

the pressure of mainstream media, doctors, peers, and others, many parents impose dieting on their kids. Another damaging factor overlooked by many is ‘yo-yo dieting’, also known as weight-cycling.

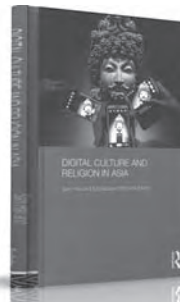
In the next chapter relationship between food and weight-gain is analysed; this relationship is not straightforward and simple as is generally assumed but depends on factors like thyroids, bacterial colonies in intestines, dieting, parent weight, genetic makeup, and also importantly on the ‘pleasure’ derived during eating! Our whole metabolism gears up when we enjoy our meal properly; this helps greatly in digestion and assimilation of the food. In a culture where many factors reinforce disordered eating and create ‘good food-bad food’ fixation, it takes time to get rid of them and start enjoying eating. One major factor that reinforces disordered eating is ‘medicalisation of obesity’. This opens up the next chapter, ‘Money, Motivation, and Medical Machine’ that shows how over the last fifty years doctors and pharmaceutical companies have systematically created and reinforced the notion that obesity is dangerous to health and only specialised doctors can treat it with surgery and/or drugs. Also observed is the increasing and widespread bias among doctors and medical staff towards ‘fat’ patients. Next, fifth chapter discusses how our notion of beauty has changed over a period and how continuous bombardment of advertising through movies, television, billboards, internet, social media, and so on creates an unattainable body-image and the false paradigm, ‘thin is healthy and beautiful while fat is ugly, lazy, unhealthy’; this keeps us perpetually unhappy about our body.

The last two chapters describe how we can personally as well as collectively bring about a positive change in this entrenched mindset. It depends on our own image and identity perceived by us in the surrounding world. In the US many women define themselves in terms of ‘body anxiety’ and ‘social roles’—an outcome of social fear of rejection—leading to increase in ‘fat-prejudice’ at homes, workplaces, and social gatherings. ‘Fat or thin, the entire American population has internalised this idea about fat being terrible ... they’re overexercising and undereating and living in a constant state of fear and panic about this horrible, hateful thing ... So if they allow someone else to say “It’s OK to be fat

and you should stop being mean to fat people”, their entire life of self-torture is a waste’ (165). Personally we should devise positive, real-world strategies for healthy life like taking fruits and vegetables, enough sleep, and physical activities, and on the collective side there are already some positive efforts in the form of associations like NAAFA, and HAES and models like Ellyn Satter’s ‘competent eating’ and Evelyn Tribole’s ‘intuitive eating’. Also, the social media can be used to boost these efforts.

This wonderful book is interspersed with real life stories of people who have struggled with all the issues relevant here; these stories are highlighted in appropriate chapters which, apart from buttressing the point under discussion also gives it an authentic feel. Extensive notes, selected bibliography, and a useful index are given at the end of the book. In all, the book is hard-hitting and a must read for every health conscious individual.

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Digital Culture and Religion in Asia

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Sam Han and Kamaludeen Mohamed Nasir have done an excellent job in interrogating the role of the Internet in bringing different faith communities together, connecting so many others who can find peace which major faith traditions bring to our lives. Before we proceed further, we should thank the authors for writing at a time when the ISIS is recruiting members through the Internet. Lone-wolf attacks are becoming more common; but these terrorists are not lone-wolves. They are brainwashed through the dark Web and, behind their lone-wolf attacks lie organised Internet handlers, trolls, and people who reject ‘The plurality of the new religious landscape’ and the cosmopolitanism of ‘bricolage religiosity’ (5). It is good to have these two sociologists studying the phenomenon of ‘mixing and matching aspects of

religion with other aspects of culture that are, now more than ever, digital' (ibid.). It must be pointed out that both Han and Nasir aim to 'treat [faith] "communities"' as problematic and they successfully 'describe how "community" is articulated and constituted in the meeting of digital culture and religion' (13).

It is heartening to see that the first chapter, 'Digital Christianity in Korea' begins with the authors reviewing a blog maintained by someone called 'The Korean' who lives in the US. The authors rightly hone into the power of the New Media—now new only to those who do not understand the power of the Internet, New Media now is a misnomer—when they mention the 'cross-cultural role that he [the author] and his blog play' (15). Based on this blog's posts and the authors' understanding of the coexistence of Asia 'as the safeguard of martial arts, Confucian filial piety' with 'the hypermodern [trope of selected Asian] cities', the 'so-called Asian Tiger economies', they see religion 'as entangled in the discourse of modernity and globalisation' (17). If Han and Nasir had stopped at this observation, then their book would not have been worth reading. They go beyond the 1990s' formulation of religion 'as part of superstition and tradition ... relegated to the past ... Religion, in that framework, cannot be modern by definition' (17). In this chapter's sub-section titled 'Digital Korea' (20–2) we have them bring in the Korean equivalent to the global conglomerate, the 'chaebol' (21). It is the success of the chaebol economy that propelled a digital economy in South Korea. Without fast internet speeds and universal access to the Internet, unlike in India, the spread of religion, in this case mainly Evangelical Christianity would have been impossible since 'it is Korean church websites that reveal important features of Korean Christianity [which is pastor-centric]' (23). They are sociologists but the range of their scholarship make them not merely sociologists of religion but theologians too: '[The Internet] changes how God and the sacred are understood ... The sacred [being mediated through personal devices that can access the Internet] is reconstituted to the level of the personal ... Small groups reflect a faith rooted in feelings and sharing instead of

obedience ... The sacred then reveals itself not [merely] in holy texts but in life stories, in, we would argue, sociality itself' (27).

This brings to mind Ignatian Christian Life Communities so popular in Jesuit academic institutions in India. The pre-Internet religious community has now been reinvented online. Thus, we find that our two authors have become commentators on the praxis of lived religions across Asia—mirroring the Christian Life Communities which they do not mention in their otherwise magisterial work. Han and Nasir may distance themselves from being called theologians since their project is to make explicit 'the divide between the religious local ("credo") and the religious global ("dogma") in the current media landscape' (73). Both offer structuralist critiques of the interface between the digital and the (lived) religions of Asia, but through their repeated and accurate observations on religious worship and 'ritual participation' through a distance, that is online, (11), they enter into the domain of the *trace of God* (See Edward Baring and Peter E Gordon, *The Trace of God: Derrida and Religion* (New York: Fordham University, 2014)). They will not agree with this reviewer's understanding of faith communities and might even consider these faith communities as simulacra; yet through their meticulous study of every faith tradition to be found online, from Hinduism to Buddhism to practitioners of Falun Gong, they reconstruct faith communities which they want to ironically deconstruct.

Han and Nasir are so thorough that one would want to believe them that the Japanese are searching more for the occult online than their American counterparts (37); but this is a double-bind. Is not the occult part of the religious apparent in both the Semitic traditions as well as within the Asian religions? Further, how can Han and Nasir be certain of their statistics? Large samples; targeted-questionnaires and even meta-analyses cannot make explicit the experience of the holy. This is not the fault of Han and Nasir but the limitation of the empirical method so popular in the social sciences.

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