to do so from the recital of his apparent memories. If these represented only wish-fulfilling fantasies, they gained nothing for him by his narrating them to other persons. But obviously he believed he had true memories of a previous life and fretted against the restrictions of incarnated existence. Nor can we reasonably trace the impulse for Warnasiri's behavior to his parents, who certainly did not wish their child to prefer other parents or to fill up the family well.

The detailed and intimate information possessed by Warnasiri about the life of Ananda Mahipala can hardly have been known totally to anyone but Ananda's mother, T. Ranaweera. And yet, according to the witnesses, she was a total stranger to Warnasiri's family until after he began talking of the previous life. Many villagers of Kimbulgoda might know the details of the subsequently destroyed residence of the Mahipalas and their son. But knowledge of Ananda's childhood toy drummer would not have been in the public domain. Even T. Ranaweera had forgotten about the existence of the toy drummer belonging to her son when Warnasiri first mentioned it. In any case, no villager of Kimbulgoda knew the Adikari family. We could find no person who could have acted as a carrier of information to Warnasiri.

We should regard the reports of Warnasiri's recognition of T. Ranaweera as quite inconclusive since, although some women tried to divert Warnasiri to themselves, he was asked to identify "his mother" and glances toward her may have guided him. This explanation does not, however, account adequately for Warnasiri's affectionate behavior toward her. The cues and even encouragement of onlookers would hardly suffice to stimulate this behavior with a strange elderly woman at the time or sustain it over several years.

Warnasiri's initial failure to recognize Ananda's sisters may have arisen from anxiety rather than ignorance. For despite efforts at dissuasion, a considerable crowd of onlookers gathered on the occasion of the attempted test of recognitions. This, together with the stilted artificial behavior of the principal participants, may well have made Warnasiri tense, as he seemed to be at the time, and may have inhibited the flow to consciousness of whatever information he had about the people there. This hypothesis of his initial failure is supported by the later testimony of one of Ananda's sisters, Iranganie, who said that after his initial failure, Warnasiri did in fact recognize her and also

another of Ananda's sisters. Unfortunately, Francis Story did not observe this episode and only heard about it three years later; moreover, leading questions seem to have played a part. Francis Story did, however, witness in 1965 Warnasiri's recognition of photographs of Ananda and one of his sisters when it was clear that no one had made any suggestions to him.

Warnasiri's Later Development

In 1965 Francis Story learned that the affection of Warnasiri and Ananda's mother had continued, as had the visits of Warnasiri from time to time to Kimbulgoda. Warnasiri's family were somewhat reluctant to have him visit her often, but permitted occasional visits. Warnasiri's mother stated that he often asked to be taken to Kimbulgoda and "worried" her about this. In 1965 Francis Story took Warnasiri with him to visit T. Ranaweera again. On this occasion, the boy was eager to go and delighted with the visit. In Kimbulgoda he showed a definite affection for T. Ranaweera (which she returned), and during the visit he obviously much preferred her company to that of other persons present, whom he largely ignored.

In 1966 we again took Warnasiri (and his father) with us to Kimbulgoda. On this occasion no strong emotion was shown by either Warnasiri or T. Ranaweera, but they seemed to enjoy seeing each other.

In 1966 we learned from Warnasiri's mother that he still spoke of the previous life when asked about it, but no longer spoke spontaneously, as he had earlier.

In 1970 Warnasiri was thirteen years old and studying in the seventh class of a school at Radhawana, where he stayed with his paternal aunt. His father said that he never then spoke about the previous life. When I asked if he spoke about it if questioned, Julis Adikari said they never questioned him. He said that Warnasiri still asked sometimes to go to Kimbulgoda to see T. Ranaweera, but his mother had not heard him make such a request for two years. In any case, he had not in fact been to see T. Ranaweera since 1966, nor had she come to see him. And he had stopped comparing his mother unfavorably with Ananda's mother about 1968.

Warnasiri's father said he was no longer shy as he had been, but had become quite sociable.

Warnasiri himself said in 1970 that he could still remember the previous life. When we asked him about details concerning it he was able to give correct answers, but we did not interrogate him at length. He still wished to join the Sangha.

In 1973 I learned from Warnasiri that he had stopped school in December 1970, soon after my meeting with him that year. He had not then passed beyond the seventh class. He returned from his aunt's home to his parents' and remained with them for two years. During this time he helped his father with the farm work and tried to obtain his parents' permission to become a monk. His mother seems to have held out longer, but eventually she yielded and

early in 1973 (not long before my visit that year), Warnasiri moved over to the temple (Siriwardhanaramaya) at Gonahena. When I met him there, he was studying Pali and Buddhism in preparation for his ordination as a *samanera* (novice), which was scheduled for later in the year. The Ven. E. Pannasiha had undertaken his instruction and his preparation for ordination.

Warnasiri then said that he could remember what he had said about the previous life when he was younger, but could no longer "see the images." I asked him when he had seemed to "lose the images" and he placed this development roughly seven or eight years earlier, which would have been when he was about eight or nine years old, that is, around the time of our meeting with him in 1966.

Warnasiri said (in 1973) that he had met T. Ranaweera about five years earlier. This would have meant that they had last met in 1968, but his parents had made it clear in 1970 that he had not seen her since 1966 and I do not think that Warnasiri, unlike some subjects of these cases, would have gone off to meet her without his parents' knowledge or consent. After this long interval he visited T. Ranaweera again early in 1973 under the following circumstances. Warnasiri had told the Ven. E. Pannasiha about his memories of the previous lives and the latter had expressed an interest in meeting T. Ranaweera. So they went to Kimbulgoda together. T. Ranaweera (by then about seventy-two years old) at first did not remember Warnasiri, but when reminded about him she became moved and wept. She also gave him a gift. Warnasiri also showed emotion at this meeting.

I reviewed with Warnasiri his motives for wishing to join the Sangha. (I was somewhat surprised when the Ven. E. Pannasiha said that he had not discussed these with him.) Warnasiri said he wanted to get off "the wheel of rebirth" and thought he could do this best through the practice of meditation and other means of gaining merit that could lead to the liberation of Nirvana. (The life of a monk clearly offers more opportunities for such spiritual exercises than does that of a layman living as a householder and supporting himself as a laborer or other wage earner.) Although I knew from what his parents had said earlier that Warnasiri had cherished the idea of becoming a monk for many years, I asked Warnasiri himself whether he then (in 1973) thought his wish to become a monk had antedated his instruction in Buddhism. Since Buddhism teaches the futility of terrestrial lives and lauds the efforts of monks to attain release from rebirth through meditation and other meritorious practices, I thought that Warnasiri's exposure to Buddhism at school might have influenced him to choose the vocation of a monk, as it undoubtedly does many persons. But Warnasiri asserted quite definitely that his intention to become a monk preceded his study of Buddhism and derived from the memories of the previous lives which he had from early childhood. These memories had convinced him of the truth of the Buddha's teaching.

Warnasiri was ordained as a *samanera* (novice) on August 29, 1973. When he thus became the Ven. Jinaseeha he took an important step, as he saw the

matter, toward fulfillment of the goal he had chosen when he was still a small child—that of not being reborn again.

On March 27, 1976, I visited Warnasiri again (with Godwin Samararatne) at the Siriwardhanaramaya Temple near Gonahena. Warnasiri was glad to meet us, and we talked at some length about the events in his life since our last meeting. He was by this time eighteen and a half years old.

He was studying with enjoyment for a degree that would qualify him to become a teacher. He expressed some preference for spending more time than he could then afford in meditation, but uncomplainingly accepted the instruction of his teacher, the Ven. E. Pannasiha, to emphasize his studies in Pali, Sanskrit, Buddhism, and History.

Warnasiri said that he was quite content with his decision to become ordained in the Sangha. He thought the memories of previous lives that he had had when younger had helped him to see the nature of suffering (according to Buddhism) and to take an appropriate step (ordination) toward ending his suffering. As in 1973, he no longer claimed to remember any “original memories,” but could still recall what other persons said he had said about the previous lives when he had been younger.

He told me that his mother, who had formerly opposed his becoming a monk, had since become reconciled to his ordination.

Warnasiri still maintained some infrequent contacts with Ananda’s family. Ananda’s mother (T. Ranaweera) and one of his sisters had been coming to visit him at his temple every three or four months. And sometimes Warnasiri was able to meet them in Gampaha, a nearby town.

I was much impressed—moved I could say without exaggeration—by the serenity Warnasiri displayed in our meeting in 1976. He himself appears to have noted an increase in his tranquility. He said that when he had been younger he had shown a preference for the family of the previous life as compared with his parents. He told us that now he saw no difference between them. He appeared to have achieved an attitude toward both pairs of parents of equal detachment—and equal affection.

10. The Case of Wijanama Kithsiri

Introduction

THIS CASE is exceptional in this volume in that I have not been able to identify a person the facts of whose life corresponded to the subject's statements. In this respect the case resembles that of Ranjith Makalanda (I. Stevenson. 1974. *Twenty cases*) and some other cases that I shall publish in later volumes of this series.

Cases of this type are naturally open to the objection that since the subject's statements about a previous life have not been verified, we have no way of knowing that they are not merely fantasies. This is true enough; at the same time it cannot be said of any such case that the subject has gained anything by assuming the identity of someone else since no one has been found to confirm his claims. If it is argued then that a child may nevertheless profit from having (and expressing) delusions about an imaginary person, this view becomes difficult to sustain in the present case. In it the subject claimed to be a person of entirely different religion and race from those of his family; and he showed habits quite different from theirs. This behavior, far from improving his situation, brought him into conflict with other persons of his family and village. In addition, the subject showed unusual behavior (for his family) that suited very well the life of a Moslem boy that he was claiming to remember.

Although I can present testimony from only one family concerned in this case (the subject's), I believe that it has been as well investigated as this limitation would permit and it has received more thorough study than some other cases in which a previous personality corresponding to the subject's statements has been found.

Summary of the Case and Its Investigation

M. G. Wijanama Kithsiri was born in the village of Wehigala (north of Kandy) on August 28, 1959. He was the oldest child of W. M. G. Ariyawansa, a carpenter, and his wife, M. J. Kusumawathie. They had three younger children, a boy and two girls.

Nothing remarkable seems to have been noticed during Wijanama's infancy and early childhood until at about the age of three he began sitting up in bed cross-legged in the middle of the night and muttering words in a language incomprehensible to his parents. This behavior, which I shall describe in more detail later, continued every night up to the age of thirteen when (in 1973) it was still occurring.

