CHAPTER IV

GENDERING FOOD AND CUISINE

This chapter discusses how male and female identities, which were sanctioned by rituals, customs and social norms, were used as crucial factors in the making, transformation and understanding of food and cuisine of the period. The topic ‘women and food’ has vast importance. Most of the societies consider women responsible for nurturing. This chapter focuses on the transformation that came over in the gender roles, in connection with food and cooking, in colonial Malabar under the project of modernity. It also analyses the various discourses involved in the construction of gender in colonial India. The popular image of an Indian woman in the eyes of Orientalists and Western feminists over centuries was that of a veiled and submissive one. Historically this image of the woman has been employed by the colonial imagination for outright exploitation in the guise of ‘civilizing mission’.¹ According to Partha Chatterjee, the colonial criticism against the indigenous tradition of Indians was that it was ‘degenerate and barbaric.’² He observed that the criticism of Indian tradition was inevitably a project civilizing the Indian people: the whole structure of colonialist discourse was essentially constituted around this project. The ‘proselytization’ by Christian missionaries to legislative and executive action in Colonialist state led to a gradual spread of progressive western knowledge which was the way to carry out the civilizing mission. Similarly, regarding the question of gender discourse in

colonial India, Ashis Nandy explains that, ‘pre-colonial Indian societies worked with rather fluid and permeable identities in which ideas about ‘bisexuality’ and ‘androgyny’ featured ‘hard’ and in which ‘softer’ forms of creativity and perception were not identified with femininity nor values of aggression and power with masculinity. It was upon these soft and multiple identities, he argues where Victorian colonial culture imposed it’s rigid and relating to ideologies of gender. These identities provided a context in which masculine was placed against feminine thereby establishing an analogy between political and sexual supremacy that put together the manliness, rationality, courage and control of the British rulers which was essentially a British middle class sexual stereotype against degenerated, effeminate and superstitious subjects.’

Utsa Ray, in her study of Bengali middle class women, argues that, ‘in colonial India under the project of modernity endowed with the act of cooking was much more significance than the pre colonial period.’ The nature of cooking was transformed in the ways that resulted in much more pronounced gendering than before. Though women were mainly responsible for cooking in pre-colonial India, this act was never defined within the specific parameters of gender roles. Several texts written during medieval period makes it evident that, though the cooking was done by women, they were not distinctively seen as inhabiting with in the domestic space. They also participated in buying and selling products in the market. For instance, the second-century Tamil epic Silappadikaram includes looking after the household and cooking among the wife’s domestic duties. But

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3 Ashis Nandy, Barbaric Others: A Manifesto on Western Racism, Pluto Press, New Delhi, 1993, p. 64.
4 Utsa Ray, Culinary Culture in Colonial India, A Cosmopolitan Platter and the Middle Class, Cambridge University Press, Delhi, 2015, p. 120.
5 Ibid, p.121.
6 The Silappadikaram is a Tamil epic that is speculated to have been composed around the fourth to sixth century AD. The Silappadikaram begins in the city of Puhar in the kingdom of Chola, a bustling trading town in which Kannagi and Kovalan are to have a marriage arranged by their parents. After the marriage Kannagi spent most of her day learning about the household and she knew that both Kovalan’s parents and her own looked to her to maintain the traditions and honour of her family. There by illustrating her devotion to her role as a wife. See more reference, Lakshmi Holmstrom, Silappadikaram, Manimekali, Orient Longman, Calcutta, 1996, p. 60.
The descriptions of the domestic realm are not desexualized in this text\textsuperscript{7} as the gender difference formulated surrounding food and cooking developed in the discourses of domestic realm in the 19\textsuperscript{th} and 20\textsuperscript{th} century Malabar. Drawing the arguments of these scholars, try to analyse how gender roles in cooking were reshaped under the project of colonial modernity in Malabar. The first part of this chapter suggests the theoretical structures of feminist historiography related to food and gender. The discussions also purports to analyse in detail two important spaces; the domestic spaces in the context of ritual purity and sanctity and the public spaces related to the creation of the identity of the new middle class Malayalee women in colonial Malabar. The ritual and social powers that maintained the power relationship between men and women in domestic sphere during pre colonial period was controlled by the feudal patriarchal norms and beliefs. The power structure during colonial period created new gender premises and these notions backed up Victorian code of thinking and beliefs. This social condition created new cultural identity for men and women and it suited the patriarchal society of the time.

