



2020

## Sustainability in Comparative Religious Perspective

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**Syllabus (updated 8/23/2020)**

**Note: this syllabus may be subject to minor, periodic adjustments, which will be announced on the main page of Moodle.**

**“Sustainability in Comparative Religious Perspective”**

**Judaic 329-01: class #: 62064 (4 credits)**

**Mideast 326-01 class: 42002 (4 credits)**

**Department of Judaic and Near Eastern Studies**

**University of Massachusetts Amherst**

**Fall 2020**

**Professor:** Dr. Aviva Ben-Ur

**Class Meeting Times:** Tuesday and Thursday 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m.

**Meeting Place:** Fully Remote Class—on Zoom. This is a synchronous course; synchronous attendance is mandatory. However, if you are in a time zone that makes synchronous attendance difficult or impossible, please let the Professor know. All students will have access on Moodle to the recordings and transcripts of each class meeting.

**Zoom URL:** Click on “Zoom meetings (click here to enter live class)” icon towards the top of the Moodle course page.

**Office Telephone:** (413) 577-0649. This telephone line has no voice mail. Due to the pandemic, I will usually not be in my office to answer calls. The best way to reach me outside of class is via email and by appointment on Zoom.

**Office:** Click on “Office Hours” icon towards top of the Moodle course page.

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00-3:00 p.m. and by appointment on Zoom.

**E-mail:** [aben-ur@judnea.umass.edu](mailto:aben-ur@judnea.umass.edu)

**Course Description**

**Sustainability** may be defined as “a method of meeting the needs of people in a socially and economically just way without depriving ecosystems of their health.”

This course explores how various cultures through time and space have interacted with the natural environment in an effort to achieve material, spiritual, and medical wellbeing. We will closely examine sustainability as reflected in a variety of spiritual traditions (from “animism” to Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism, polytheism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), and in societies or in social phenomena not necessarily driven by any “religious” system (such as hunter-gatherers, nomads, socialist and communist kibbutzim or Sirius, an intentional community and eco-village in Shutesbury, Massachusetts).

The current “greening” philosophy spreading across the U.S.A. and globally has created a campus-wide (and 5-College-wide) thirst for courses related to sustainability, permaculture, organic gardening, and environmentalism. None of these wonderful initiatives or courses, however, examines the idea of Sustainability in a comparative historical and religious context. This course helps to fill an intellectual gap in the curriculum and also offers students an opportunity to consider Sustainability as an age-old human preoccupation.

Among the questions we will explore are: What is human wellbeing and how has its definition changed according to time and place? How was the concern for human wellbeing connected to concern for other entities, such as animals or the earth as a whole? Was there a gap between law and actual practice? How successful or detrimental were sustainability efforts? How did these efforts differently

impact the various sectors of a given society? To what extent does the modern Sustainability movement show awareness of religious traditions and history? Does the movement's principle preoccupation with techniques and science make room for the historic orientation of religious traditions to the natural environment? In other words, is the modern Sustainability movement compatible with today's spiritual traditions? For each theme we will ask: What is the role of "religion" and is religion" a useful category of analysis for the topic under consideration?

The motto of this course is: "One foot in the past, one foot in the present." Most Sustainability concerns have to do with the present day. A significant portion of the course, therefore, invites students to bring contemporary themes into the classroom, discuss them, and endeavor to place them in historical context. For example, in the week spent discussing deserts in historical context, we will also consider the significance of today's deserts for Sustainability, e.g. the potential of the desert as a model for biomimicry.

In this course, students will:

1. Master current-day definitions of Sustainability and analyze how they do or do not relate to the past.
2. Precisely describe and analyze, in a global and diachronic framework, the many ways in which humans and human societies have interacted with the natural environment to achieve material, spiritual, and physical wellbeing.
3. Master the comparative method, which is essential to investigating any global phenomenon.
4. Comprehend and analyze a variety of primary sources (including archival documents, oral traditions, and archaeological evidence) which historians employ to expand understanding of the past and give context to the present.

**No prerequisites. This course fulfills the Gen Ed G (General Education Global Diversity) and HS (Historical Sciences) requirements.**

### **Why this course fulfills the G designation**

The diachronic and global nature of this course affords students the opportunity to appreciate the astounding diversity of the world's multifarious societies and how their relationships to the natural environment have been expressed through particular spiritual traditions and how these relationships have changed through time. In doing so, students will also learn the pitfalls of studying in isolation one particular society or time period. Students will also learn that it is indeed imperative to attain both a "bird's eye view" of human societies in order to explore parallels, and to appreciate the specific social and cultural particularities of each group. Moreover, since the bulk of the course will deal with pre-modern and contemporary societies that have been heavily dependent on the land's resources, students will focus on the lives of the poor masses, who formed the bulk of most human societies, and the precariousness of their existence.