At the age of about four, Wijanama began to talk about a previous life

he claimed to have lived in Kandy. He expressed a great longing to go there to see his previous parents. He made many comparisons between his home and family and the previous home and family he seemed to remember; these almost invariably favored the conditions of the previous life. The description Wijanama gave of the previous family, and also his unusual behavior, showed quite clearly that he was talking about a life in an urban Moslem family¹ with habits and customs quite different from those of his rural Sinhalese Buddhist family. Wijanama's statements (see Table 18) justified the conjecture that the previous personality whose life he was remembering had died when still a schoolboy. Unfortunately, he could not remember the name of the previous personality or any other proper name except that of the city of Kandy, where he said the former parents were still living.

In 1964, when Wijanama was about five years old, his parents took him to Kandy on a visit to the Temple of the Tooth.² Apparently they had not intended to attempt any verifications of Wijanama's statements, but once in Kandy he importuned them to go to "his" previous house. During a short period when Wijanama's father was separated from the rest of the family, Wijanama cried and dragged his mother along King Street saying that he wanted to go to the temple in which "he" worshiped. Later, Wijanama's father took him along King Street, where Wijanama pointed out the mosque there and said: "This is where we worshiped." Near the mosque Wijanama saw a house and tried to drag his father toward it. But they did not enter either the mosque or the house, partly because it was late and they had to catch a bus to return to Wehigala, and partly, it seems, out of fear of being rebuffed by the Moslems of the neighborhood. One of these enquired what they were doing and, when told about Wijanama's claim to have lived in this area of Kandy before, he became extremely cool toward them and asked them to leave. Wijanama's father made no further inquiries in Kandy at that time and did not do so until my first visit in 1966.

A resident of Wehigala who worked in Kandy, G. S. P. Abeypala, told H. S. S. Nissanka, a journalist of that city, about the case. H. S. S. Nissanka had already investigated other cases of the reincarnation type, including that of Gnanatilleka (I. Stevenson. 1974. *Twenty cases*). He therefore made some preliminary inquiries about this case and spent considerable time in trying to trace a child in Kandy who might correspond to Wijanama's statements, but without success. I heard about the case of Wijanama from him and in the summer of

¹ The Moslems (Moors) of Sri Lanka are largely descended from Arab traders who came to the island centuries ago. The ancestors of some migrated from southeastern India. The Moslems are found most abundantly in the large coastal cities such as Colombo, but a considerable number of them live in Kandy and other inland towns and villages. They are members of the Sunni branch of Islam and as such do not believe in reincarnation.

² The Temple of the Tooth is a large Buddhist temple in the center of Kandy which houses a tooth relic of the Buddha. It is a notable place of pilgrimage for Buddhists. Each year the tooth relic is the central object in a great festival known as a *Perahāra*. Richly caparisoned elephants as well as beautifully costumed dancers parade in Kandy at this time. See H. L. Seneviratne. 1963. The *Äsala Perahāra* in Kandy. *Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies* 6: 169-80.

1966 began my investigation of it with the help of Francis Story. We recorded information given us by Wijanama's parents and Wijanama himself as well as by other informants of Wehigala. Then we took Wijanama and his father into Kandy in the hope that he might recognize places, and perhaps persons, connected with the previous life he was talking about. Unfortunately, he did not do so.

In 1968 I took up the investigation of the case again and had further interviews with Wijanama and his parents. At that time I learned that Wijanama (then age nine) was still sitting up at night and, in a kind of nightmare, muttering words in a language unknown to his parents. It seemed to me and the persons assisting me that perhaps Wijanama was reciting a Moslem prayer in Arabic and that we should try to tape-record it. My colleagues in Sri Lanka could not accomplish this before I returned there again in 1970. At that time I brought a small tape recorder with me. When we visited Wehigala I looked forward to meeting Wijanama and his family once more, half wishing, for his sake, that he had stopped having the anguishing nightmares and half wishing, for the sake of these investigations, that he had not. In fact Wijanama was still continuing these nightmarish mutterings every night. We left the tape recorder with his father and instructed him in its use. The next day we returned and picked up an excellent recording of what Wijanama had said during his nightmare of the preceding night. In addition, I was able once again to talk with Wijanama and his parents and to learn further details about his development since my last visit two years earlier. We also recorded on tape a long interview between Wijanama and Dr. G. Karunaratne, a physician of Kandy who accompanied us to Wehigala.

I have not returned to Wehigala since 1970. But in 1971, 1973, and again in 1976, at my suggestion, Godwin Samararatne (who had acted as an interpreter on two of my three visits there) returned to Wehigala and obtained further information about various details connected with our inquiries and about Wijanama's later development.

Persons Interviewed during the Investigation

In Wehigala I interviewed:

- M. G. Wijanama Kithsiri
- W. M. G. Ariyawansa, Wijanama's father
- M. J. Kusumawathie, Wijanama's mother
- G. G. Ariyasena, Wijanama's cousin
- G. S. P. Abeypala, villager of Wehigala and acquaintance of W. M. G. Ariyawansa
- Ven. Siri Dhammatilleke Thera, monk of Sri Dhammaraja Mahawahari Temple at Wehigala
- H. G. Gunesena, schoolteacher of Wehigala
- E. S. Paujagoda, schoolteacher of Wehigala
- A. N. Dhanapala, schoolteacher of Wehigala

I have not included in the above list a number of persons interviewed in Kandy during the effort to trace a deceased person corresponding to Wijanama's statements.

Relevant Facts of Geography

Wehigala is a small village whose population I estimate at not more than 1,000. It lies in the highland country about 25 kilometers north of Kandy. The area is one of tea plantations on the higher levels with rice paddies lower down. The inhabitants of Wehigala are all Sinhalese Buddhists, but there are many Tamil Hindus in the surrounding regions. No Tamils and also no Moslems live in Wehigala itself. The Ven. Siri Dhammatilleke, a resident of Wehigala for thirty-three years, said that he had never known a Moslem family to have lived in the village during his time there. Moslem traders come to Wehigala every few months, but they spend a few hours only in the village. The village contains a Buddhist temple and a primary school.

Kandy is a moderately large city and the largest of the highland towns of Sri Lanka. It was the ancient capital of the Kandyan kingdom, which the British did not finally conquer until 1815. Although more or less in the center of Sri Lanka, Kandy has a diverse population, including a majority of Sinhalese, but also many Tamil Hindus and Moslems.

Statements Made by Wijanama

In Table 18 I have listed all the statements Wijanama made related to the previous life. I have divided these into four groups. In the first group (items 1-48) I have included statements reported by Wijanama's parents and to some extent by other informants. I learned of most of these items in 1966, but a few were told to me first in 1968 or 1970. I have also put into this group three statements (items 15, 41, and 42) made to us by Wijanama himself in 1966. He mentioned them to us during the drive to Kandy to be described below. I have placed the items of this group more or less according to topics such as the previous house, the food eaten, and the place of worship, but there is some overlapping of themes from different items.

During the 1966 investigation, one of our interpreters, Godwin Samararatne, took Wijanama off by himself and spoke with him alone. We thought that Wijanama might talk more freely in this situation than he would with his parents, other children, and a number of neighbors all staring at him. He did indeed speak somewhat more freely under these circumstances. Godwin Samararatne made notes of what he said as he talked, and from these I have derived a second group of items (items 49-60). I have indicated Godwin Samararatne as the informant to distinguish the statements of this block from others made by Wijanama under other circumstances. I have also arranged these items according to topics. The reader should remember

that, although they have the value that they were recorded directly as spoken to Godwin Samararatne by Wijanama (without the mediation therefore of Wijanama's parents), they were made in response to questions. This feature may have tended to extort some answers from Wijanama, but in a number of places he said that he could not remember. Moreover, Godwin Samararatne was not using leading questions and many of the questions he put to Wijanama could not be answered by yes or no, although some of them could. The items I have included in Table 18 in this group are selected from the full record of Godwin Samararatne's talk with Wijanama. Most of them derive from our efforts to obtain from Wijanama more details about the previous house and the school he said that "he" had attended in Kandy with the hope of tracing a family that corresponded to his statements through the details of the house or school.

In 1968, Wijanama, then about nine years old, talked more freely with our whole group, and in going over what he still remembered about the previous life we learned of a number of new items of memories, or amendments to previous statements made in earlier interviews. I have put the new items mentioned by Wijanama himself in 1968 into a third group (items 61-72) in Table 18.

The interview of 1968 did not exhaust what Wijanama had to say about the previous life he said he was remembering. When we returned in 1970 he told us about some further additional details which I have also included (items 73-79) in Table 18.

In general, Wijanama's account of the previous life was quite consistent over the years when we talked with him about it. He varied his account of some of the details and I have indicated some of the modifications in the column of comments in Table 18.

When Wijanama first began to talk of the previous life he did not have the vocabulary to describe some of the objects figuring in his memories. The members of his family are vegetarians for all practical purposes and they eat no animal meat, although they do eat a kind of dried fish called in Sinhalese *karola*. When Wijanama wanted to indicate that the previous personality had eaten animal meat such as beef, he did not use *mas*, the Sinhalese word for meat, probably because he had never heard it. Instead, he attached the Sinhalese word *lai*, which means "blood" in English, to the only word he knew suggesting meat, which was *karola*. His family did not understand for a time what he meant by "lai karola." When in Kandy they showed him a meat shop and he pointed to the joints of meat hanging there, saying that was what he meant by "lai karola."

On his second visit to Kandy, on the occasion when we took him and his father into the city with us, Wijanama noticed a woman wearing a cowl over her head and said: "My mother is like that."

Another difficulty in understanding Wijanama arose when he seemed to say that the previous father had drunk kerosene. At that time Wijanama had never seen anyone drinking alcohol from bottles or otherwise. But he had seen kerosene in bottles of a type that are often made in Sri Lanka to keep alcoholic

beverages such as arrack. After the arrack has been drunk, the bottle may be used again for kerosene which is poured into the bottle from a larger bottle or other container at a shop. So in describing what the previous father drank with his meals and before quarreling with his wife, Wijanama said that he drank kerosene.

Wijanama called his mother "amma," the usual word for mother in Sinhalese, and called his father "appachchi," the usual word for father. He referred to the previous mother as "umma" and the previous father as "tatha," thus enabling other people to understand readily the different persons referred to. (*Umma* is a variant Tamil word for mother; *tatha* is a Sinhalese word for father used mainly by "low country" [coastal] speakers and not in Wehigala.)

