

Lessons from Unit 2 Application Exercises

A. Food is integrated into group religious practice in two ways:

- offered formally via symbol(s) at the **heart** of worship.
(B'nai Israel, Our Lady, Siddhi Vinayaka & Wat Lao + ancestor offering, puja, possession, festivals, animal sacrifice, eucharist)
- individually focused practice **followed by** food consumption.
(B'nai Israel, Our Lady, Siddhi Vinayaka & Wat Lao)

B. Religious practice & reflection shape each other in two ways:

- practice inspires thoughts & feelings through **sensory impact**, spontaneous **vision** & kinesthetic sense of **commitment/resolve**.
(spotlighted especially by outsiders observing worship)
- engagement in practice is heightened by cultivating thoughts about deeper **meaning**, **envisioning** invisible beings & forces, strengthening sense of **trust**, and remembering **goal(s)** of practice.
(spotlighted especially by participants' accounts & sources)

****VERY DIFFERENT FROM NOTIONS OF BELIEF AS STATIC****

Transition: Modern Practice Inspiring Reflection
(for opening discussion)

* What kinds of thoughts & feelings about the sacred (your own or others') occur in connection with modern food-related practices that are NOT religious?

* In what way(s) do you think modern food-related practices inspire thoughts & feelings about the sacred in settings familiar to you? (e.g., holidays, ceremonies, communal meals)

Mid-Term Reminders

As you read—even if you don't want to think about maps and puzzles!—take time to:

- make notes on the reading guide &/or in your reader to identify important terms & locate assigned passages. (→ bring notes to reading orientation for **extra credit**)
- reflect and make notes about the way the source shows practice & reflection interacting. (→ notes **required** for Application Exercises)
- recall and compare some things that you've encountered earlier in the course.

OVERVIEW OF READINGS

Primary Sources

- "Reenchantment of the Farm" (RDR, 132-44)
- excerpts from Grapes of Wrath (RDR, 145-74)
- "Industrial: Corn," "From People's Park..." & "Monday Supper" (TOD, 15-119, 140-50, 202-7)
- "The Omnivore's Delusion" (on-line article)
- "Molly Mooching" & "Growing Trust" through "Slow Food Nations" (AVM, 70-82, 111-41, 148-69)

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

"John Burroughs," "origins of agriculture" "the sacred," "nature worship" (EB)
"Nature fakers controversy" & "The Grapes of Wrath: Plot" (Wikipedia)
(use links in on-line course schedule)

IMPORTANT: article readings are **required, but may be primarily skimmed/searched to find the relevant terms.**

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 IV) (section V)

dimensions layers [the sacred*]

(b) “What precise language can be used to describe the communities
in which practice & reflection unfold?” (section VII)

charisma institutions

informal roles specialists non-specialists

ideal vs. actual

John Burroughs'* late 19th century perspective on farming & nature* (RDR, 132-44)

(a) What did John Burroughs* do in & after leaving Washington, DC (p.108-21)

Bureau of National Banks	Washington, DC	Ursula Burroughs
John the Baptist	<i>Locusts & Wild Honey</i>	<i>Signs & Seasons</i>
ritualization (cf. 135-36)	Emerson poet-seer	nature [as a totality*]

(b) What writers & traditions helped deepen his connection with nature*? (p.121-28)

Walt Whitman*	Baptist faith	religion
Methodist church	God	Darwin [Henry Thoreau* & John Muir*]

(c) What issues and challenges did he face after his move to Slabsides? (p.128-38)

Slabsides vs. Riverby (farm on the Hudson)	Ursula	
Henry Ford	"Nature Faker"*	"Phases of Farm Life"
back-to-the-land movement (Britain)		

Secularization* of Farm & Desacralization* of Earth*: *Grapes of Wrath** (RDR, 145-74)

(a) What strained relations between tenants & land owners in Oklahoma? (RDR, 138-48)

rain crust ruined corn owners tenants (=squatters) the Bank
Grampa tractors* dust mask Spam Joe Davis tractor sheds
 cotton mice weeds

(b) What happened in California in response to the influx of migrants? (p.149-55)

California Mexicans industry fruit trees
Okies Hooverville secret gardens deputies

(c) What abuses of migrant labor does John Steinbeck* spotlight? (p.156-61)

property rights cannery pellagra grapes rotting fruit kerosene
men of understanding men of chemistry experimental farms

(d) What happens to the Joad family at Hooper ranch? (p.162-71)

 Tom Ma Al Hooligan
peaches company's store Hamburg sugar

Michael Pollan's Historical Survey of 20th Century Industrial Agriculture (TOD, 15-119, 140-50, 202-7+ Blake Hurst's Critique)

Key Places & Institutions

Greene County, Iowa Naylor farm Churdan Farnhamville, Iowa
Garden City, Kansas Poky Feeders CAFO
Center for Crops Utilization Research Bell Institute
Venezuala vs. Shenandoah Valley