### **Why this course fulfills the HS designation**

The discipline guiding the teaching of this course is History, and the majority of texts assigned for the pre-modern period are historical in nature. Even texts focusing on the contemporary period will be linked in class lectures and discussions to the past and thus placed in historical context. Students will examine the concept of change through time, explore the advantages and disadvantages of inductive and deductive research, and learn to avoid historical pitfalls such as teleological thinking, a priori assumptions that can taint deductive inquiry, and bandwagon fallacies resulting from overreliance on secondary sources, at the expense of direct examination of primary sources.

### **Junior Year Writing (Optional)**

This course also offers a Junior Year Writing option, and as such, it will teach students to analyze various primary and secondary texts and synthesize their arguments; apply in-class theories to interpret real-life historic and current events; and build a cogent, debatable argument in writing, supported with evidence from primary and secondary sources. In order to accomplish these goals students, in consultation with the professor, will practice writing in a number of formal and informal context ranging from short free writing responses to structured worksheets, and from short essays to a fully developed academic paper formatted according to the MLA manual of style.

An important resource to enhance your learning is the Writing Center, which provides free writing instruction for all UMass students at all stages of the writing process. Contact info:

The Writing Center

W.E.B. DuBois Library-Learning Commons

writingcenter@acad.umass.edu • 413.577.1293 • [umass.edu/writingcenter/](http://umass.edu/writingcenter/)

## Course Requirements

### Prerequisites

None. No disciplinary, ethnic, or religious background is required or assumed.

### Readings

Almost all readings and visuals are posted on Moodle. Occasionally, the syllabus will direct students to a specific (free access) website, designated as “**(Online)**” in this syllabus. PowerPoints (outlines for each lecture) are also posted on Moodle. Students may use these as study guides. There is a Glossary on Moodle to use as a reference and study guide. Audio-visual materials will also be made available online or during class lectures.

### Power Points and Other Course-Related Material on Moodle

PowerPoints (outlines for each lecture) will generally be posted to Moodle the evening before each lecture. Occasionally, due to unforeseeable circumstances, a PowerPoint may be posted the day of the class. Students are encouraged to download or print these out before class, or view them in class on their laptops—this will make it unnecessary to copy the outline down by hand during the lecture.

See Moodle for other pertinent information, such the updated syllabus (on the course website’s main page), a course description, Readiness Assessment Quizzes, details on Quiz format, Site Tour assignment, study tips, and contact information of the Professor. Students should regularly check the announcement link on the main Moodle page for this course for the most up-to-date information on the syllabus and class. If the class will start late or will be canceled due to illness or other disruptions, this information will be posted to announcement page of Moodle.

## Using Moodle

Students can find student-oriented MOODLE help documentation directly through the following link:

<http://www.oit.umass.edu/support/moodle/help-students>

If students have questions about Moodle that are not answered on the OIT site, they can contact the OIT Help Desk (413-545-9400 | 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m., Mon- Fri).

## **Course Policies**

### Missed Classes and Missed Course Work

Students who must miss class for whatever reason should download the recording and transcript of the recorded class from the main page of Moodle (click on the live classroom for the date you missed) or get the notes from a reliable classmate. For this purpose, make sure to exchange your phone number/email address with at least two fellow classmates. In the case that a student cannot avoid missing a class, that student is still responsible for the material covered and for changes in the class schedule announced during that class and/or on the class website. The Professor does not provide notes for missed classes. In cases of an excused absence that result in a missed Quiz, a student will speak with the Professor and/or provide documentation and a makeup Quiz will be arranged. **Judaic 102 is a synchronous course dependent in part on collaborative discussions and therefore live attendance is expected. Absences due to unexpected pandemic-related issues, such as spotty internet, will be accommodated through additional assignments to make up for the absence, but students should plan to be present for each class. Judaic 102 is not set up to accommodate students who must miss every class.**

**Electronic Devices:** All cell phones must be turned off or on silent (not vibrate) during class, unless of course they are being used to access the class.

### Personal Problems that Interfere with Academic Work

If students encounter a life crisis that interferes with their academic work they should inform their student Dean, who will then confidentially contact the Professor. In such circumstances, appropriate accommodations will be arranged.