Although we have not traced a person whose life corresponded with Wijanama's statements (and other behavior) we can record his accuracy with regard to what he said about Kandy. If we make the assumption, which I believe justified, that Wijanama made all the statements of items 1-48 before he first went to Kandy in 1964, we can see that he showed correct knowledge of conditions in Kandy that differed from those in Wehigala in at least thirteen items. In this estimate I have included items 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40, and 46. Wijanama's statements of these items were not specifically correct for Kandy since they would be equally true of other cities in Sri Lanka. But collectively they indicate a knowledge of Kandy not to be expected in a five-year-old village boy who had not been there.

Wijanama's Nocturnal Behavior and Utterances. Wijanama's nightmares and mutterings received special attention in his family not only because he woke up other inhabitants of his house but also because he seemed to be suffering, and speaking words which his parents could not understand.

His routine at night varied little. He went to sleep with the rest of the family around 9:00 P.M. Then between 10:00 P.M. and midnight he would sit up on the bed, cross his legs, and begin a sort of recitation in words his family could not understand. He sometimes got up and started to walk out of the room and house so that he had to be detained. Indeed, this tendency made his father uneasy each night until Wijanama had gone back to normal sleep following his regular nightmare, for such it seemed. The length of the period of sitting up and talking varied from about three to fifteen minutes. At the end of this time, Wijanama would lie down and resume normal sleep. His eyes remained closed during the time he sat cross-legged on the bed and muttered. Once (at least) his father spoke to him and Wijanama startled and said: "My mother [using the word *umma*] catches hold of me with one hand and in the other hand has a bucket of dirty clothes." This he seemed to say in a half or fully sleeping state. On another occasion his family thought he was dreaming of the (previous) sister, but most of the time they had no understanding whatever of what he said.

TABLE 18. *Summary of Statements Made by Wijanama*

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. He had another mother.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa, Wijanama's father M. J. Kusumawathie, Wijanama's mother Ven. Siri Dhammatilleke, monk of the temple at Wehigala	In Wijanama's family there were (in 1966) two girls younger than he was.
2. He had another father.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa Ven. Siri Dhammatilleke M. J. Kusumawathie	Kandy is the major city of the highlands of central Sri Lanka.
3. He had only one younger sister, who was beautiful.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa M. J. Kusumawathie	Another indication of an urban location. Wijanama's house is about 2 kilometers from the nearest tarred road going into the village of Wehigala.
4. His home was in Kandy.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa M. J. Kusumawathie	M. J. Kusumawathie stated that Wijanama simply said the "road adjoins the house." She did not mention his having said the road was tarred. But even this remark indicated a contrast with the Ariyawansa house in Wehigala, which one reaches by a long path through woods and across paddy fields about 2 kilometers from the nearest road of any kind.
5. A tarred road ran in front of the house.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa M. J. Kusumawathie	

6. His house had a roof of tile and zinc sheets.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa M. J. Kusumawathie	The roof of the Ariyawansa house had no tiles, but it did have zinc sheets.
7. The floor of his house was cemented, not covered with cow dung.		The floors of the Ariyawansa house were of earth only.
8. His mother did not go to the well with a pot for water. There was a pipe near the kitchen. They bathed at the pipe with a basin.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa M. J. Kusumawathie	Another contrast between rural and urban life in Sri Lanka. M. J. Kusumawathie heard Wijanama saying the water pipe was "in the house." This might be considered approximately accurate if a pipe came into the courtyard of the house without actually going into the kitchen. In 1968, Wijanama repeated the statement about water coming in a pipe, but said that they also obtained water from a well. At the Ariyawansa house all water came from a well. In the city of Kandy there is a pipe-borne water service.
9. There were no pictures of the Buddha in his home.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa	Most Buddhists keep at least one picture of the Buddha in their homes.
10. They had plenty of light with bulbs.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa M. J. Kusumawathie	Wehigala had no electricity, which is, however, found almost everywhere in Kandy.

Note: Since no person corresponding to Wijanama's statements has been found, this table contains no Verification column.

TABLE 18 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Comments</i>
11. They bought firewood from a vendor who came with a cart.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa M. J. Kusumawathie	Another indication of urban life. Villagers usually gather their own firewood in the nearby woods. In Kandy, street vendors sell firewood.
12. There was no garden to the house.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa M. J. Kusumawathie	Another indication of an urban rather than a rural location.
13. His mother had her head covered.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa Ven. Siri Dhammatilleke M. J. Kusumawathie	A typical mode of dress for Moslem women, but not so specific as a man's covering the head. On Wijanama's first visit to Kandy he noticed a woman wearing a cowl and said: "My mother is like that."
14. His mother wore beautiful clothes.	M. J. Kusumawathie	Another invidious comparison between past and present.
15. His father wore green trousers and sometimes a sarong.	Wijanama (1966)	Green is a favorite color of Moslems. Wijanama's father always wore a sarong, as do most Sinhalese villagers.
16. He slept with his mother, not with his father.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa	When Wijanama was small, he slept with his father, not with his mother. In 1966, Wijanama was not sleeping with either parent, but in a separate bed. He asked for a separate bed when he was two years old.
17. His father always wore a coat which he removed when he came home.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa	Wijanama's father did not wear a coat.
18. When his father came home he had a lot of money with him.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa	

19. His father gave the money to be put in the till. W. M. G. Ariyawansa
20. His father kept the money in a "large box" near his bed. W. M. G. Ariyawansa
21. His father had a simple ["donkey"] bed on which a multicolored sheet was laid. W. M. G. Ariyawansa
22. His father smoked cigarettes, not bidis. M. J. Kusumawathie
23. His father wore wooden sandals at home. W. M. G. Ariyawansa
M. J. Kusumawathie
24. They ate on the floor, sitting on a mat. W. M. G. Ariyawansa
M. J. Kusumawathie
25. In the morning they ate string hoppers and pittu. W. M. G. Ariyawansa
- I have put "large box" in quotation marks because I believe this is almost certainly the till referred to in item 19.
- Wijanama's father had a rather more elaborate bed than a "donkey" bed, which is really only a cot or camp bed.
- Wijanama's father spread a multi-colored sheet on his bed.
- Bidis are a kind of very cheap small cigar smoked by people who cannot afford cigarettes or large cigars.
- W. M. G. Ariyawansa smoked bidis, not cigarettes.
- W. M. G. Ariyawansa habitually wore leather sandals.
- Wijanama's family ate at a table. Moslems in Sri Lanka typically eat in the fashion described by Wijanama.
- Hoppers are a kind of farinaceous food. Mashed hoppers are sometimes forced through a type of sieve and emerge in the form of long thin strands which are then steamed. These are known as "string hoppers." Pittu is a mixture of flour and coconut cooked and eaten with gravy, usually for breakfast.

TABLE 18 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Comments</i>
25. (cont.)		Wijanama's family did not eat either string hoppers or pittu prior to his demands for them, but at his insistence, they began eating string hoppers. Wijanama himself, in 1968, said he had <i>not</i> eaten hoppers in the previous life, which made this item somewhat doubtful.
26. They ate "dried fish with blood."	W. M. G. Ariyawansa M. J. Kusumawathie	Wijanama used the Sinhalese words <i>lai karola</i> , which mean literally "dried fish with blood." Since he did not know the Sinhalese word (<i>mas</i>) for meat, this was the only way in which he could express the idea of meat. (See text for further details.)
27. They had plenty of meat.	Ven. Siri Dhammatilleke	Wijanama's family ate no meat or fish regularly. They were vegetarians except for eating some dried fish. They gave Wijanama dried fish to eat and he liked it very much.
28. They kept the meat on a rack near the hearth.	Ven. Siri Dhammatilleke W. M. G. Ariyawansa	W. M. G. Ariyawansa did not mention the hearth, but said Wijanama said the meat was kept on a rack in the kitchen.
29. They ate dates.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa	Since dates are eaten all over Sri Lanka this item is not specific. However, dates do have some special significance for Moslems since the Moslems of Sri Lanka eat dates after sundown each day of the month-long

fast of Ramazan, during which they do not eat between sunrise and sunset.

30. In his home there was plenty of sugar.

W. M. G. Ariyawansa

Wijanama referred contemptuously to the “pinches of sugar” in his family.

31. His father took a “hot drink” at night.

Ven. Siri Dhammatilleke
G. G. Ariyasena,
Wijanama’s cousin

The sight of kerosene in bottles seems to have stimulated this remark. Wijanama said the previous father drank out of such bottles. W. M. G. Ariyawansa stated that Wijanama had said the previous father drank kerosene while having his meal, and this seemed like a misunderstanding. But his mother reported he had said this also, and in 1966 Wijanama told G. Samararatne that his (previous) father drank kerosene, which was a reason why he (Wijanama) did not like him. Wijanama had seen kerosene bottles in his home, and I suppose that since he did not know the name for the alcoholic drink consumed by the previous father from bottles like those used for kerosene, he said that the previous father drank kerosene. Arrack, a distilled alcoholic drink derived from coconut juice, is sold in bottles that may later be used for kerosene. This supposition receives support from Wijanama’s statement that his (previous) father drank the “hot drink” after setting it alight, by which he must have referred to the lighting of a lamp at night. In 1968,

TABLE 18 (*cont.*)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Comments</i>
31. (<i>cont.</i>)		Wijanama repeated that the previous father drank kerosene but said he did this at his shop and not at home. When Wijanama first spoke about the previous father drinking from bottles, he had never seen anyone drinking alcohol. He asked his father why he did not drink out of bottles like those from which the previous father drank.
32. His father drank "kerosene" when he ate and then quarreled with his mother.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa M. J. Kusumawathie	See comment on preceding item for interpretation that Wijanama was apparently remembering the previous father as having drunk alcohol from bottles similar to those used in Wijanama's family for keeping kerosene. In 1968, Wijanama said the previous father drank at his shop, not at home.
33. A vegetable hawker came selling vegetables.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa	Vegetable hawkers are common in Kandy.
34. He had seen the Perahāra from his house.	Ven. Siri Dhammatilleke W. M. G. Ariyawansa	W. M. G. Ariyawansa said that Wijanama had said he had not seen the Perahāra since the days when he had lived at the previous house. Perahāras are religious festivals in Sri Lanka that feature elaborate parades. The largest and best known is held in Kandy each year and includes a parade with dancers and gorgeously appareled

elephants. This remark helped to localize the previous house in the city of Kandy.

The Perahāra parade there passes along King Street.

At the time Wijanama made this statement, he had never been to Kandy or seen the Perahāra, although his father had.

The elephants and dances are among the principal features of the Kandy Perahāra.

