

Key Points from Introductory Unit

1. TBL supports exploration of primary sources in two stages:
 - (a) orientation to readings, leading to TRA; and
 - (b) application of key concepts (see #2-3) to SAME reading.
2. Religion can be studied objectively, neutrally & empathically, & notions of the sacred apply also to culture in general.
3. People like Kingsolver & Pollan want to recreate a culture of food that puts us back in touch with the sources of our food.

& one thing to put at the top of your “To Do” list:

choose a ****local worship site**** to visit ASAP (see SacCT)

Essential Lesson from Trial Application Exercise

Studying the food-related culture requires

BOTH

(a) observing what is directly visible
(practice & community)

AND

(b) gathering evidence about what is hidden
("reflection" = thoughts & feelings about the sacred)

—> but also and most importantly,
investigating the way practice inspires reflection
and the way reflection heightens practice.

Initial Expectations re: Practice & Reflection

(answer on a half sheet of paper, to be turned in with your observation report at the end of the month)

- * What kinds of people, actions, objects, recited words, locales & timings do you expect to observe at the food-related worship you will attend?
- * How might you research the thoughts & feelings of religious worshipers in connection with food-related practice, and what kinds of thoughts & feelings do you expect to find?

Then come up with 2-3 other questions that you might want to ask about practice &/or reflection.

Content Objectives for Unit 1: Food, Farming & the Sacred in Pre-Modern Asia

By the end of this unit you should be able to describe *objectively & empathically*, for an interested peer unfamiliar with these topics:

1. the way people in ancient India & China used food to honor the cosmic forces connecting them with their ancestors.
2. rituals used in India & China to experience tangibly and visibly the presence of divine beings and other sacred things.
3. the extent to which and ways that such Asian religious practices have inspired participants' thoughts & feelings about the sacred.

& **visit your chosen worship site** and record observations

Thinking As You Read (part 1)

What you think about when you read should go beyond summarizing.
Consider an analogy that symbolically describes this thinking.

When putting together a puzzle, one **first looks for**

(a) the shape of each puzzle piece & how it fits with others

but then also

(b) forms and colors that appear on different pieces;
similar looking pieces that are hard to distinguish;
and finally the whole picture of the assembled puzzle.

This analogy spotlights the **different skills** needed
to prepare for (a) TRAs and (b) application exercises.

OVERVIEW OF READINGS

Primary Sources

- ancestor offering rituals in *The Laws of Manu* (RDR, 1-16)
 - *Family Rituals* of Zhu Xi (RDR, 35-46)
 - Fuller, "Hindu Worship" (RDR, 17-30)
 - Kinsley, "The Worship of Durga" (RDR, 31-34)
- Schipper, "Everyday Religion" & "The Immortals" (RDR, 47-72)
 - "Hunting: the Meat" & "Gathering: the Fungi" (TOD, 334-90)

--> for terms marked with * consult these EB articles:

“the sacred,” “nature worship,” “origins of agriculture”
(use links in on-line course schedule)

IMPORTANT: make sure that you *****use only the links embedded in the on-line schedule of readings***** to access the assigned Encyclopedia Britannica articles. Going through the library's database page will probably lead you to different material, which will likely confuse you when preparing for TRAs.

STUDY GUIDE KEY:

RED = study questions for each section of the assigned source

GREEN = terms to study for the TRA

IMPORTANT:

*** = look in the relevant EB article linked to the on-line schedule for essential additional information about the term**

reviewing basic terminology for the academic study of religion
“Essential Elements of Religious Life (on-line syllabus)

(a) “What analogies help picture the relationship between reflection, practice, community? (section V)

dimensions layers [sacred*]

(b) “What questions help pay attention to the concrete evidence of religious practice?” (section VI)

worship informal roles written records

actions objects words spaces

ideal vs. actual

Ancestral Offering According to *Manu's Code of Law* (= *dharma*) (RDR, 1-16)

Authoritative Sources

Dharmasūtras

Grhyasūtras

People

Brāhmin
Manu

twice-born
seers

Saka & Cīna
ancestors

Locales, Ritual Objects & Foods

divine offering = offering to gods
water*

sesame seeds

(sacred) fire(s)*
rice*/rice balls

south

Ancestral Offering According to *Manu's Code of Law* (= *dharma*) (RDR, 1-16)