### Official Warning

Academic dishonesty (also known as “plagiarism” or “cheating”) is absolutely forbidden in any form. This includes but is not limited to glancing at someone else’s material during a Quiz; bringing prepared answers and submitting them on one’s Quiz; signing in for someone else on Zoom for attendance; taking a Quiz, or completing an assignment for someone else; taking out and/or putting on earphones or other communication devices during a Quiz, and communicating with anyone other than the Professor in any form during a Quiz—including with a cell phone or other device—even after a Quiz has been submitted. Unless you are using your cell phone to access the class, please turn off cell phones before you enter the Zoom classroom. Any student who engages in academic dishonesty will receive an automatic “F” for the course. For details on Academic Dishonesty, refer to the 2020-2021 “Code of Student Conduct” handbook.

### Class Civility

In accordance with the Code of Student Conduct: Guidelines for Classroom Civility and Respect, class incivility will not be tolerated. Class incivility includes but is not limited to: 1. rude or disrespectful behavior; unwarranted interruptions; 2. failure to adhere to instructor’s directions; 3. vulgar or obscene language, slurs or other forms of intimidation; and 4. physically or verbally abusive behavior. A student who engages in such behavior in instructional settings (which include but are not limited to

emails to the Professor or T.A., Zoom classrooms, libraries, group meetings, tutorials, lab sessions, office hours, and off-campus venues) will be reported to the Professor's department chair and the Dean of Student Office. The instructor may disenroll such a student by notifying him or her in writing (with copies to the Undergraduate Registrar and the Dean of Students Office). Disenrollment may occur if a solution cannot be achieved; the disruptive behavior continues; and/or the student conduct seriously disrupts the learning process.

### Learning and Psychological Disabilities

Students with learning and psychological disabilities should immediately contact:

Disabilities Services  
 161 Whitmore Administration Building  
 University of Massachusetts  
 Amherst, MA 01003-9256  
 (413) 545-0892  
 DS@educ.umass.edu

The following is the official statement from Disabilities Services (9/4/17 email):

“The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have a documented disability on file with Disability Services ([www.umass.edu/disability](http://www.umass.edu/disability)), you may be eligible for reasonable accommodations in this course. If your disability requires an accommodation, please notify your instructors as early as possible in the course so that we may make arrangements in a timely manner.”

The following information is from AnnMarie P. Duchon, M.Ed., Interim Director, Disability Services (8/11/2020 email):

“Disability Services assists students with disabilities in obtaining accommodations. It is the students' responsibility to provide adequate documentation of a disability to DS and to maintain contact with Disability Services to activate their accommodations for the semester. Following an initial meeting with Disability Services staff, the student's accommodations will be noted in Clockwork and their instructors will be informed electronically of your eligibility for accommodations. Students are responsible for speaking with their instructors to make specific arrangements for their accommodations and for informing DS if there are problems with their accommodations, in a timely manner. It is highly recommended that students inform their instructors of their accommodations during the add/drop period, or immediately following any new diagnosis.

The professor is not responsible for providing any accommodations for students who are not registered with Disability Services and accommodations cannot be provided retroactively. Additionally, students with disabilities must make arrangements with the instructor a week in advance for extended time on exams. Students can submit exam request bookings with the Exam Proctoring Center via Clockwork, which can be accessed from the DS website [www.umass.edu/disability](http://www.umass.edu/disability). Unfortunately, DS is not equipped to evaluate and diagnose learning disabilities. DS assigns accommodations that the student is eligible for, based on their diagnosis. Neuropsychological testing must be done through a psychologist or physician. Students may get tested for learning disabilities through the Psychological Services Center on campus, or can contact them for other referrals in the area. Be aware that testing does take time and can be costly. There are rolling scholarship funds

available for students seeking to obtain funding for learning disability testing. Contact our office for more information.”

### **Attendance/class participation (15% total)**

Students are expected to attend each class with their camera on, including during the Unit Quizzes, but if students encounter difficulties following this policy, please let the Professor know. Students are asked to mute themselves during the lecture to prevent transmission disruptions. Except in cases of emergency, electronic devices are permitted only for accessing the class, notetaking, engaging in the Kahoot exercises, and for referencing the readings during lectures. This rule is also applicable to a remote learning situation.

For life crises that interfere with a student’s ability to complete this course see “Personal Problems that Interfere with Academic Work.”

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### **Four (4) Unit Quizzes on Readings, Lectures, Class Discussions, and Glossary (55%)**

Students will take four in-class Quizzes on the readings, class website documents and visuals, lectures, and film and audio clips covered since the previous quiz. Quizzes do NOT cover the readings due for the day on which the quiz is given. In the event of a canceled class, the Quiz will be given during the following class meeting. The Quizzes are 30-35 minutes and class resumes after each Quiz. The first three Unit Quizzes will consist of 10 multiple-choice, fill in the blank, and/or short answer. The last Unit Quiz will consist of 20 multiple-choice, fill in the blank, and/or short answer and will last the entire class period.