Wijanama here referred to the simplicity and lack of paintings, images, and idols in mosques as compared with Buddhist temples. In 1970, Wijanama made contradictory statements about images in mosques. He first said there were none (which would be correct for mosques) and then talked of images in human form made of clay and stuck in walls. Could this have been a dim memory of a Christian chapel or church?

Every mosque has a shallow tank of water inside the door or at the entrance. Worshipers wash their feet in the water before entering the main part of the mosque.

I have not learned that a sound like “O” occurs during religious services in mosques. But in Kandy when I listened to a muezzin calling

35. In the Perahāra there were huge elephants and a lot of dances.

W. M. G. Ariyawansa

36. The temple at which they worshiped was an ordinary house. There were no images inside it.

W. M. G. Ariyawansa

37. There was a well inside the temple where they worshiped.

W. M. G. Ariyawansa

38. When they worshiped they shouted: “O.”

W. M. G. Ariyawansa

TABLE 18 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Comments</i>
38. (cont.)		Moslems to prayer, I noticed that he ended phrases with a long vowel that sounded like a prolonged "O." It seems to me possible that Wijanama could have been referring to this sound.
39. The priests [of their temple] wore long robes not like those of the monks.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa	Buddhist monks who belong to the <i>Siyam Nikaya</i> (Siam sect) wear long orange or ochre robes with one shoulder bare. The Ven. Siri Dhammatilleke and the other monks of the temple at Wehigala wore robes of this type. Moslem sheikhs or other leaders of Moslem religious services wear long robes, usually of white and covering both shoulders.
40. His father had two shops.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa	For the types of shop Wijanama said the previous father owned, see comment to item 71.
41. His father had two vans.	Wijanama (1966)	
42. His father was thin.	Wijanama (1966)	Wijanama's father was of medium build, but rather more on the thin side than otherwise.
43. His father did not allow him to go to the shops because of the danger of buses on the streets.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa	Buses run along the main streets of Kandy.
44. He had two pairs of trousers at the house.	W. M. G. Ariyawansa	Another indication of an urban dweller of the middle or upper

classes. Most Sinhalese villagers wear sarongs. But Wijanama had some trousers himself; his mother said he complained that his were no good and said that he had good ones at his (previous) home.

45. He had a small till in which money was collected.

W. M. G. Ariyawansa

It is not clear whether this statement implied that the previous personality had his own (child's) till or referred to the larger one of his parents where the money the father earned was kept. It seems to be a different object from the "large box" described in item 20.

46. He had seen moving pictures.

W. M. G. Ariyawansa

Wijanama had never seen moving pictures at the time of making this statement. Wehigala had no moving pictures, but Kandy had some.

47. He contracted fever and died.

W. M. G. Ariyawansa
M. J. Kusumawathie

48. His father said he would make him a doctor.

W. M. G. Ariyawansa

The idea of becoming a doctor would have been an absurd ambition for the sons of most villagers in Ceylon, but not unrealistic for the son of a Kandyan merchant.

49. He had two brothers, one younger than himself.

Godwin Samararatne,
interpreter (1966)

In 1968, Wijanama denied that he had had a brother in the previous life, but stated that he and a sister were the only children of the family.

TABLE 18 (*cont.*)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Comments</i>
50. He was not very fond of his [previous] father because he drank kerosene oil.	Godwin Samararatne (1966)	See comment for item 31.
51. He liked his [previous] mother because she was clean.	Godwin Samararatne (1966)	
52. He attended an English school.	Godwin Samararatne (1966)	There are several English schools in Kandy. Wijanama's statements about schooling in the previous life varied somewhat. His father said (1966) that he had said he was taught Sinhalese at home and did not go to school. But a Moslem boy who spoke a Tamil dialect in his family and attended an English school might be tutored at home in Sinhalese. The different statements of Wijanama and his father are, therefore, not necessarily completely discordant.
53. His school had a tinned roof.	Godwin Samararatne (1966)	Wijanama's school at Wehigala had a tiled roof.
54. The school was near the lake.	Godwin Samararatne (1966)	There is a rather large lake in the center of Kandy, and Wijanama would have seen it on his visit to Kandy in 1964, because the Temple of the Tooth is just across a road from the lake.
55. One of his school friends was called Karunasena.	Godwin Samararatne (1966)	

56. Some small girls also attended the school.
Godwin Samararatne (1966)
57. He had a teacher called Premachandra Mahattaya.
Godwin Samararatne (1966)
58. Premachandra Mahattaya taught him and his older brother.
Godwin Samararatne (1966)
59. He had reached the third standard class in Kandy.
Godwin Samararatne (1966)
60. The schoolteachers in Kandy beat him.
Godwin Samararatne (1966)
61. His [previous] father wore a hat unlike his [present] father.
Wijanama (1968)
62. His father went to the mosque daily, his mother very seldom.
Wijanama (1968)
63. Once he went with his father to the mosque.
Wijanama (1968)
64. Where they worshiped they had to put mats on the ground.
Wijanama (1968)
- Wijanama had a teacher at Wehigala called Premachandra and this may have influenced this statement.
The word *Mahattaya* is a term implying, in this usage, a respected master.
- Wijanama contrasted the harshness of the teachers at the school of the previous life with the mildness of those in his school at Wehigala, who did not beat him.
- Moslem men almost invariably keep their heads covered, but the Sinhalese Buddhists do not.
- Moslem women rarely participate in public prayers.
- A reference presumably to the prayer mats used by Moslems.

TABLE 18 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Comments</i>
65. The well in the mosque had a flower tree.	Wijanama (1968)	A. Weeraratne, one of my interpreters, thought that Wijanama was referring here to the potted plants and shrubs sometimes placed in the middle of the tanks or pools at the entrances to mosques.
66. They washed their bodies and sat on mats and worshiped.	Wijanama (1968)	The washing, at least of the feet, is particularly important before Moslem worship.
67. There was a priest shouting at the top of his voice.	Wijanama (1968)	This is presumably a reference to the muezzin calling the Moslems to prayer.
68. In the mosque, his father put a hat on and sat on a mat. He took a book and read it.	Wijanama (1968)	A correct description of conduct in a mosque.
69. No women went there [to the place where he worshiped].	Wijanama (1968)	Another characteristic of worship in mosques. Women are rarely present at services, but do occasionally visit mosques.
70. He never ate mutton or pork.	Wijanama (1968)	Moslems never eat pork, but they eat mutton when it is available.
71. His father sold textiles, bread, and meat in his shops.	Wijanama (1968)	In 1968, W. M. G. Ariyawansa said Wijanama had said two of the (previous) father's shops were textile shops. But in 1970, Wijanama reaffirmed what he himself had said in 1968, that the (previous) father had a meat shop and a

textile shop. And he then added that they also sold vegetables, a detail about which he had been doubtful in 1968.

Wijanama (1968)

72. The railway line ran just outside his house.

A railway line runs through part of Kandy, and Wijanama would have seen it when he went there in 1964. The railway line does not run close to the area of the King Street mosque, and so this statement does not agree with the reported recognition by Wijanama of the place where he lived in that area. The trains, however, can be heard from the area of King Street.

Wijanama (1970)

73. His mother dressed in white and also colored clothes.

Wijanama (1970)

74. She had a red colored chain.

At another point in our talk with him in 1970 Wijanama said his (previous) mother's necklace had "red, roundish beads." Moslem women sometimes wear necklaces of red seeds, so possibly Wijanama was referring to these necklaces.

Wijanama (1970)

75. He used to go to the mosque on Fridays.

In his 1968 statements Wijanama referred to going only once with the (previous) father to the mosque. For Moslems, Friday is the weekly day of public worship.

TABLE 18 (cont.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Comments</i>
76. Before he went to the mosque he washed his hands and feet.	Wijanama (1970)	Moslems attach much importance to being clean when they say prayers in a mosque. (See also item 37.) Wijanama almost certainly referred to the washing of the hands and feet in the well at the entrance to the mosque.
77. His father had an assistant in the cloth shop.	Wijanama (1970)	
78. Carcasses were hung in his father's shop.	Wijanama (1970)	
79. The carcasses were transported in trucks [lorries].	Wijanama (1970)	One of these trucks could be one of the vans referred to in item 41.

In 1966 Wijanama's father said that he would rarely sleep through the night without one of these nightmares; but in 1968 his mother said he sat up and spoke nightmarish words *every* night and I obtained the same impression from Wijanama's parents in 1970, although I cannot find a note about this in my records.

As I have already mentioned, I (and others) thought that perhaps Wijanama was reciting a Moslem prayer in Arabic during the times he was sitting cross-legged on his bed in the middle of the night. Moslems often do sit cross-legged when praying. The tape recording we obtained dispelled this idea at least as an explanation of the whole sequence of Wijanama's nocturnal behavior.

The period during which Wijanama spoke (on the night of our recording) lasted only about three minutes, rather less, according to his father, than the usual duration of his nightmare. We found on listening to the tape recording that Wijanama actually repeated four words over and over again. Three of the words were identified. These were *Allaha*, the Arabic word for God; *umma*, a variant Tamil word for mother; and *vappa*, a variant Tamil word for father. These last two words form part of the vocabulary of the Tamil dialect spoken by Kandyan Moslems. (The correct Tamil words for mother and father are *amma* and *appa*.) The fourth word spoken by Wijanama, *thunga*, or so it sounds, has not been identified. T. S. Miskin, a Malay Moslem resident of Kandy, kindly listened to the tape recording we obtained of Wijanama's nocturnal speech. He could not place *thunga* and suggested that perhaps it was a mispronunciation of a Tamil or Arabic word, or possibly a person's name. Concerning Wijanama's pronunciation of the three identified words, T. S. Miskin stated that only a Moslem child could pronounce them so well.

I found listening to the recording of Wijanama's nocturnal speech quite moving. Without understanding (at that time) what the words meant, I felt, nevertheless, that they communicated some severe distress. And now that we know what three of the often repeated words mean, we can interpret the speech as perhaps a mixture of heartrending appeals to God and calls for the (previous) parents. I do not understand why Wijanama sat cross-legged during this nightmare, but there may be elements of prayer in it even though the content is clearly not that of a prayer apart from the inclusion of the word *Allaha* in the utterances.

Wijanama showed one other peculiarity of verbal usage that also involved a Tamil word unfamiliar in his family. When he was asked at mealtime if he had had enough of some food served, such as rice, he would reply with the word *podung*, which means "enough" in Tamil. Kandyan Moslems who speak Tamil use this word in exactly the same way Wijanama did to indicate that they have had a sufficiency of food. Wijanama's parents had not heard the word used in Wehigala in such a response. They would have expected someone who was asked if he had had enough food to answer with the Sinhalese word *ov*, which means "yes," or with another Sinhalese word, *athie*, used to indicate that one has had enough food.