\textbf{Theoretical Orientation: Food and Gender}

Food is closely associated to identity. Its central role in human survival invests it with symbolic meaning and significance reaching well beyond the issues of subsistence.\textsuperscript{8} Gender is defined as the cultural interpretation of sexual differences. The root of gender studies can be found in the second wave feminism of 1960’s. Gender as a conceptual tool for the study of society has been consistently at the forefront of social science and humanities ever since. Multiple genders exist in many cultural contexts and can be defined by sexual identity,


personal mentality or social role. The Gender differences in a society are man-made and they get legitimised in a patriarchal social order. The difference is constructed socially and historically and is legitimised by several principles, ideologies, social practices and institutions such as family, religion, caste, education, social laws, state and society. ‘Male’ and ‘Female’ are sex categories, while ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ are gender categories. Simon de Beauvoir, the French writer and feminist philosopher, opens her book Second Sex with ‘one is not born, but rather becomes a woman.’ Beauvoir states that society perpetuates gender inequality. Men and women are constantly engaged in subject-other relation where man is the subject and woman the other. It is based on the myth of the woman as the inferior other. According to Antoinette Burton, Gender is not an exclusive or stable identity; it is always mediated by race, class and gender. It shows how men and women are socially constituted and how such constructions are given ideological meanings which make up relations of power. Significantly the social constructions of relations of power based on sexual dissimilarities are extended through images to all spheres of social life to signify situations of inequities in power relation.

The engagement of a household or community with production, preparation and consumption of food on a daily basis or in special circumstances are the domain where gender identities are established and maintained in most cultures. There are many important studies that link the control of food to social, political and economic power. Anthropology was among the first disciplines to recognize the importance of studying food practices. Much of the contemporary

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9 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
scholarship that combines food studies and women’s studies is also undertaken by anthropologists. Carole M. Counihan in her work *Food and Gender: Identity and Power* argues that food practices are both constitutive and reflective of gender constructions.\(^{15}\) She points out that ‘maleness’ and ‘femaleness’ in all cultures are related to particular foods and set of laws controlling its consumption. It considers how gender relationship to food may backup mutual respect or make gender hierarchy. This relationship is considered through two fundamental questions. The first deals with the control of production, distribution, and consumption of food and how it caters to the power and social position of men and women. The second question is how food symbolically connotes maleness and femaleness and establishes the social value of men and women. Other issues include the attitude of men and women towards their bodies and the legitimacy of their appetites. Penny van Esterik, in her essay ‘Feeding Their Faith: Recipe Knowledge Among Thai Buddhist Women’, discusses how food acts as a symbol in the religious knowledge.\(^{16}\) Leela Dube in her article ‘Caste and Women’ examines the manner in which food form a critical element in the ritual idiom of purity and pollution in Indian context. She argues that the concerns of pollution centring food begin at home. The principles of the caste involve a clear distinction between domestic space and outside world. Women play a key role in maintaining the sanctity and Purity of home.\(^{17}\)

Uma Narayan in her work *Eating Cultures: incorporation, Identity and Indian Food*, examines contemporary Indian culture and identity through the lens of curry.\(^{18}\) Made from a mixture of many spices using different combinations for particular dishes, more turmeric in one *masala*, more cumin and chilli in another,

\(^{16}\) Ibid.
Indian curries have great variety. The ‘fabrication’ of curry powder, a one-mixture fits-all combination, was an English creation fixed onto Indian cuisine and accepted as quintessentially Indian by the colonizer, just as England ‘fabricated’ an India from a variety of cultural and political entities. In the post colonial writings food becomes a strategy to question the identity. According to feminist postcolonial writers like Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Bell Hooks, ‘the worst consequence of colonialism for colonized people has been the long lasting skill to steal voices and words.’ Uma Narayanan opines that the colonized people have stopped thinking about their identity according to their own point of view rather adopting the cultural categories of the Western dominant culture.

The post colonial feminist writers reject the notion that the traditional patriarchy is the main cause of women’s oppression in their respective countries. They proposed that western standards of modernization and empowerment of women in their countries was the colonial cultural models. Some of the principle ways in which gender is negotiated through food provision include differential access to and control over food, gendered division of labour in the production, distribution and preparation of food, symbolic association to specific food stuffs according to gender and feasting and ritual practices. In the ritual practices of every religion the role of woman is defined. To maintain the ritual purity in the private sphere is the duty of woman.

