

Reincarnation studies

A series of articles exploring contemporary research on Reincarnation

"It is not more surprising to be born twice than once"

Voltaire



Narayanan Namboodiri



**As per a survey conducted in 2001,
45% of Baltic population believes in Reincarnation.**



25% of Russians believe in Reincarnation



25% of Americans too believe in Reincarnation



Many famous universities (including Duke University, Princeton University, University of Edinburgh) and organizations have conducted or are conducting research on subjects like NDE { Near Death Experience }, Past life regression Therapy and Reincarnation.

Part 1

Story of Santhi Devi



→ **One of the best documented stories of Reincarnation.**

→ **A story of Reincarnation, in which a great soul like Mahatma Gandhi was interested.**

→ **A story of Reincarnation, which was documented by a committee comprising 15 prominent members appointed by Mahatma Gandhi.**

→ **A story of Reincarnation, which was later investigated by many committees and forums, out of which only one report turned negative (that was written by a rationalist).**

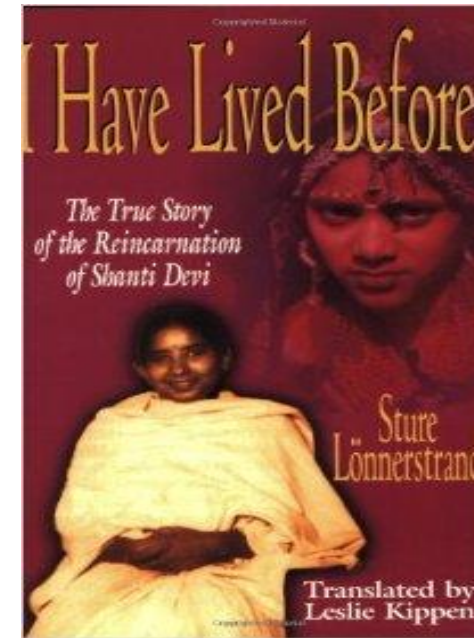
→ **A story of Reincarnation, which made Sture Lonnerstrand, who came here to “expose” the “fake” story, finally write a beautiful biography of her.**

→ **A story of Reincarnation, which made Dr. Ian Stevenson, leading authority on Reincarnation, say that ‘she made atleast 24 statements of her memories that matched the verified facts’.**

Santhi Devi's story is one of the most amazing and well-documented cases of Reincarnation.

She was born in Delhi in 1926. She spoke very little until reached four. When started talking, she alarmed everybody by telling them, "this is not my house. I have a husband and a son in Madhura".

At first her parents didn't take her words seriously. But when she continued the habit of talking about incidents which were not connected to her present life, her parents were perplexed and worried and started to think that she had some serious mental problem.



"For thirty years I have leaned toward the theory of Reincarnation. It seems a most reasonable philosophy and explains many things. This belief in immortality makes present living the more attractive. It gives you all the time there is. You will always be able to finish what you start."

Henry Ford

One day when the girl gave a detailed account of her death following childbirth in her previous life, they, without any delay, consulted their family physician. He was also amazed how a little girl narrated so many details of the process of childbirth.

When Shanthi Devi realized that her parents were not believing what she said, she started to talk about these things to everybody, whoever she met.

One of her teachers, who had a little belief in Reincarnation, was curious to know more and questioned her further about her husband, his house and address etc.



Santhi Devi as a child

"Reincarnation contains a most comforting explanation of reality by means of which Indian thought surmounts difficulties which baffle the thinkers of Europe."

Albert Schweitzer

From Shanthi Devi he came to know that her husband's name was Kedarnath Chaubey, and his house was in Madhura. When the teacher realized that Shanthi Devi knew the exact address, he decided to write a letter to that person explaining what all things happened here.

When the teacher posted the letter, he was not sure whether there was a real person called Kedarnath chaubey and whether the address given by Shanthi Devi was correct. Hence, even while posting, he didn't expect a reply for his letter.

But to everybody's surprise, within a couple of weeks, they got a reply from the man called Kedarnath Chaubey. In that reply letter, Kedarnath confirmed that he had a wife named Lugdi Devi who died on 4th October, 1925. { Around one and half years before Shanthi Devi's birth }.



Pandit Kedarnath chobey
Santhi Devi's husband in her previous liffe

**"A little while, a moment of rest upon the wind,
and another woman shall bear me."**

Kahlil Gibran

More than that, he wanted to see the girl who knew all his details and who claimed that she was his wife.

He couldn't wait long. Because of his excitement to see the girl, he reached Delhi with his present wife and the son of his former wife on 12th November, 1935.