(a) Who should one invite & when does one hold the ritual? (p.52-54, 57, 63-64)

Veda vedic* scholar = learned man friend bald-headed [man] temple priest
new moon* dark fortnight afternoon proper [=pure*] vs. unfit

(b) How should one send invitations, prepare the space & offer rice balls? (p.58-59)

Marīci seat(s) perfumes & garlands oblation seats/sacred grass = Kusha blades

(c) How should one feed the attending Brāhmins? (p.60-61, 63)

food side dishes daughter's son remnants
goat [meat*] boar/buffalo beef/milk* rhinoceros

(d) How should one conclude the meal & distribute leftovers? (p.61-63)

Svādhā Darbha grass wife honey residue/ambrosia

“Sacrifice” to the Ancestors According to Chu Hsi’s *Family Rituals* (RDR, 35-46)

Authoritative Traditions

Confucius

Neo-Confucians

Northern Sung

People

family system

presiding man

presiding woman

liturgist

attendant

Locales, Ritual Objects & Foods

offering hall (=ancestral shrine)
(wooden//ancestral/spirit) tablet
(good luck) wine

meat

main hall
incense burner
(wheat*) flour

north, south, east & west
official plaque
fish
grain

“Sacrifice” to the Ancestors According to Chu Hsi’s *Family Rituals* (RDR, 35-46)

(a) Where does the main ritual happen & what preparations are done? (p.xxii-vi, 155-59)

	ancestor	soul cloth	
	visits & reports	cappings & weddings	
second month of the season		divining blocks	purification*

(b) What foods are sacrificed, in what order & what is said? (p.xiv, 158, 60-63)

	cups, saucers & plates	vinegar & salt	
reeds	liver	[grain*]	rice
			atmospheric forces

(c) What is done with the food left over from the sacrifice? (p.164-66)

Heaven*	five blessings	boxes	feasts
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C.J. Fuller & David Kinsley's Survey of Hindu Puja & its Symbols (RDR, 17-30, 31-34)

Unseen Beings & Forces

deity = god/goddess *darshana*
divine [=sacred*] power (=shakti) & grace/ divine qualities

People

priest = Brahman lay worshiper
householder “ordinary people”

Locales & Ritual Objects

lamp temple vs. home image(s)
food water* camphor flame
“offerings & services”

C.J. Fuller & David Kinsley's Survey of Hindu Puja & its Symbols (RDR, 17-30, 31-34)

(a) What happens during the worship? (p.57, 62-69, 106, 110-15)

sound/music mantra Sanskrit text(s) scent/incense camphor fire*
gesture bathing flowers guest men vs. women Minakshi
Sundareshwara = Somaskanda festival(s) structure
upacharas = offerings & services preparation/purification decoration/adornment
Durgā buffalo/blood harvest/fertility/agriculture/crops* *navapatrikā*/grains* pot

(b) What is the relationship between the deities & the images worshiped (p.58-62, 69-72)

stone vs. bronze vs. picture movable vs. immovable *linga* eye(s) *nirguna*
divine needs protection & favors Vaishnavas/Krishna request

(c) What is the significance of the flame & the *prasada*? (p.72-75, 82)

identity *arati* transcendent vs. embodied ash & powder

(d) In what ways does puja reflect and influence social hierarchies? (p.75-81)

purity* & pollution* high vs. low castes Harper's argument *jutha*/wife & husband
food exchange/transaction Babb's conclusions rank & honors Dirk's argument

Kristof Schipper's Survey of Taoist Festivals & Rites (RDR, 47-72)

Unseen Beings & Forces

	gods & (patron) saints	Immortals	ancestors
	deprived/orphan souls	Earth* God	Hearth/Kitchen God
<i>yin & yang</i>	Heaven* & Earth*	Tao	Lao Tzu
			Heavenly Worthies

People

medium	barefoot master (<i>fa-shih</i>)	Taoist master	(local) leaders
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Locales, Ritual Objects & Festivals

temple(s)	altar	image(s)/statue(s)
incense burner	food	rice
New Year	Universal Salvation	theatre/play(s)

Kristof Schipper's Survey of Taoist Festivals & Rites (RDR, 47-72)

(a) Where, with what & when do Taoists gather for festivals & rites (p.20-31, 74-81), and what kinds of gods & saints do they honor (p.34-38)?

