

Looking Back to Unit 1

Do you feel that you have:

- learned everything you wanted to know about food-related Hindu & Taoist rituals and the notion of the sacred in contemporary society?
- found some reliable sources you could consult to find more information about these topics?
- examined for yourself a few vivid examples of the way small-scale farmers supporting local food culture honor the sacred in their work?

Shifting Focus: How Does Reflection Heighten Practice? (for opening discussion)

- * In what way(s) do you think religious peoples' thoughts & feelings heighten food-related practice in familiar settings? (e.g., church, temple, mosque, home—your own or others')
- * What is the difference between practice inspiring reflection and reflection heightening practice in these settings?

Content Objectives for Unit 2: Food, Farming & the Sacred in the Pre-Modern West

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

1. the relationship between agriculture, food, and Israel's covenant with Yahweh in the mid-first millennium BCE.
2. the way that Christians in medieval Europe made ritual use of sacred food & food symbols to experience Christ through the senses.
3. the extent to which and ways that thoughts & feelings about the sacred heighten religious peoples' engagement in practice.

& start planning your own ***local meal(s)*** (see course site)

Thinking As You Read (part 2)

What you think about when you read should go beyond summarizing. Consider another analogy—more complex than that of puzzle making—which symbolically describes this thinking.

Mapping a territory, one **first looks for**

(a) features of the landscape

but then also

(b) where one gets lost,
similar features found in different places,
& clues about forces that shape the landscape

This more precisely describes the multilayered reading needed for studying sources as **evidence of the forces that shape religion.**

OVERVIEW OF READINGS

Primary Sources

- excerpts from the *Tanakh* (RDR, 73-105)
 - Gospel of John, chapter 6 (online)
- Bynum, “Fast & Feast”...“Food in the Writings of Women...” (RDR, 106-31)
 - *Les Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry*: Folios 1-12, 25 & 29 (online)
- "The Forager," "The Omnivore's Dilemma" "The Ethics of Eating Animals"
& "The Perfect Meal (TOD, 277-333, 391-411)

--> 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.

reviewing basic terminology for the academic study of religion
“Essential Elements of Religious Life (@ course content site)

(a) “What is misleading about discussions that focus on ‘belief,’
and what alternatives exist to using that word?” (section III)

unstated beliefs trust

non-specialists

nature* fate luck

awareness faith

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

dimensions layers [sacred*]

Harvest, Food and God's Covenant with Israel (RDR, 73-105)

Authoritative Sources & Languages

Tanakh (= "Hebrew Bible*") *Torah* *Septuagint* *Targums*
Latin commandment(s)

The Divine Being

YHWH the Lord (your God) God (of Heaven*) covenant

People

Israelites Moses Aaron Levites David*
Ezra* Nehemiah* men of Judah Jews

Locales, Ritual Foods & Important Times

Eden Egypt* Sinai Canaan* Tabernacle*/Tent House of God altar
fruit (with the seed) tree(s)* beasts/animals vineyard harvest [New Year*]
food (unleavened) bread cattle oil offering first fruit(s) wine
seven days & sabbath seventh month festival of Booths (= "Tabernacles," tents)

Harvest, Food and God's Covenant with Israel (RDR, 73-105)

(a) What foods are important in biblical creation stories, & why? (Gen 1-3, 9-10.12)

earth water(s) creatures & birds male/female third & sixth days
Adam/dust/soil woman/Eve garden river tilling (life-)blood rainbow*

(b) According to these passages, what food should be offered to God, & by whom?
(Ex 19.18-21.6, 25.1-9, 28.1-5, 29, 34.4-28; Lev 22-26; Num 9-10 & I Kings 7.51-8.64)

thunder* oil vestments bull & rams tablets of stone male firstling
sacred donations blemish/defect burnt offering sheaf elevation set times
blasts/horn = trumpet jubilee slave/laborer/servant/resident alien redemption

(c) What hunger did Israel endure in the wilderness? (Num 11-13.30, Ps 106.1-15, 107)

manna meat/fish/cucumbers/melons seventy/spirit quail grapes pools/springs

(d) With what words & foods do Jews renew their covenant after their exile*?

(Ezra 1, 3, 7, 10.1-4 & Nehemiah 1-2, 8-10)

Jerusalem* Cyrus* & Artaxerxes* silver/gold/vessels tax foreign women
Teaching of Moses scroll of Teaching food/drink cities

Jesus in the Gospel of John 6 & Gospel of Matthew 13

(<http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+6&version=NIV>)

(a) according to John's gospel, what analogies did Jesus use to make sense of his feeding miracle and to explain his true nature?

Sea of Galilee loaves & fish boat
bread of life manna flesh & blood

(b) according to Matthew's Gospel what gardening & fishing analogies did Jesus use to explain the importance of his teaching?

lake (mustard) seed weeds
yeast net disciples vs. crowds

Bynum's Survey of Medieval Christian Feasts, Fasting & Eucharist (RDR, 106-31)

Authoritative Writers/Sources

Augustine (of Hippo) Ambrose Ephrem of Nisibis
Thomas Aquinas Francis of Assisi Peter the Chanter Romanos the Melodist

Time Periods & People:

the priest nuns = contemplatives laypeople/tertiaries the sick & poor
Gertrude the Great Mary of Oignies Mechtild of Magdeburg

Ritual Objects & Actions

bread (of Heaven or Life)/loaves crumbs wine host/wafer chalice/cup
sacrifice* altar mass hand mouth/tongue oil