### **Two (2) Online Movie Quizzes (30% total)**

Students will view two movies on their own time and take two online Movie Quizzes on these assigned movies and readings paired with the movies. The readings and Quizzes will be posted on Moodle as soon as possible. The Online Movies Quizzes are due Sunday, October 4 and Sunday, November 8 no later than 11:30 p.m. Please see below for the movie titles and urls.

### **Calculation of Grades**

Attendance/class participation	15%
Two Online Movie Quizzes	30%
Movie Quiz #1 (due October 4; 15% of the final grade)	
Movie Quiz #2 (due November 8; 15% of the final grade)	
Four Unit Quizzes on Readings, Visuals, Film Clips, Lectures, and Class Discussions	55%

### **Grades: Numerical Values of Letter Grades**

*Note: UMass has no official numerical equivalent for letter grades; determining numerical equivalents is up to the individual Professor.*

- A (95 and up)
- A- (90-94)
- B+ (86-89)
- B (85)

B- (80-84)  
C+ (76-79)  
C (75)  
C- (70-74)  
D+ (66-69)  
D (65)  
D- (60-64)  
F (59 and below)

**Note:** The administration has announced that during the Fall 2020 semester, students may decide about whether to opt for Pass-Fail grading. The administration created this policy because some students may find that they need to use a Pass-Fail option in more circumstances than normally allowed to keep on track amidst Covid-19 related challenges in their particular situations. Unlike Spring 2020, this policy limits the number of courses in which an undergraduate can choose Pass-Fail grading to three. As in Spring 2020, students will have extra time to consider their options and will be encouraged to seek advice about the potential implications of their choice for their future studies or other endeavors before opting for Pass-Fail grading in any particular course. The deadline to declare Pass/Fail is Friday, November 20, 2020. The information in this paragraph is paraphrased from a mass email sent by M. J. Peterson, Secretary of the Faculty Senate, August 13, 2020.

**Note about this class:** It is not possible to negotiate a higher grade based on students' needs for their GPA, Certificate, financial aid, on-time graduation, or similar record needs. Students are evaluated on their work for this class. Attempts to negotiate a higher grade based on matters extraneous to this class will be considered a violation of the Code of Student Conduct (under the heading "failure to adhere to instructor's directions"). For life crises that interfere with a student's ability to complete this course see "Personal Problems that Interfere with Academic Work."



**Schedule of Readings and Requirements**  
**“Sustainability in Comparative Religious Perspective” (Fall 2020)**

Readings must be completed *before* the class session for which they are assigned.

*Reminder: always refer to Moodle for the most up-to-date information.*

**Tuesday, August 25, 2020: Introduction to the Course—What is Sustainability?**

*No advanced readings required. The requirements and mechanics of the course will be reviewed at the beginning of each class during Add/Drop period. Make sure you can access the course’s Moodle page for the readings.*

**Thursday, August 27, 2020: What is “Religion?”—Historical, Sociological, and Scientific Perspectives**

*The major themes, requirements, and mechanics of the course will be briefly reviewed at the beginning of class during Add/Drop period.*

*Come to class prepared to informally define and discuss religion as a concept.*

Nicholas Wade, “The Nature of Religion,” Chapter 1 in Nicholas Wade, *The Faith Instinct: How Religion Evolved and Why It Endures* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2009), 1-17. **(Moodle)**

**Tuesday, September 1, 2020: Wellbeing, Deep History, and Hunter-Gatherer Societies**

*The major themes, requirements, and mechanics of the course will be briefly reviewed at the beginning of class during Add/Drop period.*

*Come to class prepared to informally define and discuss wellbeing as a concept.*

Sultan Kermally, “Chapter Four: Abraham Maslow (1908-1970),” in Sultan Kermally, *Gurus on People Management* (London: Thorogood, 2004): 25-34. **(Moodle)**

Marshall Sahlins, “The Original Affluent Society,” in John M. Gowdy, ed., *Limited Wants, Unlimited Means: A Reader on Hunter-Gatherer Economics and the Environment* (St Louis: Island Press, 1998), 5-36 (pp.37-41 are footnotes and bibliography, which you may skip). **(Moodle)**

**Thursday, September 3, 2020: Hunter-Gatherers to Farmers—The Shift to Sedentary Society in the Middle East**

*Note: Monday, September 7 is the last day to Add/Drop. Today is the last day that the general themes, requirements, and mechanics of the course will be reviewed.*

