Site Visit Questions

1. Visit a place where people use sacred texts. A folder for each of the four traditions contains a list of especially good sites to visit. Please select sites that will introduce you to traditions unfamiliar to you.

2. Glean information for your 2-3 page typed report both from direct observation and from interviewing participants on the site.

3. Describe the site you visit, indicating the time, location, and nature of the activity you observed.

4. Describe the sacred text the community used in the setting. Give a physical description of the text if one is visibly present. In situations where a sacred text is not physically present, it may be functioning in oral recitation or being meditated upon; be attuned to these subtle and sophisticated uses of text and ask participants to help you understand how text might be being used.

5. Describe the content of the specific texts read or recited during the service. Ask someone the specific location of the passages (e.g., chapter and verse, Surah and verse, etc.) in a sacred text and include this information in your report.

6. Describe in some detail the setting in which people used the text.

7. Describe the different things people did with the text. How many ways were there of using the text?

8. Who was allowed to do things with the text? What did they do with it? Are there hierarchies among those who used it? Were there special "job categories" for using it, based on age, education, gender, office, etc.? How were persons in those categories differentiated?

9. How central would you say sacred text in both oral and written form is to the activity of the group in this setting?