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19 Arlene Voski Avakian and Barbara Haber (eds.), *From Betty Crocker to Feminist Food Studies, Critical Perspective on Women and Food*, University of Massachusetts Press, USA, 2005, p. 6.
22 Ibid.
Food and Rituals: Women in Traditional Domestic Space

The word ‘tradition’ refers to the practice of handing down statements of faith, beliefs, legends, myths, customs etc, from generation to generation orally or through practice.\textsuperscript{23} In a traditional or feudal society the groups and community are given more importance than individual. In a feudal society the power gets manifested through symbols of fidelity norms and rituals. In the social space of that society the gender was performed more in a ritual setting.\textsuperscript{24} In the study on feudal society Nur Yalman, an anthropologist, argues that a basic principle of Hindu social organization is to preserve land, women and ritual quality within it.\textsuperscript{25} Similarly Uma Chakravathi observes that these three are structurally linked and it is impossible to maintain all three strictly and control female sexuality.\textsuperscript{26}

Maintenance of the ritual purity in the domestic space was the responsibility of women.\textsuperscript{27} ‘Gender’ was undoubtedly one of the major tools for internal regulation among the Malayalee Brahmins.\textsuperscript{28} These ritual rules and regulations were comparatively stricter in the case of the upper caste women. The women belonging to other castes like Nair enjoyed more ritual freedom in Malabar compared to Namboothiri Women. Everyday life of these Anthrjanams was associated with a number of ritual ceremonies and festivals. Their domesticity was highly ritualized one. Fasting is associated with ritual purity in all the castes and groups.\textsuperscript{29} Orthodox Brahmin women perform a number of vratam or fasting of religious assertions with the aim to secure a long life for their husband.\textsuperscript{30}

Every woman, married, unmarried and widows observed a number of fasting in

\textsuperscript{24}Meera Velayudhan, ‘Changing Roles and Women’s Narratives’, in Social Scientist Vol. 22, November, 1994, p. 64.
\textsuperscript{25}Uma Chakravarti, Gendering of Caste: Through a Feminist Lens, Sthree, Calcutta, 2003, p. 67.
\textsuperscript{26}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{27}Leela Dube, Op. Cit., p.6.
\textsuperscript{29}Karin Kapadia, Siva and Her Sisters, Gender, Caste, and Class in Rural South India, West View Press, Oxford, United Kingdom, 1995, p.96.
their daily life for various religious vows. Kanipayyur Sankaran Namboothiripad, a prominent figure of the early twentieth century, states in his memoir *Ente Smaranakal* that number of *vratam* were observed by the female members of his *illam*. The fasting or *vratam* is a ritual activity of a wife who shows complete devotion to her husband. She prays for his long life. His existence is determined by the fortune and fate of her life. Most of these *vratam* or fast are observed for the long life of their husbands and in doing so the woman’s hope is to predecease her husband thus to avoid widowhood. Women who predecease their husband are considered lucky as well as good, while widowhood is attributed to sins committed in a previous incarnation. In those days Hindu Brahmin widows were denied all luxuries including good food, clothes and jewels and her mourning was eternal. They had different food without spices and other flavours. Salt was the only ingredient in their food. They had to observe a life full of rituals, *vratam* and fasts. Devaki Nilayamgode has illustrated the life of widows in her memories. Her father died when she was two years old and after his death her mother used to observe all the fast and rites strictly. She fasted all day on *ekadashi* and *dwadashi* the eleventh and twelfth days in lunar calendar. She recollects that her mother was weak and tired during *Shravanam* as she fasted on both *ekadashi* and *dwadashi* without even a sip of water. Despite of this long fast, on *thrayodashi* the thirteenth day, she would drink water only after her bath, visit to the temple and Vishnu *puja*.

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36 *Ekadashi* is the eleventh lunar day of the *shukla* or *Krishna paksha* of every lunar month in the Hindu calendar. In Hinduism and Jainism it is considered a spiritually beneficial day. Two *Ekadasis* in every month, all the twenty for *Ekadashis* throughout the year are sacred to a Hindu see more references: Pandit S.M. Natesa Sasthri, *Hindu Feast, Fast and Ceremonies*, Madras, 1903, p. 134.
38 Ibid.
shares the experiences of her childhood at her illam in her memories. She remembers that, in those days in Namboothiri illams widows had separate food and they had no right to eat the food prepared for the other members of the family.\(^\text{39}\)

In the magazine *Unni Namboothiri*, there is a story named *Appa Katha*. The story tells that, during the month of *Vrischikam* widows of Namboothiri illam have to fast. They also don’t have the right to participate in the *ayinioottu*, a sadya conducted especially for Namboothiri women during the marriage functions.\(^\text{40}\) They couldn’t co-dine with other female members of the family. In the Namboothiri illam the kitchen has four parts –mele adukkala, kizhakkini, nalupua and vadakkini. The male members and the children sit in the mele adukkala to eat. However the women folks sit only in vadakkini. In the illam the children were fed first, then Namboothiris and finally the women. Women ate the leftover food of children or husband. The question of purity and impurity associated with food is raised in these circumstances. Women have to maintain the purity of the food in the domestic sphere. As William Logan describes it was unthinkable for a cook or housewife to taste the dishes during the course of its preparation so as to assure the purity.\(^\text{41}\) At the same time left over food of husband and children was pure food for a wife. This practice clearly shows that there were rules controlling the consumption of food in the patriarchal culture and gender was a deciding factor in it.