*For today’s discussion, please review Glossary terms for “Hunter-Gatherer” and “Sedentism.”*

Yuval Noah Harari, “Chapter 5: History’s Biggest Fraud” and “Chapter 6: Building Pyramids,” in Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* (London: Vintage Books, 2011), 87-133. **(Moodle)**

## **Tuesday, September 8, 2020: Pre-Islamic Desert Religions**

*Glossary terms selected for Unit Quiz #1 will be announced today.*

*Reminder: Quiz #1 is next Tuesday.*

Daniel W. Brown, "Arabia," in Daniel W. Brown, *A New Introduction to Islam* (Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 19-32. **(Moodle)**

Zulfiqar Ali Shah, "Pre-Islamic Arabs," in Ansari, Zafar Ishaq, Nawwab, Ismail Ibrahim, eds., *The Different aspects of Islamic culture: The Foundations of Islam* (Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2016), 71-74. **(Moodle)**

Joseph Henninger, "Pre-Islamic Bedouin Religion," in Marlin L. Swartz, *Studies on Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981): 3-16 (pp.16-22 are footnotes, which you may skip). **(Moodle)**

## **Thursday, September 10, 2020: Radical Hospitality in the Desert**

*Reminder: Quiz #1 is this coming Tuesday.*

Ben-Ur, "Brief Introduction to the Biblical Text" (one page). **(Moodle)**

No universally agreed-upon author, *Book of Ruth* and excerpts from *Numbers*, in *Tanakh: A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures According to the Tradition Hebrew Text* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1985), 1419-24, 255-56. **(Moodle)**

Eli Davis, "Hospitality," *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1971): VIII: 1030-33. **(Moodle)**

Raymond Boisvert, "Hospitality and Food," in Paul B. Thompson, David M. Kaplan, eds., *Encyclopedia of Food and Agricultural Ethics* (Dordrecht : Springer Netherlands, 2014), 1,082-90. **(Moodle)**

Cyril Glassé, ed., "Adab," *The New Encyclopedia of Islam*, 4th edition (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2013). *Note: read highlighted section only; three paragraphs.* **(Moodle)**

## **Tuesday, September 15, 2020: Unit Quiz #1 & The Rise of Islam and the Role of Environment**

*Unit Quiz #1: covers all materials from the first day of class through Tuesday, September 8: "Pre-Islamic Desert Religions." The Quiz lasts 30-35 minutes. Students with letters of accommodations will be given a special link to a Quiz with either 1.5 or 2.0 time. Students are requested to have their videos on ("Start Video") and their microphones off ("Mute"). If you are unable to turn your video on during the Quiz, please let the Professor know.*

Zulfiqar Ali Shah, section entitled "Islam's Advent and its Monotheism," in Ansari, Zafar Ishaq, Nawwab, Ismail Ibrahim, eds., *The Different aspects of Islamic culture: The Foundations of Islam* (Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2016), 74-77. **(Moodle)**

William Harmon Norton, “The Influence of the Desert on Early Islam,” *The Journal of Religion* 4: 4 (1924): 383-396. **(Moodle)**

“Hagar,” in Scott B. Noegel and Brannon M. Wheeler, *The A to Z of Prophets in Islam and Judaism* (Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, 2010 [2002]), 129-30. **(Moodle)**

“Hajar” in Oliver Leaman, ed., *The Quran: an Encyclopedia* (London: Routledge, 2006), 234-236. **(Moodle)**

Traditional stories on Isma’il, in Al-Imam ibn Kathir (trans. Muhammad Mustapha Geme’ah, Al-Azhar), *Stories of The Prophets*, [https://archive.org/details/StoriesOfTheProphetsByIbnKathir\\_201312](https://archive.org/details/StoriesOfTheProphetsByIbnKathir_201312) (last accessed 9/13/17) (6 pages--DO NOT CLICK ON THIS LINK--JUST USE PDF BELOW) **(Moodle)**

### **Thursday, September 17, 2020: Animal- and Plant-Centric Sustainability in the Middle East and South Asia**

*Note: Be sure to familiarize yourself with Movie Quiz #1, which is due via Moodle on Sunday, October 4 by 11:30 p.m.*

The stories of the creation of the world and the Garden of Eden from the Hebrew Bible, in English translation. **(Moodle)**

Jon Gregerson, *Vegetarianism: A History* (Fremont, California: Jain Publishing Company, 1994), chapter 3, “Vegetarian Foundations in the East—The Hindu and Jain Background,” and chapter 4, “Vegetarian Observance in Buddhism—An Indisputable Fact,” 13-21. **(Moodle)**