When they reached the house, Santhi Devi was at school. When the eight-year-old came home from school in the afternoon, they told her that she has a visitor waiting for her in the other room.

When she entered the room, she immediately recognized her husband from the past life. Without saying a word she bowed her head in shy respect before him and stood by his side.



Santhi Devi in her youth

**"I'm a great believer in the hereafter, in karma,
in reincarnation.**

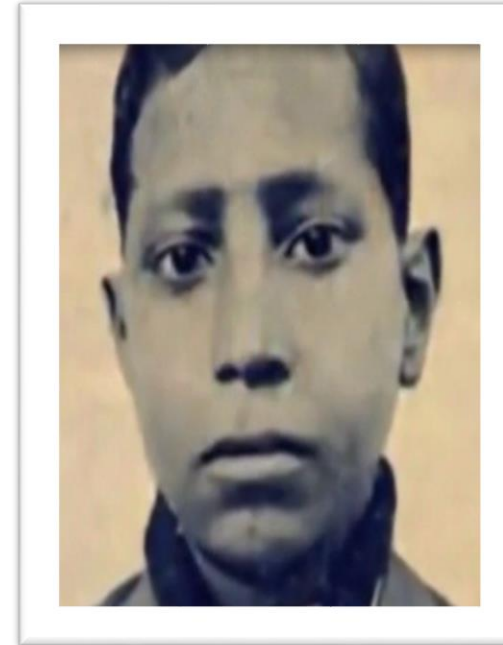
It does make sense."

Norman Mailer

She then asked her mother to prepare meals for the guests. When the mother asked what should she prepare, she said that he was fond of stuffed potato parathas and pumpkin squash. Kedarnath was dumbfounded as these were his favorite dishes.

Then Kedarnath asked whether she could tell them anything unusual to establish full faith in her. Shanti replied, "Yes, there is a well in the courtyard of our house, where I used to take my bath."

Shanti was emotionally overwhelmed on seeing Navneet, the son in her previous life. She hugged him and cried for a long time. Then she asked her mother to bring all her own toys so that she could give them to her son Navaneeth.



Nabaneeth
Santhi Devi's son in her previous life

"As long as you are not aware of the continual
law of Die and Be Again,
you are merely a vague guest on a dark Earth"
Goethe

After their meal she asked her husband why he had remarried, "Did we not agree that after the death of one of us neither would remarry?" Mr. Chobey had apparently gazed at the floor feeling uncomfortable. After all, it was a matter known only to him and his previous wife. How could this little girl know it?

Shanti Devi became visibly upset when Kedarnath decided to leave. She begged to be allowed to go to Mathura with him but her parents refused. How could they allow a stranger to take their little daughter with him?



**Nabaneeth in his middle ages
Recently taken**

**"The soul comes from without into the human body,
as into a temporary abode,
and it goes out of it anew
it passes into other habitations,
for the soul is immortal."**

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Her story spread all over the country through the media and many intellectuals got interested in it. When Mahatma Gandhi heard about it, he called Shanti Devi's parents, talked to her, and then requested her to stay in his ashram. Santhi Devi, even in her old age, cherished the memories of her meeting with the Mahatma and spending time with him.

Mahatma Gandhi showed great interest in this case of a young girl remembering her past life. He considered this case a worthy one to be investigated. Soon he appointed a committee of 15 prominent people, including parliamentarians, national leaders, and members from the media, to study the case. The committee persuaded her parents to allow her to accompany them to Mathura. They left by rail with Shanti Devi on November 24, 1935.



**"Each night, when I go to sleep, I die.
And the next morning,
when I wake up, I am reborn."**

Mahatma Gandhi

The committee's report describes what happened in Madhura:

“As the train approached Mathura, she became flushed with joy and remarked that by the time they reach Mathura the doors of the temple would be closed. The language she used was the colloquial one used in Madhura.

“The first incident which attracted our attention on reaching Mathura happened on the platform itself. The girl was in L. Deshbandhu's arms. When they arrived the station, thousands of onlookers, informed about the imminent arrival of Shanti Devi by the newspapers, had gathered at the station. A tall man wearing a turban stood in front of the girl and asked, “Do you know me?” Shanti bowed down with respect and touched his feet.

Narayanan Namboodiri



Santhi Devi as a teenager

**“If you think about the concept of reincarnation,
it's essentially uploading yourself
and your spirit into a new form,
a new Hard drive...”**

Conor Oberst

When inquired who it was, she whispered in L. Deshbandhu's ear that the person was her 'Jeth' (older brother of her husband).

The committee members took her in a tonga, instructing the driver to follow her directions. On the way she described the changes that had taken place since her time, which were all correct.