**Concept of Purity and Impurity**

Generally, *echil* refers to the left over of the eaten food items. But among Namboothiri Anthrjanams eating from used leaves was part of their life. A

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Namboothiri woman becomes a wife, after four days’ wedding ceremonies, when she is fed off the leaf used by the husband. The bride serves him and pours a little water in to his cupped palm by the end of the meal. When he gets up she places her right hand on the leaf and uses the same leaf for eating. This practice would be continued thereafter. *Echil* has different connotations in the cultural hierarchy. *Prasadam*, the leftover food of Gods, is pure to the devotee. Likewise the leftover food of husband is pure and good to the wife.\(^{42}\) The leavings of upper caste people are considered pure to the lower caste people.

Major or minor celebrations were conducted in all wealthy *illams* during those days. Even though birthday celebrations were the most important among these not all birthdays were given equal significance. The *Namboothiris* and their sons feted lavishly as the women and girl –children had to be content with just one extra item added to their daily meal. There were special *pujas* held in temples and *illams* for the long life of the men and their sons. For instance, in all *Namboothiri* families large feasts were conducted during marriage and other functions. They have rules and regulation for eating in these feasts. *Kudiveppu* was the most lavish among these. During the wedding there would be feasts for two to three days. The children are fed first, then *Namboothiri* men and finally the women. Once the first two rounds of the feast are over, the servants remove the used leaves and clean the floor. But when the last round is over, the used leaves are left in the same place to be served to the *Nair* women who accompany the *Namboothiri* women as helpers.\(^ {43}\) These *Nair* women always accompany *Anthrjanams*. *Anthrjanams* and their companions are not invited for *varasadya* conducted in temples. These women come there to have good food. The *Anthrjanams* arrive with their helpers, tuck their umbrellas in the gap between the wall and roof tiles and go through the rear entrance of the *oottupura*. The helpers wait in the bath house near the tank, in the shack used for pounding rice.


or sit in the back veranada. Once the Anthrjanam have the meal, it is the turn of the helpers waiting hungrily outside to be called for lunch. But these women straining to go in would not be allowed an easy entry. A Brahmin cook would stand at the door keeping one half of it shut and physically blocking their way. As the helper approaches the door, she has to call out the name of the illam she works for and if the irikanamma approves the cook will move his arm and allow her to enter. They use the dirty banana leaves on which the half eaten food of the Anthrjanams still lay sprinkled. These women do not have the right to eat from fresh leaf. These customs make evident the power relationship maintained through the hierarchical structure. Echil or left over possesses a number of meanings in the daily life of women. Arjun Appadurai observes that the food is both the medium and message of male female relationship and it encodes the primary consequence of gender distinctions. 44

In the nineteenth century traditional Malayalee society women were refrained from social mobility or social freedom. The transition, from traditional Malayalee society to a progressive one, saw a number of drastic changes in political, social and economic spheres. Simultaneously a shift from private to public is seen in the life of Malayalee women. In this context an analysis of the colonial intervention and changes in gender discourses can be done. Bourdieu argues that changes in discourses, institutions, values, rules and regulations produce and transform attitudes and practices in a cultural system. 45 The discourse on the emergence of ‘New women’ in the context of colonial Malabar is an important area of study to analyse changing gender relations during this period.

Conceptualising ‘Old Women / New Women’

The age of colonial rule in Malabar has been a time of great transformations and transitions. It has been the period in which she entered modernity. In the beginning of 20th century the social landscape of Malabar started changing rapidly. The nation witnessed tremendous and far reaching changes during this period. Among other things the power centres in the society were greatly affected. There was a re-location of power in the society. In Kerala, as in various other parts of India, feudal families were greatly affected by the rules and regulations of the colonial power. During the course of the nineteenth century, the pattern of women’s life began to change. By the end of the nineteenth century a number of women who were educated, articulate and mobile started increasingly involving in public activities.

The involvement of women in education is an important yard stick in measuring the qualitative social changes. The enforcement of laws and regulations and the protection of women were of considerable importance during this period. Indian reformers, European missionaries and colonial government encouraged female education. Schools for girls were setup during early 19th century and the method of Zenana instruction was introduced from mid century onwards. Public instruction report of 1877-1878 observes a tremendous increase in female education. Partha Chatterjee observes that formal education became a requirement for the new woman and the nationalist ideology called for women to achieve cultural refinement through modern education. The transition of traditional Malabar society during colonial period brought about changes in

the attitude towards women and their social roles. Social reform movement led by the intellectual and middle class males seems to emphasize the restructuring of the traditional society by improving the social position of women. The changes oriented towards the making of modern women followed the suit.