Radhika Govindrajan, beginning of “Introduction” and “Epilogue,” in Radhika Govindrajan, *Animal Intimacies: Interspecies Relatedness in India’s Central Himalayas* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2018), 1-13; 173-82. **(Moodle)**

### **Tuesday, September 22, 2020: Native Americans and the Ecological Indian**

A Navajo emergence story, as told by Sandoval, Hastin Tlo'tsi hee (Old Man Buffalo Grass) in late November 1928 to Aileen O’Bryan. Published in Colin G. Calloway, *First Peoples: a Documentary Survey of American Indian History*, 2nd ed. (New York: Bedford/St. Martins, 2004, 37-42. This story was first published in *The Dîné: Origin Myths of the Navaho Indians* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1956). **(Moodle)**

Shepard Krech III, “Introduction,” in *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999), pp.15-28. **(Moodle)**

Michael Shermer, “The Ignoble Savage,” *Scientific American* 289: 2 (August 2003), 33. **(Moodle)**

### **Thursday, September 24, 2020: Famine and Fantasy: Lazy Tasty Land**

Herman Pleij, *Dreaming of Cockaigne: Medieval Fantasies of the Perfect Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001 [1997]), 3-29. **(Moodle)**

Piers Paul Read, *Alive: the Story of the Andes Survivors* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1974), 35-46 and 333-52. **(Moodle)**

**Tuesday, September 29, 2020: Food Preservation and Its Unintended Consequences**

Stuart Thorne, “The Origins of Food Preservation Processes” and “Nicholas Appert and the Origins of an Industry,” Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 in Stuart Thorne, *The History of Food Preservation* (Totowa, N.J.: Barnes & Noble Books, 1986), pp.13-27 and pp.28-42. **(Moodle)**

**Thursday, October 1, 2020: Human Responses to Pandemic**

*Reminder: Online Movie Quiz #1 is due Sunday, October 4 by 11:30 p.m.*

Giovanni Boccaccio (Richard Aldington, trans.), *The Decameron of Giovanni Boccaccio* (Garden City, New York: Garden City Publishing Company, 1930), 1-13. **(Moodle)**

Joseph P. Byrne, “Jewish Treasure Hordes,” “Jews,” *Encyclopedia of the Black Death* (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO), 192-96. **(Moodle)**

Joseph P. Byrne, “Funerals, Muslim,” *Encyclopedia of the Black Death* (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO), 154. **(Moodle)**

**Sunday, October 4, 2020: Movie Quiz #1 Due Today by 10:00 p.m.—it is weekend, so class does not meet**

Watch: “Dr. Ehrlich’s Magic Bullet” (1940). Directed by William Dieterle. Starring Edward G. Robinson as Dr. Ehrlich. 103 minutes. Url: <https://vimeo.com/155189041> **(Online)**

“Dr. Ehrlich’s Magic Bullet” is a biographical film based on the true story of the German Jewish doctor and scientist Dr. Paul Ehrlich (1854-1915), who is credited with a number of discoveries in the fight against pandemics, including selective color staining of cells and microorganisms (to help diagnose diseases in the laboratory) and cures. The film deals with tuberculosis, diphtheria, antibiotic chemotherapy, and the sexually-transmitted disease syphilis. The film also deals with the racism of the Nazi regime, which sought to efface Dr. Ehrlich’s memory in the 1930s and ’40s.

Take the Online Quiz: *Movie Quiz #1 is due today no later than 11:30 p.m. The Quiz will be posted to Moodle ASAP.*

**Tuesday, October 6, 2020: Totally Unsustainable: Sugar and Slaves in the Americas**

*Glossary terms selected for Unit Quiz #2 will be announced today.*

Richard Howard Robbins, “Environment and Consumption: The Case of Sugar; The story of Beef; Economic Growth, Sustainability, and the Environment,” in *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism*, 5th ed. (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2011), 183-192. **(Moodle)**

Sidney W. Mintz, “Time, Sugar, and Sweetness,” in Carole Counihan, et al., *Food and Culture: A Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 91-103. **(Moodle)**

### **Thursday, October 8: Quiz #2 & Precursors of the Sustainability Movement?: The Industrial Revolution and the Transcendentalists**

*Unit Quiz #2: Covers all materials from Thursday, September 10 (“Radical Hospitality in the Desert”) through Tuesday, September 29 (“Food Preservation and its Unintended Consequences”). The Quiz lasts 30-35 minutes. Students with letters of accommodations will be given a special link to a Quiz with either 1.5 or 2.0 time. Students are asked to have their videos on (“Start Video”) and their microphones off (“Mute”). If you are unable to turn your video on during the Quiz, please let the Professor know.*

Robert C. Allen, “Introduction” and “The Spread of the Industrial Movement Abroad,” in Robert C. Allen, *The Industrial Revolution: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), chapter 1 & 6. **(Moodle)**

Corporate author, “Silas Marner,” [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silas\\_Marner](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silas_Marner) **(Online)** [Note: pay close attention to the plot summary before you read Chapter XXI.]

