Authority in the Virtual Sangat: Sikhism, Ritual and Identity in the Twenty-First Century

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In: Online – Heidelberg Journal of Religions on the Internet, 02.1 (2006),

PDF, English
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- URN: urn:nbn:de:bsz:16-opus-69552
- URL: http://www.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/archiv/6955
- DOI: 10.11588/heidok.00006955

Abstract

In her paper Authority in the Virtual Sangat: Sikhism, Ritual and Identity in the Twenty-First Century, Doris Jakobsh analyses the change of authority based on her research on Sikhs on the Internet. She stresses the Web as a 'third place' of communication among the Sikhs as well as the phenomenon of new authorities online. However, this does not imply the replacement of the traditional seats of authority, the Akal Takht, SGPC, or gurdwara managements, but one can recognize a significant shift away from these traditional sites of authority toward the 'new authorities', the intermediaries of cyberspace. Her analysis shows that this aspect of the Sikh experience brings with it the most profound challenges and, most importantly, a need to bridge the post-modern individual, i.e. ‘Sikh tradition' intertwined and legitimated by the metanarrative, and the proliferation of new authorities who have become intermediaries of Sikhism online by virtue of their expertise within the digital domain.

Item Type: Article

Journal or Publication Title: Online – Heidelberg Journal of Religions on the Internet

Volume: 02.1

Date Deposited: 14 Nov 2006 10:06

Date: 2006

Faculties / Institutes: Philosophische Fakultät > Institut für Religionswissenschaft

Subjects: 200 Religion

Controlled Keywords: Ritual, Sikh, Sikhismus

Uncontrolled Keywords: Internet

MEMORY, TRADITION AND REVELATION Scripture and Revelation in the Jewish Tradition 95 David Fox Sandmel The Role of Memory in the Formation of Early Christian Identity 113 Binsar Jonathan Pkpanah Sacred Text, Revelation and Authority: Remembering and Transmitting the Word. 127 Nelly van Doom-Harder: RELIGIOUS IDENTITY AND RENEWAL IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY IV. CASE STUDIES: TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY FORMATION OF COMMUNITY Forming Roots in Sikhism is rooted in the mystical experiences of Hindu and Muslim saints of northern India, and particularly in the mystical universalism of the ten Sikh gurus (106). Because Sikhism is a universalist faith (all faiths already contain the truth), the movement has not focused on the conversion of individuals to their faith (107). On the other hand, the purpose of religions is not to practice rituals, but to love others, to care for the sick and oppressed, and to reaffirm the value of living. “Prophets and founders of all religions have tried to show us the way to a better future” (117). Pluralism and unity. Criticisms of Religion in the Twenty-first Century. Fisher is heavily influenced by her own religious background (as are we all). She. The Meaning of Sexual Identity in the Twenty-First Century. Editor(s): Judith S. Kaufman, David A. Powell. Contributors: Thomas O. Haakenson, Richard Canning, Judith S. Kaufman, David A. Powell, Jennifer de Coste, Alexandar Mihailovic “Something happened in the 1990s”; a group of people who were perceived as radical and “unmentionable” were transformed into a group of people who deserved human rights, and, if you looked close enough, were “normal,” just like everybody else (John D’Emilio (2002). Had a “post-gay era” (Ghaziani, 2011) begun? And if so, how might this impact on the meaning of sexual identity and a political movement steeped in identity politics?