The English education and emergence of new middle class intelligence, with their attitude and taste of western thoughts in mind also changed the lives of women in middle class society. These newly educated youth realized the importance of women’s education in the process of modernization. The 19th century middle class women were produced by the male discourses and were the part of construction and reproduction of higher values. G. Forbes observes that in reality the concept of the ‘perfect wife’ was being redefined. First there was modification in the appropriate activities for a female at different stages of her life. Second the appropriate arena for female action was expanded, and third, there was a new and growing approval of Individualism.

The middle class promoted female education because they wanted women to be better mothers, better wives and equip them better for the house works. Appu Nedungadi started an English school at Chalappuram for women. In the beginning of the twentieth century when non-Christian girls were not admitted in the convent school at Calicut, he started the ‘Society for the Promotion of Education of Women’ (SPEW) at Chalappuram and an English school was started for girls in 1906. He was very much aware of the social progress that could be achieved through education, particularly women’s education on western lines. The school was opened to girls of all castes and religions. He appointed European ladies Ellen Frank Koria and Elizebath as teachers of the school. According to J. Devika modernity and its re-figuration of

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51 Ibid.
gendered space has to be explored in the context of an emerging educated middle class in the nineteenth century Malayalee society that began to review the existent social order, ideas and institution in sharply critical terms.\textsuperscript{53}

Schools, one of the main institutions for socializing, mainly depend upon the prescribed textbook taught at various classes. These text books are instrumental in helping the students in socializing and preparing them to be the true representatives of their culture. The colonial curriculum was designed with the aim to create a group of people who would support colonial administrative policy. They also intended to make them the followers of the culture of the colonial masters. A separate curriculum was prepared for the male and female students.

**The Colonial Curriculum and the Concept of Cooking**

In Colonial India, Christian missionaries and Indian social reformers had been credited for the majority of the schools established during the nineteenth century. During the first decade of the twentieth century, however, the colonial administration became more active in founding and expanding schools. Female education, in particular, was thought to be a powerful way of encouraging political activism because it extended imperial modernity into the home.\textsuperscript{54} The first missionaries who started their activities in Malabar were the Basel Evangelical Mission society. They arrived in Malabar in 1839. The Protestant Basel Mission, established in 1839, founded churches and schools in Cannanore, Tellicheri, Calicut, and Palaghat. In addition to this some branches also established by them such as Chombala, South Tellicheri, and Kodakal near

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The Basel Mission gave timely encouragement for female education. The Basel missionaries took initiative to start girls schools at Malabar District. They founded a number of girls schools in all important towns in Malabar. The primary education was made compulsory for female converts. The mission started two types of schools for girls’ education, the Boarding schools and Day schools. The first school of the BEMS for girls was established by Julie Gundert in 1839 in Tellichery. Later girls schools were established in indifferent places like Kannur, Chombala, Palghat, Calicut, Manjeri, Kodakkal and Vaniyamkulam. The missionary activities in the field of women education brought tremendous changes in the society of Malabar.

The missionaries understood the importance of women’s education in their attempt to reform the traditional society. Through education, they were able to influence the kitchen as well as the kith and kin of the natives. The syllabus of school included not only textual knowledge but also knowledge of cooking, needlework and family management. Thus, women’s education was one of the ways the colonial modernity found to enter in to the households of the natives. The syllabus taught at girls schools conveys the aim of the colonial masters to enter our traditional cultural structures. The missionaries followed a curriculum as modified from what was taught in England in the 19th century. The connection between women’s education and motherhood was made as early as the mid 19th century. This was also connected to their belief in the civilizing power of the West and the cultural backwardness of the Indians. The teaching at the boarding schools, managed by the wives of missionaries in Malabar, gave the female students necessary domestic training. In their syllabus they included domestic science as an important subject along with other subjects. Mary Hancock in her study, *Home Science and Nationalization of Domesticity in W.W. Hunter, The Imperial Gazetteer of India, Madras Presidency to Multai, Vol. IX, Second Edition, Madras, Trubner & Co, London, 1886, p. 53.

Colonial India, discusses the making of womanhood in Colonial India during the late 19th century. She argued that domesticity itself could make home visible in public life. British educators in Madras endorsed domestic Science for girls because it seemed political and its practicality was consistent with the scientific outlook that they sought to instil in Indians.  