George Eliot, Chapter XXI of *Silas Marner: The Weaver of Raveloe* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood, 1861). <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/550/550-h/550-h.htm#chap21> **(Online)**

Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Lecture III. The Transcendentalist,” *Dial* (January 1843): 297-313. **(Moodle)** **[skim this for references to the Industrial Revolution. Can you find any?]**

### **Tuesday, October 13, 2020: The Discovery of Vitamins and The “Popeye Principle”**

Laura Lovett, “The Popeye Principle: Selling Child Health in the First Nutrition Crisis,” *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law* 30: 5 (October 2005): 803-838. **(Moodle)**

Jonah Mandel, “Plague to Protein: Israeli Firm Seeks to Put Locusts on the Menu,” *Phys.org* (August 3, 2020). [https://phys.org/news/2020-08-plague-protein-israeli-firm-locusts.html?mc\\_cid=353063c0d6&mc\\_eid=6da94982bc](https://phys.org/news/2020-08-plague-protein-israeli-firm-locusts.html?mc_cid=353063c0d6&mc_eid=6da94982bc) **(Online)**

### **Thursday, October 15, 2020: Newtowns—Sustainable Cities?**

“Charlie in a New Town” (1948). Director: John Halas and Joy Batchelor. Duration: 8 minutes 15 seconds. Sponsor: Central Office of Information for Ministry of Town and Country Planning, London, Great Britain. Url: <http://vimeo.com/80073368> **(Online)**

Katy Lock and Hugh Ellis, “Foreword” and “Introduction,” in Katy Lock and Hugh Ellis, *New Towns: The Rise, Fall and Rebirth* (New York: Routledge, 2020), through page 26.

### **Tuesday, October 20, 2020: Victory Gardens—Sustainability in Wartime**

*Glossary terms selected for Unit Quiz #3 will be announced today.*

J. J. Levison, “Your Garden in Wartime: What Should Be Done Now—and What Can Wait—in the Care of Home Grounds,” *American Forestry* (April 1944): 168-169 and 190-191. **(Moodle)**

Cecilia Gowdy-Wygant, “Introduction: Gardening in the New Century” and “Epilogue,” in Cecilia Gowdy-Wygant, *Cultivating Victory: The Women’s Land Army and the Victory Garden Movement* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013), 1-12 and 183-187. **(Moodle)**

**Thursday, October 22, 2020: Unit Quiz #3 & Is It Green?—Nuclear Energy and the World Without Us**

*Unit Quiz #3 covers all material from Thursday, October 1 (“Human Responses to Pandemic”) through Thursday, October 15 (“Newtowns—Sustainable Cities?”). The Quiz lasts 30-35 minutes. Students with letters of accommodations will be given a special link to a Quiz with either 1.5 or 2.0 time. Students are asked to have their videos on (“Start Video”) and their microphones off (“Mute”). If you are unable to turn your video on during the Quiz, please let the Professor know.*

Charles D. Ferguson, “Preface” and “Chapter 8: Sustainable Energy,” in Charles D. Ferguson, *Nuclear Energy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), xiii-xiv and 203-207. **(Moodle)**

Alan Weisman, “Chapter 13: The World Without War,” *The World Without Us* (New York: Macmillan, 2007), 183-90. **(Moodle)**

**Tuesday, October 27, 2020: Farming While Black: Reclaiming Agriculture in the African American Community**

Leah Penniman, *Farming While Black: Soul Fire Farm’s Practical Guide to Liberation on the Land* (White River Junction, Vermont: Chelsea Green Publishing, 2019), Introduction and Chapter 14. **(Moodle)**

**Thursday, October 29, 2020: Flying High—Hallucinogenic Substances and the “Stoned Ape” Theory**

*General questions: Why have people throughout time used psychoactive substances? How did this use intertwine with spiritual traditions?*

Dorion Sagan, Chapter 14, “On Doyle on Drugs,” in Dorion Sagan, *Cosmic Apprentice: Dispatches from the Edges of Science* (University of Minnesota Press, 199-23). **(Moodle)**

**Tuesday, November 3: Is Sustainability a New Religion?**

Before class, view “Is God Green?.” Part I, Bill Moyers (12 minute 24 second segment). Url: <https://www.pbs.org/video/bill-moyers-moyers-on-america-is-god-green/> **(Online)**

