

Hinduism

The typical assumption in the Hindu tradition is that every living body is matched by a soul (sometimes called atman and sometimes purusa, or else cit or consciousness). However, in Advaita Vedanta the identity between the Divine Being and the Self is taken strictly. Consequently we all, so to speak, share the same Self. It is our limited view or projection which causes us to see separate selves. It is like a light seen through a colander. It looks like many lights when it is in fact only one. ... so at the lower or empirical level of truth we have a host of transmigrating individuals, lacking permanence.

Apart from the karmic linkage between lives, it is assumed that yogis can by the process of purifying their consciousness remember previous lives. Spiritual leaders are held also to have other paranormal powers, such as telepathy and the ability to read others' minds. In regard to rebirth, arguments rather than appeal to putative memory are used, mostly empirical – notably the occurrence of child geniuses, apparently paranormal recognitions, and so on.

From Smart N – Hinduism in 'Philosophical Issues in the Religions of the World' selections from Part 1 of Quinn P and Taliaferro C (eds) – *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion* (Blackwell, 2002) p11

1. (b) Clarify the argument and/or interpretation in the passage. (24)

(b) Do you agree with the idea(s) expressed? Justify your point of view and discuss its implications for understanding religion and human experience.

(16)

(Total 40 marks)

TOTAL FOR PAPER 1E: 40 MARKS

Start your answer on page 3.