Home science was included in their curriculum and Sunday classes were started for female students. Domestic training mainly comprised of needlework – embroidery spinning, lacework, sewing and cooking. They were trained in pounding rice and assisted in cleaning the school’s living quarters. For instance Joseph Mooliyil in his novel Sukumari gives a detailed description of the system of education in the Missionary school (Sala) at Chirakkal in Kannur. Figure 1 is a photograph of Basel mission school at Chombala in Calicut district. The photograph shows how the female students studied cooking at their boarding schools. Hema Joseph, in her thesis, discusses the way in which gender discourses were depicted in the colonial Malayalam novels. She argues that the early education system for girls relied only on the prevailing patriarchal values in the society of Malabar.

58 Basel Mission e Archives, Manglore, 1904.  
The syllabus for the schools in Travancore and Cochin government also prepared a separate curriculum for girls. The curriculum was divide as domestic, general and sports. The domestic lessons contained economic management of home, hygiene, child caring, cooking, interior designing of home and also the basics of agriculture. The text books in the schools were also a necessary tool for the new crop of gender relations based on the patriarchal ideology followed by the Victorian way of life. The text books not only aimed at teaching students how to read and write but also to instil virtues valued by society, implied in the term hidden curriculum. The text books were instrumental in socializing children and training them to be the representatives of their culture.

The collection of essays *Mahathikal* (Great Women) was a textbook used in Malabar in 1922 and in 1940. It contained short biographical accounts of

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61 Qasiar Khan, Nihgt sulthana, Qasim Bughio and Arab Naz, ‘Role of Language in Gender Identity Formation in Pakistani School Textbooks’, *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, No. 21, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2014, pp. 55-84.
Queen Victoria, Chand Bibi, Tarabai, Florence Nightingale, Queen Alexandra, Krishna Kumari, Sarah Martin, Rani Padmini, Bharati, Yohanna (Joan of Arc), Maharani Swarnamayi, and Rani Bharani Thirunal Lakshmi Bayi. Queen Victoria represented a femininity centred on family, motherhood and respectability. She was also considered the personification of marital stability and domestic virtue. The chapter gives a brief sketch of her life with focus on her different roles as wife, mother and queen. There is a romancing of the domestic life especially in the descriptions of Queen Victoria’s life in the country, instances of her daughters cooking and keeping house for their parents.\textsuperscript{62} The short stories, accompanied by contextualized pictures and symbols, served the purpose of reinforcing the written message. For instance, one of the short stories named \textit{The Children at Home} was introduced as part of the text book in the schools of Malabar district under the Madras presidency during that period.\textsuperscript{63} This story shows how children should behave at home; girls should behave at dining table and the ways of decorating the dining table with flowers and fruits. These are explained with pictures of dining table and young girls. So the household duties of women include cooking, cleaning, washing clothes of husband and children and entertaining guests.\textsuperscript{64} The lessons and stories mainly try to define the sphere of women’s activities in the household. Similarly, a number of books related to the manners and etiquette were published in English at that time. These texts chiefly intended to teach the students how to behave in various situations in public and private sphere. Most of the instructions addressed young unmarried girls. \textit{Book of Etiquette} published in 1921 in English gives instruction to children to observe table manners and other behaviours are to be


practiced in the domestic and public spaces. A Text book of Domestic Science for High Schools by Matilda G. Campbell provides a number of recipes and asserts the importance of diet and nutrition in human life with detailed descriptions. The colonial text books and literature emphasises the role of women as home makers.

Women’s Associations and the Making of Domestic Science

These educational experiments of the late nineteenth and early twentieth produced a ‘new woman’ with interests that went beyond the household. In the work of Meredith Borthwick, The Changing Role of Women in Colonial Bengal, she argues that the new techniques of education, culinary craft and hygienic trainings created the ‘new woman’. Women’s education was promoted and by the late 19th century Indian men themselves started organizing institution for female education.

Formal education became a condition for the ‘new’ woman, and nationalist ideology called for women to attain cultural enhancement through modern education. However, it was also demanded that the ‘new woman’ be different from the western woman, the period between 1900 and 1920 is considered the epoch of the emergence of the ‘new women,’ that is, women who were the recipients of the social reforms and educational efforts of the nineteenth century.


69 Partha Chatterjee, Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories, Princeton University Press, 1993, p. 120.
century who took initiative to begin their own associations and groups.\textsuperscript{70} J. Devika observes, the appearance of such special opening for women seems to point out that the public sphere was already a structured space that promoted ‘gendering’ in its very structuring, and in the distribution of new ethics of gendered subjectivity within it.\textsuperscript{71} The formation of women organization in India stated in the mid of the nineteenth century. The main agenda of these associations was to bring women together in a common place and discuss their issues. G. Forbes observes: after the formation of these organizations women in India began defining their interests, propose solutions and take actions in the public sphere.\textsuperscript{72} The national level women’s organizations were formed only after the First World War. The major organizations, the Women’s Indian Association \textsuperscript{73}(WIA) and All India Women’s Conference (AIWC), emerged between 1917 and 1927.

