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HRS 179A/B  
**Observation Report Worksheet**  
(6 PAGES MAX, plus sketch & “Initial Expectations” attached)

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\*Type responses directly onto this form, single-spaced\*  
**\*\*Preserve numbering & prompts, but delete unused spaces\*\***  
**\*\*\*50 points for completion & review—NO PARTIAL CREDIT\*\*\***

Name of site: \_\_\_\_\_ Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Day & date: \_\_\_\_\_ Exact times you were on site: \_\_\_\_\_

Person interviewed: \_\_\_\_\_ Interview time, length & place: \_\_\_\_\_

Before & during your site visit, for each of the topics below, generate a list of questions to ask yourself &/or others while at the worship site &/or interviewing a participant. Then during & following your visit, answer those questions to the best of your ability, **focusing as much as possible on observable sensory details & words**. **IMPORTANT**: many of these topics are things you will not have considered before, so **start thinking about your questions at least two days before your visit**.

A. Practice Shaping Reflection

- (i) Articulate 5-8 questions about the way(s) & the extent to which **objects, actions & words** used in ritual **suggest the presence of unseen powers and forces** to people gathered at the site.

Things to consider: statues and other images, implements used, names or words you recognize being repeated, rhythms & melodies, translations (printed books or obtained from interview)

For example: “What exactly does the priest do to the Shiva *linga* during the worship, and with what?” “How do those actions suggest that something more is going on?”

CAUTION: **\*AVOID\*** questions like “what is the meaning of X?” or “what does Y represent?” that assume there is ONE meaning/explanation and thus obscure diversity of interpretations.

- (ii) Articulate 3-5 questions about the way(s) & the extent to which the **spatial arrangement of people in the worship space** suggests the presence of unseen powers & forces to worshippers.

Things to consider: the building, worship space, number & features of people and features, distinguishing marks of specialists vs. laypeople.

For example: “Where do most people stand in relation to the statue of Krishna, and how does standing in those places make a person feel?” “How does everyone know who the specialist is?”

- (iii) Articulate 2-3 **other questions** you have (&/or that you imagine the audience of your report might want to have answered) **regarding the practice** you will observe.

- (iv) Number and then answer the above questions based on the **evidence of what you saw & heard**, attaching at least one SKETCH OR PHOTO to address questions in A(ii). Attribute all perception of unseen presence either (i) to yourself OR (ii) to someone you spoke with. (IMPORTANT: record emotional responses &/or evaluative judgments in C below.)

## B. Reflection Shaping Practice

- (i) Articulate 3-5 questions about the **thoughts & feelings** that people gathered at the worship site seem to be **experiencing spontaneously** during the event.
- (ii) Articulate 3-5 questions about the **thoughts & feelings** that people gathered at the worship site **intentionally cultivate** to intensify their engagement in worship.

For example: “How does a worshiper feel when sipping the water distributed by the priest?”

Things to consider for (i) & (ii): side conversations, non-verbals, facial expressions, interview.

(iii) Articulate 2-3 questions about the way(s) & extent to which people gathered at the worship site seem to **reflect about authoritative sources** to intensify their engagement in worship.

Things to consider: interview, translations (printed books or through interviewing participants).

For example: “To what extent does Mr. Y think of the *Bhagavad Gita* when he imagines what Vishnu is like during the worship?”

(iii) Articulate 2-3 **other questions** you have (&/or that you imagine the audience of your report might want to have answered) **regarding the reflection of people** you will observe.

(iv) Number & then answer the above questions based on the **evidence of what you saw & heard**, attaching at least one TRANSLATION of some source & two DIRECT QUOTES from your interview. (IMPORTANT: record emotional responses &/or evaluative judgments in C below.)

#### C. Outsider’s Perspectives on Practice & Reflection

(i) Articulate 2-3 questions about **thoughts & feelings** YOU experienced while observing the event and listening to the person you decided to interview.

Things to consider: your curiosity, your upbringing, other [lack of] experience with religion.

For example: “What will I be/am I most interested in?” “How will my love of Church/alienation from my Christian upbringing influence what I pay attention to?”

- (ii) Articulate 3-5 questions about the way(s) & extent to which what you observed at the site and heard in the interview resembles what others have observed during similar celebrations in India, as recorded in one or more of the [ethnographic sources](#) included in the on-line list.

Things to consider: objects, actions, words, locales or spaces, specialists vs. laypeople, thoughts & feelings described in one of the [ethnographic sources](#) included in the on-line list.

For example: “To what extent does Om Lata Bahadur’s description of the Holi bonfire in India resemble the events that I observed at the Laxmi Narayana Temple?”

- (iii) Articulate 2-3 **other questions** you have (&/or that you imagine the audience of your report might want to have answered) **regarding the variations in practice & reflection**.

(iv) Number & then answer the above questions based on the **evidence of your independent reflection and reading**, citing at least **THREE (3) SINGLE PAGE NUMBERS** for C(ii).

\*\*\*ANALYSIS OF PARTS A-C & PLANNING FINAL PRODUCT\*\*\*

→ Review the introductory on-line essay, "[Essential Elements of Religion](#)" & then summarize & cite your findings in A-C of this worksheet by answering the questions below.

\*\*If you prefer you may **\*use a sketch or diagram\*** to address these questions.\*\*

- How does the practice of the Hindu community you investigated appear to shape the reflection of people in the community? (Refer to details in sections A & C(i).)

- How does the reflection of people in the Hindu community you investigated appear to shape their practice? (Refer to details in section B & C(ii).)

→ Describe (100-150 words) how you will structure your final product, (sequence of parts, use of narrative or visuals, etc.) to emphasize the **mutual influence of practice & reflection in religious life** in representing what you observed at the site & heard in your interview.

→ [After peer review, WRITTEN ON BACK:] Explain which of the comments you received from your reviewer seem most useful for creating the final product; cite sections of the ORW by number/letter (e.g., A(ii), C(iii)). Describe also any omissions and/or inaccuracies noted from your own rereading your work, and what you plan to do about them.