Key People & an Animal

George Naylor steer number 534 David Wallerstein
William Salatin J.I. Rodale

Big Ideas, Practices, Food & Chemicals

Nature* *Zea Mays* tractor* commodity corn* HFCS

Michael Pollan's Historical Survey of 20th Century Industrial Agriculture (TOD, 15-119, 140-50, 202-7+ Blake Hurst's Critique)

(a) what 20th CE developments made it possible to grow more corn? (p.15-64 + Hurst)

ecological detective Squanto C-4 corn sex ammonium nitrate
Fritz Haber Earl Butz agribusinessmen neighbor Billy Farmer's Cooperative
Derbyshire, England Muscle Shoals, Alabama New Deal farm programs

(b) what alternatives to industrial agriculture developed since the 1940s? (p.140-50, 202-7)

People's Park organic Cascadian Farm India NPK fertilizer*
"great hummus controversy" philosophy vs. science rotational grazing

(c) what is made with industrially harvested corn, & how? (p.65-99)

cattle* Blair Ranch pen 63 Mel Metzin Rumensin flaking
mad cow disease wet milling breakfast cereal

(d) what impact does cheap corn have on the health & meals of its consumers? (p.100-19)

Corn Whiskey Founding Fathers soft drinks "grill seasoning"
Isaac Pollan Judge Sweet Todd Dawson

Kingsolver's Survey of Sustainable Agriculture in Virginia & the Northeast
(AVM, 70-82, 111-41, 148-69)

(a) what is the history of Kingsolver's farm
& what does it have to do with Molly Mooching? (p.70-82)

Sanford Webb hollow tobacco Old Charlie's Lot morel

(b) what does Kingsolver learn about traditional methods of farming & food preparation
during her summer road trip to the Northeast? (p.111-41, 148-58)

Ashfield, MA Farmer's Diner Little Italy & Chinatown
career women Cheese Queen Micki & Anne

(c) what is unique about David & Elsie's farm life in Ohio? (p.159-69)

corn* birds silence chemical pesticides* Jersey/dairy cows
Toyota technology miracles fireflies

passages to look for in these primary sources

"They've declined to participate in the modern century's paradigm of agriculture--and of family life, for that matter, as they place high value on nonmaterial things like intergenerational family bonds, natural aesthetics, and the pleasure of shared work. By restraining their consumption and retaining skills from earlier generations of farmers, they are succeeding. When the present paradigm of extractive farming has run its course, I don't foresee crowds of people signing up for the plain wardrobe. But I do foresee them needing guidance on sustainable agriculture."

"When I depart [from the simple life] evil results follow. I love a small house, plain clothes, simple living....How free one feels, how good the elements taste, how close one gets to them, how they fit one's body and one's soul! To see the fire that warms you, or better yet, to cut the wood that feeds the fire that warms you; to see the spring, where the water bubbles up that slakes your thirst, and to dip your pail in to it; to see the beams that are the stay of your four walls, and the timbers that uphold the roof that shelters you; to be in direct and personal contact with the sources of your material life;...these are some of the rewards of the simple life."

"Employers were expected to supply spirits over the course of the workday; in fact, the modern coffee break began as a late-morning whiskey break called "the elevenses." ...Except for a brief respite Sunday morning in church, Americans simply did not gather--whether for barn raising or quilting bee, corn husking or political rally--without passing the whiskey jug. Visitors from Europe--hardly models of sobriety themselves--marveled at the free flow of American spirits. 'Come on then, if you love toping,' the journalist William Cobbett wrote his fellow Englishmen in a dispatch from America. 'For here you may drink yourself blind at the price of sixpence.' The results of all this toping were entirely predictable: a rising tide of public drunkenness, violence, family abandonment, and a spike in alcohol-related diseases."

"Then, with time, the squatters were no long squatters, but owners; and their children grew up and had children on the land. And the hunger was gone from them, the feral hunger, the gnawing, tearing hunger for the land, for water and earth and the good sky over it, for the green thrusting grass, for the swelling roots. They had these things so completely that they did not know about them anymore. They had no more the stomach-tearing lust for a rich acre and a shining blade to plow it, for seed and a windmill beating its wings in the air. They arose in the dark no more to hear the sleepy bird's first chitting, and the morning wind around the house, while they waited for the first light to go out to the dear acres. These things were lost..."

"A few other problems come to mind. The last time I planted a cover crop, the clover provided a perfect habitat in early spring for bugs, bugs that I had to kill with an insecticide. We do not normally apply insecticides, but we did that year. Of course, you can provide nitrogen with legumes by using a longer crop rotation, growing clover one year and corn the next. But that uses twice as much water to produce a corn crop, and takes twice as much land to produce the same number of bushels. We are producing twice the food we did in 1960 on less land, and commercial nitrogen is one of the main reasons why. It may be that we decide we would rather spend land and water than energy, but [he] never mentions that we are faced with that choice."