Confucianist vs. Taoist altars community roof pillars mountain decor
(solar vs. lunar*) calendar *ch'ing-ming* stove assemblies
rice cake, spring rolls, moon cakes alimentary cycle frugal vs. feast day
“pure”* services fast (*chai*) vs. offering (*chiao*) Tao's enclosure wine & meats
ch'i *shen vs. ching* *hun vs. p'o* *kuei* tablet

(b) What different kinds of specialists officiate at Taoist rites? (p.44-49, 56-59, 72-74)

marionette = puppet stage trance boxers
 (“barefoot”) master (of the medium) = “impresario”
tao-shih = “Dignitaries of the Tao” Heavenly Master manuscripts Great Master

(c) Who are the Immortals & what is their relationship to food? (p.160-62, 166-71, 174-75)

Lü Tun Ping alchemy ritual feast tomb gods of the people
diet irrigation* & agriculture* grains*/cereals/harvest/crops peasants/farmers*
mountain* sanctuary pine- nuts & roots mirror Marvelous Fungus

Pollan's Reflections on Hunting Pig & Gathering Mushrooms (TOD, 334-90)

(a) What did Pollan have to do to hunt down & process his ferral pig? (p.334-63)

Angelo Garro Richard & Jean-Pierre hunter's eye
wild pig oak tree

(b) What skills did Pollan learn as he foraged for mushrooms, & from whom? (p.364-90)

Anthony Tassinello Ben Bailey forest pine fire lands
Beaver Creek chanterelle morels

(c) What authors & concepts help Pollan analyze his hunting & gathering experiences?
(p.336-37, 342-44, 349, 357-63 | p.364-66, 373-78)

Ortega Y Gasset cannabinoid disgust shame
omnivore's dilemma mycorrhizal fungi

passages to look for in these primary sources

"The rules that traditionally govern intercaste food exchanges...are complicated. They vary according to the kind of food involved and they are not the same for all groups everywhere in the country. In general, however, ordinary boiled foods such as rice and vegetable dishes--which typically constitute the core of a meal offered to the deities--are subject to the tightest restrictions, because these foods are thought to transmit pollution to the eater most easily. Consequently, to protect their own purity, no one will traditionally accept such food if it is cooked by someone of a lower caste. The very refusal to accept is itself an assertion of higher-caste status."

"Carrying with both his hands and by himself the vessel heaped with food, he should set it down gently in front...while thinking of his ancestors. When food is brought without being held with both hands, evil-minded demons forcibly snatch it away. Keeping himself ritually pure and with a collected mind, he should set down on the ground properly the side dishes, such as sauces and vegetables; milk, curd, ghee, and honey; various kinds of foods and delicacies; roots and fruits; and delicious meats and fragrant drinks. After bringing all these, he should dish them out gradually with a collected mind and keeping himself ritually pure, pressing all the side dishes on them."

"On the day of the new moon of this month of this year,...I, filial great-grandson...presume to report clearly to your honor...:The succession of atmospheric forces flows and changes. The time now is the middle of spring. When we think back with gratitude on the seasonal service, we cannot overcome our long-term longings. We presume to take this pure offering of a soft-haired animal, a vessel of millet, and sweet wine, and respectfully present them as our seasonal service. Please enjoy them along with the associated spirits...' When finished, he rises...."

"The whoosh of air through my nostrils suddenly sounded calamitous, so I began inhaling and exhaling through my mouth, silencing my breath. So much sensory information was coming into my head that it seemed to push out the normal buzz of consciousness. The state felt very much like meditation, though it took no mental effort or exercise to achieve that kind of head-emptying presence. The simple act of looking and listening...occupied every quadrant of mental space and anchored me to the present. I must have lost track of time as the twenty minutes flashed by."

"...the offering of incense in the burner is the essential element of worship. Indeed, although the sanctuaries are dedicated to gods--or rather patron saints--the presence of the latter in the form of an image or statue is not essential. One finds temples without statues, where the presence of the patron saints is simply indicated by an inscription in black characters on a band of red paper stuck on the wall behind the incense burner. Moreover, worship in a temple is not reserved exclusively for the saint or gods....The [temple] is a place open to all beings, divine & human [&] is a place for casual & formal meetings."