Efforts to Trace a Deceased Person Corresponding to Wijanama's Statements

Wijanama seemed to remember the life of a person who had died young, probably as a child. He had no memories of being "big," never spoke of events in the life of an adult, and explicitly said in 1966 that he had been in the third standard class in Kandy, which was presumably the last class reached by the supposed previous personality of this case. If so, we could expect that the boy died when about eight or nine years old. All efforts to trace a deceased person corresponding to Wijanama's statements therefore centered on the search for a schoolboy who had died below the age of ten years of age or thereabouts.

I have already mentioned that H. S. S. Nissanka expended much time in trying to trace a deceased child the facts of whose life would correspond to Wijanama's statements. In 1966, and subsequently, I renewed this effort. Wijanama had referred to attending (in the previous life) an English school in Kandy, of which there are several. He had also mentioned a teacher called Premachandra, and, although we thought this statement perhaps derived from the fact that he had a teacher by that name at his school in Wehigala, there was nothing to prevent the previous personality from also having had a teacher of the same name. We found a teacher at the English school in Kandy called St. Sylvester's by the name of R. C. Premachandra. And he had had a Moslem student called Halaldeen who had died some years earlier. Halaldeen seemed to fit Wijanama's statements to some extent. Unfortunately, when I consulted the school register I found that Halaldeen had died in 1965 and as Wijanama had begun having his nightmares in 1962 and had begun to talk about the previous life during the daytime in 1963, I dropped Halaldeen from further consideration. Other inquiries revealed no one else more likely to fit the description developed from Wijanama's statements.

The incredulity of orthodox Moslems about reincarnation prevented us from obtaining much assistance from any of them. Some of those we approached managed indeed to be polite, but none could have thought that he wished to waste his time along with ours in something so manifestly absurd as tracing the previous personality of a Buddhist child who was claiming that he had been a Moslem in Kandy. I think it not unlikely that in the efforts made by H. S. S. Nissanka and later by myself some news of Wijanama's case may actually have reached a family which had had a child corresponding to Wijanama's statements. But if this happened, they would almost certainly have thought it prudent to say nothing about him since to do so could have exposed them to ridicule or even suspicions of heresy among their Moslem friends. So the matter rests there, an unsolved puzzle. Wijanama belongs to the considerable group of children in Sri Lanka (and elsewhere) who seem to remember previous lives without stating sufficient detail, especially proper names, to permit identification of any persons corresponding to their apparent memories.

Wijanama's Visit to Kandy in 1966

Wijanama's parents, as I have already mentioned, took him to Kandy in 1964, and while there he showed a strong interest in visiting the area of the mosque on King Street. I have previously described how he dragged his father toward a house in Kandy near the King Street mosque. His parents thought he had seemed to recognize a house in that area.

In 1966 I took Wijanama and his father from Wehigala into Kandy in the hope that he would make more precise identifications of places and, perhaps ultimately, of persons in the area surrounding the King Street mosque. As we had two interpreters and several other persons in our group, we would quickly have aroused the curiosity of people in the streets if we had all walked about together. So we thought it best to allow Wijanama and his father to walk around and into the mosque only with Godwin Samararatne and H. S. S. Nissanka, who assisted on this occasion. The rest of our group remained at a distance while these four walked around the area. Afterward, Godwin Samararatne and H. S. S. Nissanka reported that Wijanama had been unable to recognize anything in the mosque or its surroundings, where there were a number of shops and residential buildings. I found this disappointing, but I could think of several reasons why he might not have made any recognitions in that area at that time. We might have chosen the wrong area in Kandy, although in 1964 Wijanama had seemed to lead his parents toward the King Street mosque; his memories might have faded too much by the age of seven as he then (nearly) was; he may have been tired, as I am almost certain he was toward the end of a long day which included the journey from Wehigala into Kandy by a long and tortuous mountain road; if he had lived a previous life in Kandy, he might have been reborn many years after the previous personality's death and during this interval the buildings in Kandy could have been much altered; and, finally, there may have been no previous life and therefore no house in Kandy corresponding to his statements.

In 1966 as we parted in Kandy and Wijanama and his father returned to Wehigala, the latter did not claim, in my hearing, that Wijanama had made any recognitions during the visit to Kandy. He therefore surprised me greatly when, in 1968, he told us that Wijanama had drawn attention to alterations in the stairs of the mosque (presumably since the time of the previous life) and had also extracted a grudging admission from an official in the mosque about the correctness of this statement. Wijanama's father also said that in a row of houses near the mosque Wijanama recognized the faucet of a water pipe and said: "We washed and bathed there." Upon hearing Wijanama's father make these and other statements about what Wijanama had said during our visit to Kandy (at a time when, for the reason stated earlier, I was not myself present), I checked again with Godwin Samararatne and H. S. S. Nissanka as to what they remembered Wijanama to have done and said in 1966 at Kandy when

they were with him and his father and away from the rest of our group. Both were quite sure that Wijanama had not made any recognitions. Godwin Samararatne said he was certain he had not let Wijanama get out of earshot and so would have heard any statement the boy made that indicated a recognition. And H. S. S. Nissanka also said that he was close to Wijanama the whole time they were walking in the area and did not hear him make any recognitions.

It does not matter much whether Wijanama did or did not make any recognitions in Kandy in 1966. Those his father claimed he had made would add little to the case; if, on the other hand, he did not make them, the case would lose little. But it does matter, at least to me, whether Wijanama's father was a truthful person, and I have tried to understand how he could have come to make statements so far at variance with those of Godwin Samararatne and H. S. S. Nissanka. I reviewed the matter with him again in 1970, and at that time he still believed that Wijanama had recognized the mosque and a nearby house. His belief that Wijanama had made recognitions the others present did not report can have several explanations. First, despite their apparent vigilance, Godwin Samararatne and H. S. S. Nissanka may have strayed away from Wijanama and his father both farther and more often than they afterward thought they had done, and so Wijanama may have made remarks to his father that they did not hear. I mentioned in the General Introduction, included in the first volume of this series, that some discrepancies in the information witnesses of these cases give may occur because only one person hears a child say something in a soft voice which does not carry to the ears of other persons present. Secondly, Wijanama's father might have been confusing some details of the family's first visit to Kandy in 1964, when Wijanama showed great eagerness to go to the area of the King Street mosque, with the visit of 1966. Thirdly, Wijanama's father may have wanted to see him proven correct with an intensity which led him, perhaps quite unconsciously, to supplement the facts with an imaginary account of what he wished had happened. I do not mean by this to imply that Wijanama's father in any way enjoyed his son's statements and behavior related to the claim to have been a Moslem boy in his previous life. In the next section I shall describe Wijanama's behavior, and the reader will quickly see just how unwelcome it must have been for his parents. But since Wijanama had been the butt of some ridicule from his classmates, W. M. G. Ariyawansa could well have wished for some confirmation that his son had been talking about a person who really had existed. This would have freed Wijanama and his family from any charges of trying to offer mere fantasies as a substitute for genuine memories of a previous life.

If W. M. G. Ariyawansa did improve the case a little, does that disqualify the remainder of his testimony? I do not think so myself. His wife gave testimony that accorded very well with that of her husband and I interviewed her on two occasions when he was absent, although she had heard his initial testimony

in 1966. And fortunately Wijanama himself talked rather affably with us on all three visits to his home. Wijanama's statements also accorded well with what his father said. And I did not discover any major discrepancies in what Wijanama's father told us on different occasions apart from the matter of the recognitions during the visit to Kandy in 1966.

Wijanama's Behavior Related to the Previous Life

Circumstances and Manner of Wijanama's Speaking about the Previous Life. Apart from the nocturnal speech already described, Wijanama did not seem to talk about the previous life more at one time of day than another. His father said that he tended to talk about the previous life when he noticed shortcomings in the home, such as insufficient food of a type he claimed he had had abundantly before. One day there was no sugar in the house. Wijanama became angry and said: "In my other house there is plenty of sugar and I want to go there." He would also talk about the previous life if reproached for some misdemeanor. He would then sometimes threaten to leave. He did not usually specify his destination, but presumably he would have tried to leave for Kandy if he had acted on this threat. At least once he said he would go to the house in Kandy and hide and not come back.

For Wijanama the past life remained vividly present as he talked about it. Nearly all the statements informants attributed to him were phrased in the present tense, for example: "In our house we *don't* bring sugar like that" (referring to the small amounts of sugar his parents purchased), "The Perahāra is very beautiful," and "I *have* only one sister, who *is* very beautiful."

In addition to his waking memories, Wijanama said that he dreamed at night about the previous life, a statement confirmed by the reports and tape recording of his nocturnal utterances.

Wijanama had as strong a pull back toward the previous life as almost any child subject of a case of this type whom I have met. He repeatedly asked to be taken to the previous home in Kandy. He said: "It is not the house of a poor person like this." (His parents' residence was indeed a humble clay house with a dirt floor.) Apart from the superiority of the house he seemed to be remembering, almost everything about the previous life seemed much better to Wijanama. In his apparent memories there was certainly more and better food, such as ample sugar and meat, at the previous family's house compared with that of his own family. He also clearly found the previous family's religion more congenial than that of his family. On his first visit to Kandy in 1964, Wijanama fairly pulled his mother in the direction of the King Street mosque, saying he did not worship in the place where "this mother" (meaning M. J. Kusumawathie) worshiped, but in another place.

In addition to his wish to return to a better house and to worship at a mosque, Wijanama mentioned two other reasons for wanting to go to Kandy. He wished to see the Perahāra, of which he seemed to have a very clear knowledge, although he had actually never seen it at the time he began talking about it.

He cried, saying he had not seen the Perahära since the days when he had lived in the other house. And he said he could not study in the village of Wehigala, but wanted to go to Kandy so he could study to become a doctor. Later he dropped this idea and talked only of opening a boutique when he became older.

The parents of the subjects of these cases (or other persons) have sometimes teased the children by pretending that a person to whom the previous personality was attached was ill or had died. They thus probed the intensity of emotions connected with the previous life. Wijanama's father did this by telling him that the previous mother had died. Upon hearing this, Wijanama wept.³ Wijanama's father had no need to apply such a test. He well knew that Wijanama became emotionally upset when he recalled the previous life, and that when he did so he tended to become more involved in the memories and more miserable as a consequence. "The more he talks about the previous life," Wijanama's father said, "the unhappier he appears, and so I tried to suppress him from thinking [about these] things." He went on to say that when Wijanama talked about the previous life he tried to ignore him and show that he was not interested.

