

## 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)

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--> 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 *Nonnenbücker*  
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.