Divinity & Key Concepts

Christ God soul church/community unity/union
body/flesh blood lamb suffering & service sacrifice & redemption
fasting eucharist = consecration + communion = "the sacrament*" vision(s)
senses abstinence hunger & thirst fear/terror piety = devotion honey

Bynum's Survey of Medieval Christian Feasts, Fasting & Eucharist (RDR, 106-31)

(a) With what objects, actions & words did medieval Christians prepare to receive the eucharist, and how did these contrast the ritual of the early church? (p.31-33, 48-62)

(early church = antiquity =) patristic [period] vs. medieval [period] = Middle Ages
passover Fourth Lateran Council Corpus Christi transubstantiation & concomitance
showing/seeing vs. receiving incense & bells pyx elevation mass
meal/feast/banquet colors meat/fish Hildegard of Bingen

(b) In what ways did medieval women saints experience feeding & being fed? (p.129-40)

vita(e) [= life story/ies] Low Countries withdrawal vs. action *Nonnenbücher*
Lidwina of Schiedam Lukardis of Oberweimar Alpaïs of Cudot
Elizabeth & Margaret of Hungary Dorothy of Montau Colette of Corbie
illness marriage/husband ecstasy/trance stigmata

(c) What food-related symbols & visions motivated Beatrice of Nazareth & Catherine of Sienna to serve & seek union with Christ? (p.150-52,161-63, 165-67, 170-80)

milk nursing vision(s) tasting breast pus wound table
beguines of Leau monasteries bleeding insanity sleeplessness
Dialogue Raymond of Capua Mary Magdalen Bonaventura miracles Circumcision

Images of Medieval Farming, Hunting & Feasts

(<http://www.christusrex.org/www2/berry/index.html> <-- link in on-line schedule)

Source:

Les Tres Riches Heures du Duke de Berry

People & Places:

Jean de Berry	Limbourg brothers	Bishop of Chartres	
maidens	falconer	peasants	hunters
Chateau de Lusignan	Dourdan	Hotel de Nesl	

Food:

beehive	sheep	plowing*	vineyard	fields*
woods	wheat	sowing	pigs & boar	acorns

The Divine:

Adam	Eve	God	serpent	Ark of God
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Conceptualizing & Planning the “Perfect Meal” (TOD, 277-333, 391-411)

(a) What practical obstacles & concepts does Pollan face in his planning? (p.277-303)

foraging chanterelle omnivore’s dilemma

(b) What arguments about animal rights does Pollan consider? (p.304-33)

Peter Singer steak/meat vegetarian/veganism animal dog vs. pig ape chicken
eye contact interest vs. treatment Bentham AMC speciesist/-ism suffering/pain
culture/traditions/norms inheritance happiness domestication predation symbiosis
individual vs. species Santa Cruz Island New England Temple Grandin Lorentz Meats

(c) What foods does Pollan gather for his meal, in what ways does he prepare them, who assembles to eat, and what is their response? (p.391-411)

abalone wild yeast salt ponds bing cherry
chamomile wild pig ragout
transparency grace

passages to look for in these primary sources

“You shall bring from your settlements two loaves of bread as an elevation offering; each shall be made of two-tenths of a measure of choice flour, baked after leavening, as first fruits to the Lord. With the bread you shall present, as brunt offerings to the LORD, seven yearling lambs without blemish, one bull of the herd, and two rams, with their meal offerings and libations, an offering by fire of pleasing odor to the LORD. You shall also offer one he-goat as a sin offering and two yearling lambs...”

"[We are] looking forward to the supper of the lamb...whose sacred body is roasted on the altar of the cross. By drinking his rosy blood, we live with God...Now Christ is our passover, our sacrificial lamb; His flesh, the unleavened bread of sincerity, is offered up....Come holy people, eat the body of Christ, drinking the holy blood by which you are redeemed. We have been saved by Christ's body and blood; having feasted on it, let us give thanks to God. All have been rescued from the jaws of hell by this sacrament of body and blood....The lord, offered as sacrifice for us all, was both priest and victim....He gives the celestial bread to the hungry and offers drink from the living fountain to the thirsty."

"Abalone are gathered during unusually low tides by wading and diving among and beneath underwater boulders and feeling around blindly for their upside-down football-size shells with hands too numb to feel anything--except, that is, the barbed spikes of sea urchins, which happen to occupy many of the same underwater crevices as abalone. And if you're lucky enough to avoid getting stuck by sea urchin spines, your probing fingers are liable to settle on the undulating slime of a sea anemone, recoiling abruptly therefrom in terror and disgust. All of this takes place beneath the bemused gaze of seal lions, the presence of whom...is most welcome, since it indicates an absence of man-eating sharks."

"Gather for Me seventy...elders of whom you have experience as elders and officers of the people, and bring them...and let them take their place there with you. I will come down and speak with you there, and I will draw upon the spirit that is on you and put it upon them; they shall share the burden of the people with you, and you shall not bear it alone. And say to the people: Purify yourselves for tomorrow and you shall eat meat, for you have kept whining before the Lord and saying, 'If only we had meat to eat!...You shall eat not one day, not two, not five or even ten or twenty, but a whole month, until it comes out of your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you.'"

“[Jesus] made of his blood a drink and his flesh a food for all those who wish it. There is no other means for man to be satisfied. He can appease his hunger and thirst only in this blood...A man can possess the whole world and not be satisfied (for the world is less than man) until blood satisfies him, for only that blood is united to the divinity....Eight days after his birth, Christ spilled a little of it in the Circumcision, but it was not enough to cover man....Then on the cross the lance opened his heart. The Holy Spirit tells us to have recourse to the blood...And then the soul becomes like a drunken man.