The AIWC organized branches throughout the country. Mary Hancock in her study says that the feminist nationalist women’s associations and organizations in India incorporated home science in to educational and social reform projects in the 1920s. In her article she observes that the WIA recruited members by providing informal instruction in Home science; needle work, domestic economy, cooking and hygiene were reported as having been taught during the weekly meetings of many of its regional branches.\textsuperscript{74} There are references of a number of organizations called ladies associations or


\textsuperscript{71} J. Devika, \textit{Op. Cit.}, p. 41.


\textsuperscript{73} The Women’s Indian Association was started in 1917 by Margaret Cousins, Dorothy Jinaraja Dasa and Annie Besant was linked with the British movement for women’s suffrage. The National Council of Women in India was founded by Lady Tata and Lady Aberdeen in 1925. The AIWC was formed in 1927, initiated by Margaret Cousins. See more references: G. Frobes, \textit{The New Cambridge History of India IV.2, Women in Modern India}, Cambridge University Press, Foundation Books, New Delhi, 1998, p.156.

\textsuperscript{74} Mary Elizabeth Hancock, \textit{Op. Cit.}, pp. 871-903.
sthreesamjams working effectively among the elite middle class women in Malabar even before the organizational actives of AIWC and Mahilasamjams.

The history of these organizations could be traced from various women’s magazines like Indian Ladies Magazine and Sarada published during the first half of the nineteenth century. The prime venture of these organizations was the making of a space for the social interaction between the natives and the European ladies that may facilitate in self fashioning themselves with the introduction of Victorian ideals. The basic attempt of these organizations was to build a modern and progressive society. Number of references of the formation of ladies associations or streesmajams in Calicut, Cannanore and Palakkad during the early 20th century. The surviving accounts of the activities of these early associations reveal that the female negotiations with colonial modernity were mediated through the interactions with white women, especially the wife of English officers or Missionaries. The Calicut Ladies Association was formed in 1902. The first meeting of this association was convened by a European woman, Mrs. Marce, at Brahamana Balika Patasala. The figure II is the group photo of Cannanore Ladies Association.

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The second meeting of Cannanore Ladies Association was held in government girls school, Cannanore under the presidency of Mrs. Buton. After the proceedings of the meeting the president called upon Cheruvery Rugumani Amma (Mrs. Govindan) to read her essay on female education in Malayalam. An English translation of the same was read by Mrs. Pope (wife of a civil surgeon). In her essay Mrs. Govindan traced the causes of the ignorance and low position of Indian women. She located illiteracy of women as the main reason and it incited the reformers who were engaged in the task of uplifting the women to take action. In the concluding part of this essay Mrs. Govindan argued that female education could not be complete without the knowledge of domestic duties. She suggested to making domestic duties a compulsory part of the
syllabus of girl’s schools in Malabar. Mrs. Barlo who was an active member of *Stree Samajam* in Calicut went to Palaghat and took the initiative to start a *Stree Samajam* there in February 1904. The first two meetings of the *samajam* were held at Victoria College. Many innovative programmes were conducted at all India level in their associations. Conducting demonstration classes for the preparation of new recipes like puddings was one of their main activities. AIWC encouraged considering domestic science an essential part of female education. During the post- First World War period more women organizations were formed in Malabar. A branch of Women Indian Association was started in Calicut under the initiative of Margaret cousins. Annapoorni Ammal was the first President of the association.

When AIWC started its branches in Malabar women began working in these associations. The Educational section of AIWC meeting discussed the reforms of female education in India. The fourth session of AIWC was held at Bombay in 1930. They observed that more women should be trained as specialist teachers in domestic science as to make teaching of the subject progressive and efficient. They found it essential to lay the foundation of such teaching at the elementary school level. The meeting also recommended the University of Bombay to introduce a suitable syllabus including domestic science for women’s colleges. The committee recommended the inclusion of the following in the syllabus:

**The Home and its Environ.**

1. The domestic budget: accounting
2. Shopping.
3. Cooking (some new recipes).
4. Mending clothes.

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80 All India Women’s Conference 4th Session, Bombay, 20 to 24 January, 1930, p. 28.
81 Ibid, p. 248.
(5) Care and beautifying of the house: gardening.
(6) Care of domestic animals.82

Educational policy framed in the colonial period mainly focused on basic learning, improvement of domestic skills, moral education, and the study of religious texts. Education was also the means of setting the middle classes apart from the lower castes. The first cook book appeared in Malayalam in this context. The very first cook book, Pachakachinthamani by Velupillai, was published in 1893 with the financial assistance from the Rajas of Travancore.83 This book was included as a textbook in the girls schools of Travancore. The book, full of the recipes collected from the royal household of Cochin and Travancore, was suitable for the ordinary middle class homes. Apart from the culinary skills in colleges and schools, various domestic manuals and women’s journals began publishing recipes for the benefit of modern women. Other than this a number of periodicals and monthly magazines, English as well as Malayalam, published a number of recipes.