Wijanama's family must have found it easier to express annoyance over his talk about a previous life than to ignore it since he regularly awakened them every night with his agonizing calls for the previous mother and father and God. These mighty cries of misery had begun before Wijanama had given any articulate statements about the previous life and they were continuing every night up to April 1973, at which time he was already well over thirteen years old.

Wijanama's Comparisons of the Two Lives. Wijanama cannot have increased the level of contentment in his family by his invidious comparisons with the comfortable city home he claimed to remember. The small amount of sugar purchased in his family incited his first clear remark about the previous life when he was about four years old. He compared the small bags of sugar purchased by his parents with the huge supplies of it laid in by the previous parents. He also commented on his family's simple diet of breadfruit and jackfruit and the lack of meat. The absence of electricity stigmatized his home further. When one of the villagers of Wehigala, to test him, asked if electric light bulbs were things to be found on a table or in a cupboard, Wijanama replied: "How can you be so foolish? Light bulbs hang down from the ceiling." Wijanama also kept asking for more clothes. His father said: "Even when he has new suits he asks for more. He wears three suits to school each week." Wijanama had insisted that his father make for him a pair of wooden slippers similar to those worn by the supposed previous father, and W. M. G. Ariyawansa obediently complied. It is perhaps difficult to evaluate how painful Wijanama's

³ For similar tests of other subjects, see the reports of the cases of Imad Elawar and Sukla Gupta (I. Stevenson, 1974. *Twenty cases*).

demands of this sort must have been for his parents without actually seeing their impoverished circumstances. Given the situation of his family, some of Wijanama's complaints and requests would have exasperated most other parents.

Wijanama also commented on the differences between the two pairs of parents in his memories. He resented the authoritative firmness of his mother and said that he preferred the previous mother to her. He said: "My umma does not order me harshly and say, 'Come here,' and, 'Go.' She speaks politely and says, 'Please come. Come, my son.'" On the other hand, he evidently preferred his father to the previous one, who, he said, drank alcohol and quarreled at night.

Wijanama's father said he seemed to be "reflective," and like many of the children subjects of these cases he appeared perplexed by the contrasts between his present situation and what he remembered of a much better one, better at least with regard to socioeconomic conditions. He used to ask his parents why things were not as good as they had been. (Who could answer this question, at once profound and pathetic?)

Other Behavior of Wijanama Related to the Previous Life. Wijanama had numerous habits that closely resembled those of Moslem people and differed markedly from the customs of his family. For example, he tended to keep his head covered with a hat much more than the other village children, and sometimes he tied a handkerchief around his head with the knot at the back, a characteristic Moslem style of headdress. He wore his sarong much farther up the leg than the other boys of his village. Moslems in Sri Lanka wear their sarongs to about mid calf or a little lower (but not near the ground) for greater convenience when they wash their feet on entering a mosque. He did not wish to wear any cloth or piece of clothes that his mother had worn. For him they were not pure. "I wear father's clothes, but I don't want mother's clothes," he said.⁴ Wijanama also asked for slippers, an article of clothing not often worn or expected by Sinhalese village children but likely to be worn by children in a city if they can afford to do so.

His family ate their meals seated at a table, but Wijanama took his plate and sat cross-legged on the floor by himself to eat. He also had the habit of taking food from the center of a dish prepared for all instead of taking it from the edges. (This last habit was not particularly Moslem, but Wijanama's siblings did not have it; it may have reflected an expectation by a well-to-do person that there was plenty of food and it did not matter if food in a dish became mixed up and spoiled.) After eating, Wijanama would rub his stomach and belch, a typical Moslem habit, but not at all a Sinhalese one. He also showed a peculiar Moslem style of spitting in which saliva is worked neatly into a ball before ejection from the mouth. Moslems, during their periods of

⁴ So far as I know, Wijanama's attitude toward his mother's clothes had nothing to do with special characteristics of Moslems. It appears to have had some more personal origin.

fasting, get rid of surplus saliva in this manner, which distinctly differs from the Sinhalese way of spitting.

In his food preferences, Wijanama's most conspicuous departure from the habits of other members of his family came in his talk about meat and his openly expressed wish to eat it. (But he said he would not eat pork, a food totally repugnant to Moslems.) For all practical purposes Wijanama's family were vegetarians; they ate the dried fish (*karola*) I have mentioned, but no other meat.⁵ Wijanama, although he did not like the meatless diet, did not complain about it as he did about the paucity of sugar in the home. But he did pester his family until they finally began serving him string hoppers, a preparation of a starchy root. They had previously eaten rice instead of hoppers. (According to Wijanama's father he had said that he had eaten hoppers and pittu in his previous life; however, to me Wijanama himself denied, in 1968, that he had eaten hoppers in the previous life.)

Wijanama showed a conspicuous resistance to Buddhist religious customs. He evidently felt repelled by the images in Buddhist temples. He said: "Why have these huge images in the temple? Aren't they made of clay?" and "Where we worship we don't have all these idols and statues. We have to put mats on the ground. We wash our bodies and sit on our mats and worship. There is a priest shouting at the top of his voice. No women go there." In the presence of a monk, Sinhalese Buddhists prostrate themselves by kneeling on the ground and placing the head on the floor or making a very low bow with the knees bent. Most Sinhalese children form this habit quickly on imitation or instruction of their parents, but Wijanama resisted worshiping the monks of the village temple in this manner. At the temple he took little interest in what was going on, and tended to wander off and play by himself. He offered flowers (an important element in Buddhist worship) only because his parents almost forced him to do so.⁶

Wijanama had not become reconciled to Buddhism by the age of eleven. In 1970, he told me that he still did not like to go to the village temple. And some neighboring children mentioned that he never joined with his younger brothers in offering flowers at a small play *dagoba*⁷ that they had made behind the house and that I saw.

Wijanama's opposition to Buddhism in practice did not prevent him from performing satisfactorily in Buddhist studies at school. His teachers, with several of whom I talked, said that Wijanama did well in classes on Buddhism

⁵ Although Buddhism does not expressly forbid the eating of meat, many Buddhists are vegetarians for religious reasons. Wijanama's father said he believed that anyone who eats meat is not a Buddhist. This is not true, but I am here merely recording his opinion, not arguing with it. For further remarks about Buddhism and vegetarianism, see the report of the case of Ratana Wongsombat (in the fourth volume of this series).

⁶ For another example of resistance to Buddhism related to memories of a previous life, see the case of Gamini Jayasena (this volume).

⁷ A *dagoba* is a moundlike structure in which ashes and relics are placed. In other parts of Southeast Asia similar structures are called stupas and pagodas, although the word *stupa* is also used in Sri Lanka.

and even seemed enthusiastic about the subject. Perhaps he had adopted a sort of anthropologist's attitude, and was determined to learn about the curious customs of the people among whom he found himself living.

As have many other children subjects of these cases, Wijanama's play showed connections with the supposed previous life. He regularly played at tending a boutique. I do not know at just what age he first began playing at shop, but he continued it up to the age of eleven, although he was not then opening his boutique daily as he did at the height of this activity. During these earlier years he always opened his boutique as soon as he came back from school. Elongated red seed pods represented joints of meat, a piece of paper stood for textiles, and he devised a miniature toy balance. He also sold vegetables. At times he varied his shop and opened a dispensary instead of a meat and vegetable shop or textile boutique. He used in this play strange words his parents did not understand. For years he carried out this play alone every day when he returned from school.

At age eleven, however, Wijanama had extended his trading operations from play at home to making profits from his schoolmates. He would buy books or other objects from them that he thought salable and would later sell them for a higher price. And in talking with us he expressed the desire to become a boutique owner or other type of trader when he became older.

Wijanama's father said he behaved exceptionally for their family in having an unusual concern about cleanliness. He washed his hands not only before meals (which his younger brother did not do), but also whenever they became somewhat dirty at other times. His father considered that he was washing excessively and reproached him for it. I cannot say that this trait has any definite connections with the previous life about which Wijanama talked. Cleanliness is not by any means a specific feature of Moslem people, although the ritual washing of the feet before entering a mosque is an important custom among them.

Wijanama's father also commented on his habit of singing songs, apparently ones that "came to him" or that he made up. The trait seemed odd for their family, but I cannot say whether it had any connection with Wijanama's memories of a previous life.

The Attitudes of Other Persons toward Wijanama's Statements and Behavior

No one can feel surprised that Wijanama's extraordinary remarks and behavior made him the object of teasing at school. His schoolmates began calling him a Moslem boy and jeered at him. (As I have explained, there were and are no Moslem families in Wehigala; and since only children from Wehigala attended the village school, it had no Moslem pupils.) When the boys at school first teased him, Wijanama came home crying and asked to be sent to his previous father. His schoolmates continued to tease him up to 1970 and were then nicknaming him "Marahesh," meaning Moslem. By this time Wijanama had learned to keep his memories more to himself; but he

yielded nothing in his conviction that he had been a Moslem and indeed seemed to feel himself still to be one.

Wijanama's parents adopted a constructive, tolerant attitude toward his statements and other unusual behavior even though these made him (and to some extent themselves) conspicuous in the village. One might have expected them to take a more antagonistic position toward him. His father would sometimes say jokingly in front of Wijanama that it had been a lot of trouble to have a Moslem come into the family. To this Wijanama sagely replied: "Aren't we all human? Don't say such things about others!" But although Wijanama's father teased him a little about having a Moslem in the family and discouraged him from talking about the previous life, he never tried to suppress Wijanama's talk about it with stronger measures. He and his wife always seemed to me to show interest and indeed concern about Wijanama and never, so far as I know, punished him for his statements or behavior related to the previous life. Their anxiety about his nocturnal utterances led them to take him to a hospital at the end of 1965. A physician there prescribed some pills, but these did not influence Wijanama's nightmares.

Comments on the Evidence of Paranormal Processes in the Case

Since we have not found anyone whose life corresponded to Wijanama's statements, we have not verified any of them as correct for a particular person. I have already drawn attention to the fact that Wijanama did make a considerable number of statements that were correct for conditions in Kandy, although they could not be regarded as specific for that city. If we believe, as I do, that his correct knowledge of Kandy was beyond what we should expect in a village boy who had never been there, we may credit this to a paranormal process. He also showed familiarity with three words of the Tamil dialect spoken by Kandyan Moslems, and there seems to be no reasonable normal explanation for his use of these words.