Lynn White, Jr., “The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis,” *Science*, New Series, 155: 3767 (March 10, 1967), 1203-1207. **(Moodle)**

Robert H. Nelson, “Unoriginal Sin: The Judeo-Christian Roots of Ecotheology,” *Policy Review* 53 (Summer 1990): 52. **(Moodle)**

**Thursday, November 5: At One With Nature?—The Life and Death of the Grizzly Man**

Timothy Treadwell, *Among Grizzlies: Living with Wild Bears in Alaska* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1997), chapters 1-2. **(Moodle)**

**Sunday, November 8, 2020: Movie Quiz #2 “Grizzly Man” is Due Today by 11:30 p.m.—it is weekend, so class does not meet**

*Movie Quiz #2 is due today no later than 11:30 p.m.*

Review previously assigned: Timothy Treadwell, *Among Grizzlies: Living with Wild Bears in Alaska* (1997), chapters 1-2. **(Moodle)**

Watch: “Grizzly Man.” 2005. A film by Werner Herzog. Lion Gate Films. 1 hour and 42 minutes.

<http://www.documentarymania.com/player.php?title=Grizzly%20Man> **(Online)**

Note: This film is also on Netflix.

“Timothy Treadwell's death was as sensational as his life: Having presumed he could live safely among the grizzly bears of the Alaskan wilderness, the outdoorsman and author (*Among Grizzlies*)--along with his partner, Amie Huguenard--was eventually killed and devoured by one of the very animals to whom he had devoted years of study.

In telling this story, Werner Herzog relies considerably on Treadwell's own video footage, shot during his time in the wild. The famed German director takes Treadwell's story into unexpected emotional frontiers and startling landscapes of the mind. Treadwell is an intriguing, infuriating, perhaps even tragic figure. But Herzog himself is equally compelling, and this brilliant film is just one reason why.”

Take the Online Quiz: On Moodle. Consists of multiple choice and open-ended shorts answers. The Movie Quiz will be uploaded to Moodle ASAP.

**Tuesday, November 10, 2020: Going Out With a Blast: Human Responses to Volcanoes**

*General questions: How did ancient peoples regard Mount Vesuvius? What was the result of its eruption in 79 C.E.? How did various cultures respond? How do these responses compare to those of our day?*

Joanne Berry, *The Complete Pompeii* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2007), through p.33. **(Moodle)**

**Thursday, November 12: Underwater Towns: The Quabbin Reservoir and Human Displacement**

John R. Greene, “Preface,” “introduction,” Chapter 1: “What Led to This?,” Chapter 2: “The Day After the Ball,” in John R. Greene, *From Valley to Quabbin, 1938-1946* (Athol, MA: Athol Press, 2010), through p.25. **(Moodle)**

Sean Cole, *Haunting the Quabbin: Inside Out*. Audiotape available at:

<https://beta.prx.org/stories/17226> **(Online)**

**Tuesday, November 17, 2020: “Mass Aggie”**

“The Radical Idea: UMass Amherst & America's Education Revolution,”

<http://video.wgby.org/video/2365117505/> (57 minutes). **(Online)**

Irving Seidman, *Oswald Tippo and the Early Promise of the University of Massachusetts: a Profile in his own Words* (Amherst: Friends of the Library, University of Massachusetts Amherst. 2002), through 14. (**Moodle**)

**Thursday, November 19: Unit Quiz #4 (non-cumulative)**

*Note: Tomorrow, Friday, November 20 is the last day to Drop with 'W' and select 'Pass/Fail'*

*Note: Thanksgiving recess begins following the end of class Friday, November 20, which is the last day of classes.*

***Unit Quiz #4 covers all materials from Tuesday, October 20 ("Victory Gardens—Sustainability in Wartime") through Tuesday, November 17 ("Mass Aggie"). Unit Quiz #4 is non-cumulative, but has 20 questions instead of the usual 10 (a combination of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer questions). The Quiz will be automatically timed for 1 hour and 15 minutes. Students with letters of accommodations will be given a special link to a Quiz with either 1.5 or 2.0 time. Students are asked to have their videos on ("Start Video") and their microphones off ("Mute"). If you are unable to turn your video on during the Quiz, please let the Professor know. Students may leave the virtual classroom after they submit their Quiz. The Professor will be on Zoom to answer any questions that may arise; students may send their questions via the \*private\* Chat function. See the Moodle website under Thursday, November 19 for the Short Answer Questions and Glossary Questions.***

*Note: There is no final examination in this class.*

*Final grades due by midnight on Monday, December 14, 2020.*

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