When they arrived at a crossing, she climbed down from the carriage and led the committee to her house that was surrounded by a huge crowd of people. An elderly man was waiting there dressed in Brahmin clothing. She bowed down before him and said, "This is my father-in-law." Among the crowd she also discovered her twenty-five-year-old brother and her father in law's brother from her past life.

When she reached the front of the house, she went in without any hesitation and was able to locate her bedroom. She also recognized many items of hers.

One of the people present asked her whether she knew where the toilet was. He used a typical colloquial word, which was known and used only in this area and naturally it would be unfamiliar to a girl from Delhi. But she immediately went downstairs and pointed to the toilet.

After this incident Shanti led the committee to the river Jumna to show them where she used to bathe. She pointed to a house and said, "My parents used to live in that house." Then she suddenly ran off in the direction of the house and the committee had to be quick to catch up with her.

In the house there were forty-five people. Among them she recognized her mother from the past and immediately went to sit on her lap.

The older woman asked the girl whether she could tell her something that they both knew from their past. Shanti reminded her that she had promised her on her deathbed that she would bring flowers and sweets to Lord Krishna for her.

When the nine-year-old asked her whether she had kept this promise, her mother from the past had to admit to having forgotten about it. Then Shanti said with regret, "Why has no one kept their promises? Why do people always lie to the dying?"

She had no answer. Along with her, Kedarnath, who was watching this, could only look at her with remorse.

The woman now was totally convinced that this girl really was her daughter Lugdi and tears started to flow from her eyes.

Shanti's present day parents were also witness to this moving scene. Mrs. Bahadur, her present mother, was in turmoil, since she was certain that her daughter would no longer wish to return to Delhi with her.

Mrs. Bahadur turned to her husband in despair and said, "They want to rob us of our daughter. They are all part of this conspiracy." Shanti's previous mother sensed their fear and despair and said, "Let Shanti decide. Only she has the right to decide which family she wishes to live with."

Everyone in the room looked at Shanti with great anticipation, wondering what her decision would be. Meantime she had gathered her thoughts and wiped her tears. She freed herself from the arms of her previous mother and whispered, "Forgive me" and she walked out through the door. She never returned to that place again in her life.

The manner in which she burst into tears on meeting the parents of her past life moved everyone present there. The committee mentioned in their report that it was a blessing that the past lives are forgotten.

Otherwise, everyone will have to undergo the same panic experiences that Santhi Devi underwent, when she met the parents of her previous birth.

They felt that by bringing Shanti Devi to Mathura they had taken a big responsibility, and finally they had to forcibly separate her from the parents she had in the previous life.

Shanti Devi died in 1988. Because of her vows she made to her husband during her life as Lugdi, she never remarried in the present life as Shanthi Devi.

Stephen Ellis, who has written a beautiful article about Shanthi Devi says, "Of all the hundreds of past life cases that I have studied, the case of Shanti Devi stands out as the most documented, provable instance of having lived before. What makes this so, is that Shanti Devi never lost her memory of her past life.

In almost all past-life cases, the subject only has flashes or very vague memories of his/her past life. Detailed memories can frequently be brought out through hypnosis. It was not the case with Shanti Devi.

Shanti Devi actually maintained her identity as Lugdi Devi through death and beyond into her new birth as Shanti Devi. She said, "My earlier life was still with me and had never really come to an end. It was my Real life, the other was like a dream."

Why did she see this life as a mere dream? She said, "I was a great devotee of Lord Krishna, and his divine Name was ever on my lips and in my mind, so much so that it became one with my breath and heart throughout the day and night. I had almost reached a state of eternal bliss and salvation..."

Narayanan Namboodiri



Santhi Devi in her middle ages

"The theory of Reincarnation, which was originated in India, has been welcomed in other countries. Without doubt, it is one of the most sensible and satisfying of all ideas that mankind has conceived."

Luther Burbank

But I made a mistake. I was far too eager to see my son and husband. My love was egoistical, greedy and demanding. Therefore I had to come back again.”

It might be because she considered the present life as the result of a past mistake that she took it as a dream.

A lady, who lives with the individuality of her previous birth, who doesn't marry in order to keep the promises she made to her husband in her previous life, is really a wonder even without all these investigations and proofs.



Santhi Devi in her old age

**“I died as a mineral and became a plant,
I died as a plant and rose to animal,
I died as an animal and I was Man.**

**Why should I fear?
When was I less by dying?”**

Jalaluddeen Rumi

To those who still have doubts,
I can only repeat what Stephen Ellis has said in
his article on Shanthi Devi

**“If you don’t believe something,
no amount of proof will ever convince you.
If you do believe something,
no proof is necessary.”**

Continued.....

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