Wijanama also exhibited an unusual knowledge of Moslem customs, and he showed this information not only in his statements but equally in his behavior expressed at the risk of provoking the antagonism of his parents and the derision of his schoolmates. For me, the case derives its greatest interest and strength from his unusual and lengthily persistent personation of a Moslem boy.

Wehigala is entirely a village of Sinhalese Buddhists. It has no Moslem resident family or Moslem schoolchildren. Moslem traders visit the village every few months for a few hours and then leave.⁸ Wijanama had lived his whole life in Wehigala, most of the time with his parents, although for a short period with his grandmother. He had never been to Kandy before 1964, by which time

⁸ I have not depended exclusively on the statements of Wijanama's father about the presence of Moslem people in the community of Wehigala. During Godwin Samararatne's visit to Wehigala in 1971 he interviewed the Ven. Siri Dhammatilleke (who had lived in Wehigala for thirty-three years) on this particular question about which I wished to move from conjecture to certainty.

he had already had nightmares for two years and had talked of the previous life for at least one year. His parents had been to Kandy, and they must certainly have had some acquaintance with Moslems in that city, if only because many of the shopkeepers and tradesmen of Kandy are Moslems. But they had no special knowledge of the Moslem religion and the customs of Moslems. Wijanama's father told me that he had never been inside a mosque until the time in 1966 when we took him and Wijanama into Kandy and they went into the King Street mosque.

I would not deny, however, that some of the people around Wijanama had ample knowledge of Moslem customs. And Wijanama might have derived all his information about Moslems from them, if not by direct instruction then possibly by telepathy. My confidence in this case as containing some elements of paranormal processes derives from my complete inability to understand what motive Wijanama (or his parents) could have had that would have incited him to personate a Moslem boy, or persist in this personation over many years. I have, in commenting on other cases of this type, sometimes mentioned how undesirable it seems to Asian (or any other) parents when a child starts talking about murders and other crimes in which he claims to have figured in his previous life. Buddhists are far from thinking it is disgraceful to be (or have been) a Moslem, but most Buddhist families would not regard the rebirth of a Moslem in their family as in any way commendable or enhancing to their pleasure and prestige. In some cases one can surmise that the child and his parents may aspire to attention and even assistance from the identified previous family; and occasionally the surviving relatives of related previous personalities have shown generosity toward subjects claiming to remember the life of a loved member of their family. In the present case, however, no person corresponding to Wijanama's statements has been found. Wijanama's parents had taken him only once to Kandy (in 1964) up to the time (1966) of my first interviews and efforts to identify a family corresponding to his statements. Clearly they showed no haste in tracing out a person the facts of whose life might verify Wijanama's statements. As I have mentioned, Wijanama's father probably did want very much to have his son vindicated, but I think this was purely because of the attention given to the case in the village and surrounding area. He could hope also that a verification of Wijanama's statements would subdue the teasing of him by his schoolmates.⁹ But these motives evidently lacked strength sufficient to stimulate Wijanama's father to any new exertions toward finding the related previous personality after he and his wife took Wijanama to Kandy in 1964. I think it doubtful that he would have ever done anything more toward tracing a related previous family if we had not taken him and Wijanama into Kandy in 1966.

⁹ I hope my last visit to Wehigala in 1970 may have had some such influence. At that time we talked with Wijanama's teachers. The entire school knew that a number of men from such remote places as Kandy, Colombo, and even the United States, had come to talk with Wijanama. This may have improved his status with his schoolmates a little.

Finally, in considering the possibility that Wijanama's parents contrived (or stimulated) his talking about a previous life as a Moslem, we have to conjecture a considerable training of Wijanama, since large blocks of the statements we recorded came from Wijanama himself, as did the tape recording of his nocturnal utterances.

In summary, one has to conceive the most improbable and self-destructive motives to believe that Wijanama or his family would wish to maintain a fiction of having in their family a child claiming to have been a Moslem boy in a previous life. And this seems even less probable when we consider that Wijanama was said to have sustained the role of a Moslem boy from the age of three until he was at least eleven. During four of those years (1966 to 1970) I had an opportunity to observe the family and know that at least throughout this period Wijanama persisted in his claim to have been a Moslem in a previous life.

Wijanama's Later Development

Despite the handicap of being so different from the other boys of his village, Wijanama seemed in 1970 to be developing fairly well, although not without some important difficulties.

In scholastic performance at school he had risen above his peers. In 1966 his father affirmed that he showed signs of precocity in his ability to learn and that he already knew more than other children of his age. Wijanama's father did not speak only from paternal bias. In 1970, Wijanama's teachers confirmed that he did exceptionally well at school. They agreed that he showed unusual enthusiasm for studies. One of his teachers in that year, E. S. Paujagoda, said Wijanama was third in a class of thirty studying Buddhism. He said Wijanama had an excellent memory and, in addition, was more modest and obedient than the other pupils. Wijanama was then in the fifth standard class at school. In principle, at age eleven, as he then was, he should have been in the sixth standard class. One of his teachers explained to me, however, that Wijanama had not failed a class and was only retained in the fifth class because the village school had no teacher for the next class to which he ordinarily would have been promoted.

Concerning Wijanama's superior intelligence, his father said (in 1968) that Wijanama could read the gathas (Buddhist religious verses) better than he could.

Despite his intellectual advancement, in 1970 Wijanama had by no means achieved complete ease in social relationships. His schoolmates still teased him, and, as I have mentioned, this had the effect of restraining his talk about the previous life. Two of his teachers described him as a solitary child, one using the expression "fearless loner" to describe him.

Wijanama's mother said in 1968 that his memories had begun to fade then. His father (also in 1968) said that Wijanama then spoke less than formerly about the previous life. I have learned to try to distinguish a diminished

expression of statements about the previous life on the part of the subject as he grows older from an actual forgetting of memories. The inhibitions that children acquire as they grow older naturally affect topics that they find it wise to conceal from adults and insensitive siblings or other children so that what a child says about a previous life after the age of five or six may bear little relation to what he thinks.

In 1970 Wijanama's parents again noted that he talked less about the previous life, but said that he still spoke about it sometimes. His father attributed the lessened references by Wijanama to the previous life to the suppressive influence of the teasing he incurred at school. In his conversations with us in 1970 Wijanama seemed definitely to have conserved many memories of the previous life. We took him in a car a short distance out of the village where he was away from the scrutiny of his parents and classmates. There Dr. G. Karunaratne skillfully helped him talk freely about the previous life and we made a tape recording of this interview. Judging by what he then said, I concluded that his memories of the previous life had faded a little, but by no means so completely as those of most subjects of these cases by the time they reach the age of eleven. Wijanama seemed to have clear recall of most details that we enquired about that had formed part of his memories when he was younger. The only important discrepancy with his earlier statements occurred when he spoke about images in the mosque. (See item 36, Table 18.)

In 1970, Wijanama was persisting in behavior apparently related to the previous life. He still had the habit of keeping his head covered with some kind of headdress and still wore his sarong shorter than the other boys of Wehigala. He rubbed his stomach and belched after meals and resisted going to worship at the Buddhist temple. He opened his play boutique, but no longer daily. And most important of all, almost every night he went through the familiar program of sitting up on his bed in the middle of the night and calling for God and the previous mother and father. In 1970, as earlier in 1968, Wijanama described dreaming of the parents of the previous life. I cannot say whether the images of these dreams coincided with the nightmarish callings for God and the previous parents or occurred at other times of the night. Be that as it may, Wijanama said (in 1970) that in his dreams he saw the previous father going in his truck to bring vegetables to his boutique. He also dreamed of the previous mother going to bed with her head covered. On another occasion (also in 1970) Wijanama said that he dreamed of boutiques.

One aspect of Wijanama's health gave rise to concern on the part of his parents. In early childhood he had had some febrile convulsions. In 1969 he had a convulsion during which he fell and injured his chin. Then he had another convulsion in 1970 not long before my last visit to Wehigala. Apart from these seizures, for which no obvious explanation presented itself, Wijanama seemed to enjoy good general health.

In April 1973, Godwin Samararatne returned to Wehigala to make further inquiries about the case on my behalf and in doing so naturally learned about Wijanama's condition and situation at that time. He was then nearing fourteen

years of age. He had stopped having the seizures mentioned above and his general health was good. He was, however, still having the "nocturnal mutterings" with little variation from the routine that I described earlier. Wijanama was then in the eighth standard class at school and performing well; he had been ranked eighth in a class of thirty-two students at the preceding term test. He continued to play at managing a boutique, but less often than when he was younger.

Wijanama was almost seventeen years old when Godwin Samararatne met him in Wehigala for the last time before publication of this volume, on July 27, 1976. In December 1975, Wijanama had tried the examination for the General Certificate of Education, but had failed to obtain it. This does not mean that previous judgments about his intelligence and scholastic aptitude were wrong. None of his classmates passed the examination either, a circumstance perhaps due to the inadequate training in the village school. But Wijanama could not go on to higher studies. He was therefore planning to open a cloth shop. He had no interest in selling meats. He was eating beef at this time, but said he would not eat pork; this was perhaps a residue of Moslem attitudes.

Wijanama said that he had completely forgotten all his memories of the previous life. But he added that when he had occasion to visit Kandy "the idea sometimes comes to my mind that it was in Kandy that I lived previously." He did not have such thoughts except when in Kandy.

In religious attitudes and observances Wijanama now appeared to be fully Buddhist. He said that he enjoyed going to the temple "very much." He knew that the life he remembered had been that of a Moslem and said that he preferred to be a Sinhalese Buddhist. But he could not say why.

Wijanama's mother (M. J. Kusumawathie) told Godwin Samararatne that Wijanama had stopped having the "nocturnal mutterings" which had figured so prominently in the case (and in the family's life) when he had been younger. She said that he would sometimes talk in his sleep and she could recognize in the words he spoke the ones that he had earlier repeated in the "nocturnal mutterings." In short, the "mutterings" had become "murmurings"; the content was the same, or similar, but the delivery was quieter and less intense.

Glossary
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Glossary

Words defined in this glossary have been given an initial capital letter even when they would not have one in the original Asian language, such as Sinhalese, Pali, or Sanskrit. Words of these languages have been romanized without diacriticals.

- ACHCHIE. Grandmother.
- AKKA. Older sister; may be used loosely in reference to an older female cousin.
Cf. NANGI.
- ALMIRAH. A closet or cupboard used for keeping clothes, toys, and almost anything else. It may be movable or built into a wall. The word is of Portuguese origin.
- AMMA. Mother. *Amma* means mother in standard Tamil as well as in Sinhalese.
- ANATTA. No soul. The Buddhist doctrine that no enduring entity or soul either exists during one life or persists from one life to another.
- ANICCA. Impermanence. A central tenet of Buddhism. The idea that everything, including human personality, is constantly changing.
- APPACHCHI. Father in the speech of “up-country” or Kandyan Sinhalese; sometimes shortened to *Appa*.
- ARECA NUT. A type of nut often chewed with betel leaf.
- ARRACK. A distilled alcoholic beverage made in Sri Lanka. The alcohol derives from the fermentation of juices tapped from the coconut palm. Arrack may also be derived from molasses.
- ATERIA. A type of tree with white flowers that grows in Sri Lanka.
- AVATAR. *Hinduism*: An incarnation of God in a human (physical) body.
- AYAH. A female servant who cares for small children.
- AYIYA. Older brother; used also to address or refer to older cousins.
- BANA PREACHING. Exegesis of Buddhist scriptures and commentaries; somewhat similar to sermons in Christian churches.
- BAPPA. Paternal uncle; strictly the father’s younger brother; may be used loosely in addressing or referring to an older male cousin.
- BETEL. A leaf of *Piper betle* which is chewed, often with areca nuts and other seasonings or therapeutic additives.
- BHAWANA. Mind development, especially by concentration and meditation.
- BHIKKHU. An ordained monk in Buddhism; a member of the Sangha or order of monks founded by the Buddha.

BIDI. A type of cheap, small, leaf-wrapped cigar smoked by the poorer classes in Sri Lanka and India.

BO TREE. Short or corrupt form of *Bodhi tree*; the pipal tree (*Ficus religiosa*); the type of tree under which the Buddha attained Enlightenment at Buddh Gaya (now in Bihar, India); ultimately from the Sanskrit word *budh*, meaning "to wake."

BOUTIQUE. French word used in some communities of Asia, such as in Sri Lanka, to refer to small shops.

BUDDHA. Strictly a title, not the name of a person. It refers to one who has attained complete Enlightenment and Nirvana. The word is used most commonly in reference to Gotama the Buddha (born ca. 563 B.C.), the historical founder of Buddhism. The word is derived from the Sanskrit *budh*, meaning "to wake."

CADJU. A game played with cashew nuts, somewhat resembling marbles as played in America. *Cadju* is a variant of *cashew*.

DAGOBA. A moundlike structure in which ashes and relics are placed. The word is Sinhalese, derived from the Sanskrit *dhatu garbha*, literally "the womb for relics." In other parts of Southeast Asia similar structures are called stupas and pagodas. The word *stupa* is also used in Sri Lanka.

DEVA. A discarnate personality; generally of a beneficent nature. Cf. PRETA.

DHAL. Split pulse, a common foodstuff in Sri Lanka and India.

DHARMA (Sanskrit); DHAMMA (Pali). Doctrine, especially the teaching of Buddhism considered as a whole.

DUKKHA. Suffering; emphasized in Buddhism as an inevitable component of terrestrial life.

DUVA. Daughter.

GATHA. A set of verses, especially ones based on Buddhist scriptures.

GOTUKOLA. A leafy vegetable that grows wild in paddy (rice) fields. It is sometimes cultivated.

GRAMA SEVEKA. The headman of a village.

HICHCHI. Smaller; younger.

HOPPERS. A farinaceous food often prepared in the form of a small pancake, but with a thin, crisp edge. When the mashed dough is forced through a sieve, it emerges as thin strands which are then steamed and called string hoppers.

JAMBU. A type of tree bearing edible juicy fruit.

KACHCHERI. Administrative center for a district.

KADE. A stall for selling merchandise; often only a simple structure by the road where small traders sell their wares.

KANDYAN. A person from Kandy or the highland country around it. Some of those who have this distinction consider themselves superior to the Sinhalese of the lowland and coastal areas of Sri Lanka.

- KARAWILA.** A type of bitter gourd.
- KARMA** (Sanskrit); **KAMMA** (Pali). Literally, action. The word has come to refer more narrowly to actions whose effects are experienced later, often in another incarnation. It should not be used to describe the effects of karma.
- KRIS.** A large dagger widely used in Malay and found also in Sri Lanka; also spelled *creese* and *cris*.
- KUKULALA.** A root somewhat similar to a yam, eaten after being boiled or in curries.
- LOKU.** Big; in referring to two or more children or siblings it is used to indicate an older one.
- MACHANG.** A corruption of the word *massina*, meaning “brother-in-law”; mostly applied loosely to friends.
- MAHATTAYA.** Gentleman; an honorific used to refer to or address a superior. It may be given to foremen and supervisors at plantations and factories. It signifies a status often associated with trousered persons having a knowledge of English. Wives sometimes refer to their husbands as “mahattaya”; somewhat paradoxically, parents may also address sons as “loku mahattaya” (older) and “chuti mahattaya” (younger). The word is cognate with *Mahatma* (Sanskrit), which means literally “Great Soul.”
- MAHOUT.** Elephant trainer and worker. Mahouts often “grow up” with the elephant they work and may spend much of a lifetime with one elephant.
- MALLI.** Younger brother.
- MAMMOTTY.** An agricultural implement somewhat like a cross between a hoe and a shovel as used in the West. They are widely used in cultivation in Asia.
- MANIOC.** A type of cassava, a tuberous root. It is a common substitute for rice (or a supplement) in Sri Lanka. Tapioca is derived from it.
- MANTRA(M).** A word or phrase which, when spoken, has a special influence and power on the speaker or on other persons or things.
- MUDALALI.** A well-established businessman, especially one who is economically and socially prominent in his community.
- MUDLIYAR.** Title conferred on certain locally prominent persons during the British administration of Sri Lanka.
- NANGI.** Younger sister; may be used to address or refer to younger female cousins. *Cf.* **AKKA.**
- NIKAYA.** A subdivision or sect of the Sangha in Sri Lanka. The Siyam Nikaya was founded in the eighteenth century by monks from Siam, now Thailand.
- NIRVANA** (Sanskrit); **NIBBANA** (Pali). *Buddhism:* The extinction of personality through the loss of all cravings for existence. It means a cessation of rebirth. The concept in Hinduism is somewhat different.
- NONA.** Lady; frequently included in the names of women.

PALI. Originally, text. The word was applied to the scriptural text of the Theravada Buddhist Canon and then later to the language in which the text was written. The language was originally a Prakrit (vernacular dialect) contemporary with Sanskrit.

PANCHA SILA. Literally, five precepts. The five most important precepts taught by the Buddha and observed by devout Buddhists. (For further details, see the case of Ratana Wongsombat in the fourth volume of this series.)

PANSALA. Temple.

PERA. A type of fruit tree.

PITTU. A mixture of flour and coconut, cooked and eaten with gravy, usually for breakfast.

PODI. Small; younger, in referring to brothers and sisters.

PRETA. Supernatural entity inhabiting a nonterrestrial realm, but capable of adversely interacting with living humans and manifesting to them. Pretas are said to result from strong, unfulfilled cravings which lead to rebirth in this form instead of in a higher realm as a deva.

PUJA. An act of worship or religious offering.

PUTA. Child; usually refers to a son, but may be used also for a daughter.

RABANA. A type of drum widely used in Sri Lanka.

REBIRTH. *Buddhism*: The activation of a new physical body by effects or residues of a personality that had previously been associated with another (now deceased) physical body. Cf. REINCARNATION.

REINCARNATION. *Hinduism*: The union of a soul with a new physical body after death of the physical body with which it had previously been associated. Cf. REBIRTH.

SAMANERA. Novice monk of the Buddhist Sangha (order of monks).

SAMBOLA. A food made from combining ground chilies, onions, and salt with coconut.

SAMSARA. The endless cycle of birth, death, and rebirth from which there is no release save in the extinction of personality through the attainment of Nirvana. Sometimes referred to as "the wheel of rebirth."

SANGHA. The order of Buddhist monks considered collectively.

SATIPATTHANA. A system of mind development derived from the Satipatthana Sutta of the Pali Canon.

SILA. Moral conduct. See PANCHA SILA.

SINIBOLA. A sweet (candy) of Sri Lanka.

SUDU. Fair, pale, or white; applied often to light-skinned persons.

TATHA. Father in "low-country" (coastal) Sinhalese. The "up-country" word is *appa* or *appachchi*.

THALA GULI. A sweet (candy) of Sri Lanka, prepared from crystallized treacle and sesame seeds.

- THERA.** Literally, elder. An honorific given to senior monks (bhikkhus) of the Sangha (order of Buddhist monks) after ten years of higher ordination. Senior monks of twenty years standing are called Mahathera (great elder).
- THERAVADA.** Literally, doctrine of the elders. The branch of Buddhism based on the teachings of the Pali Canon. It is the dominant school of Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia. Sometimes called Hinayana.
- TODDY.** An alcoholic beverage consisting largely of fermented juice of the tapped coconut palm. Toddy is used to make arrack by distillation. A variety of toddy may be obtained by fermenting the juice of the palmyra tree.
- UMMA.** Mother in a Tamil dialect spoken by Kandyan Moslems. In standard Tamil, *amma* is the word for mother, as it is in Sinhalese.
- VIDYALAYA.** School; may also be used for a college.
- WADE.** A fried patty made of ground dhal and spices.

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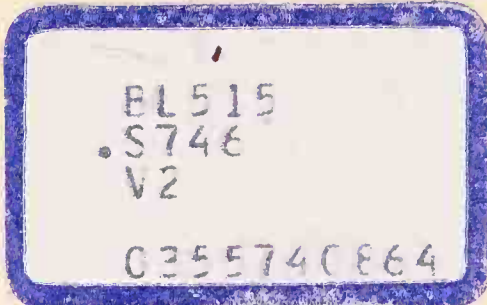
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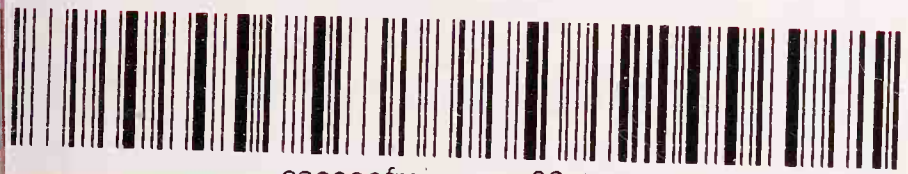
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