The introduction of new curriculum on cooking in educational institutions made the middle class women praise the act of cooking in the 19th and 20th century through the magazines and periodical edited by them. Towards the end of 19th century women of India emerges beyond their enclosed domestic space to large public sphere of literary activity. J. Devika assigned that the significant development of the late nineteenth century Kerala was the emergence of English educated class, which began to review the existent social order, ideas and institution in sharply critical terms. Scholarly attention focused upon the gradual emergence of a reading public, stressing the increasing circulation of newspapers and magazines, and also emergence of modern literature in Malayalam.

82 Proceedings, All India Women’s Conference (AIWC) Thirteenth Session, Delhi, December 20, 1938, p.135.
83 N. Velupilla, Pachakachintamani, Cook Book for the Girls Schools in Travancore, Madras, 1893.
This print culture promoted the ideals of culinary science through publication of recipes and other instructions for cooking.

**Aestheticizing the Culinary: Role of Food in Women’s Writing**

The first generation of western educated Indian women who wrote in English was one of important signs denoting the changing attitudes of western educated minds living in India. These women were the products of the complex modernizing process, constituted of gendered social reforms. Women’s magazines that began to appear in Kerala during the late nineteenth century are very important in this context. Besides this the spread of women’s associations or *streesamajams* has also been noticed. Accordingly women’s magazines as well as associations deal with a populace that was expected to already possess an explicit set of capacities considered ‘Womanly.’ Discussions within these areas dealt with the ways and means of nurturing these given qualities so as to best benefit modern society to overcome the obstacles and expanding it to reach an utmost number of women. Women’s magazines identified the sphere of modern domesticity as a domain seriously in need of ‘womanly’ capacities.

Magazines in Malayalam, the *Keraleeya Sugunabodhini* (1892), *Sarada* (1902) The *Indian Ladies Magazine* 1901 to 1937, *Lakashmi Vilasam* and *Lakshmibai* were entirely devoted to women’s matters. *Sarada*, the Malayalam magazine (monthly), started by two *Nair* ladies T.C. Kalayani Amma and B. Bhagirathi Amma, was published from Eranamkulam in the interest of ladies of Malabar. T.B. Kalayani Amma translated Mr. Brander’s, ‘Talk on Health’ into

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85 J. Devika, *OP. Cit.*, p.34.
86 *Keraleeya Sugunabodhini* was published from Thiruvanthapuram; *Sarada* was first published from Kochi and later from Thiruvanthapuram. *Lakshmibai* was published from Thrisur, see more references: Raghavan Puthupally, *Kerala Patrapravarttana Charitram*, History of Journalism in Kerala, Kerala Sahitya Akademi, Thrissur, 1985.
Malayalam for Kerala women. Sarada started publishing recipes in it since its first issue in the year 1904. The number of discussions of recipes by women proliferated from the end of the nineteenth century. Lakshmibai, another women’s journal, also took initiative in publishing a variety of recipes. The *Indian Ladies Magazine*, a magazine specifically for women, carried recipes by the editor. The first volumes from 1901 to 1915 were published from Madras and volumes from 1915 to 1930’s from Cannanore. Domestic matters and cookery was one of the important themes of the magazines. Keraleya sugunbodhini, the 19th century magazine, mainly contained among other things, philosophy, and science of body (sareera sasthram) advice about moral values duty of women science of cooking, history of noble (English) women and so on. All the magazines mentioned above added cookery as a special feature in each issue. In *Indian Ladies Magazine* cookery features were handled both by Anglo Indian and native ladies. These recipe columns included both European and Indian cuisine.

The recipe columns help us to understand how the process of hybridity began in cuisine. Cuisine and cooking style become more hybrids during this time. The nature of hybridity can be seen in the recipes published in these columns. For example, the recipe of mango flummery given in the *Indian Ladies Magazine* makes clear the importance of Indian fruits in the British cuisine. The recipe of Mango Flummery published in *Indian Ladies Magazine* is mentioned below:

Mango Flummery: put 8 large mangos (slightly unripe) in to oven and bake till soft, then peel and scrap all fruits from the seeds, sweeten to taste .whip the white of two eggs to shift forth, add the fruit and whip all well together place in

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the mould on the ice and cover it over to keep the air from it. Let it remain for several hours turn to glass dish and decorate with ratafia biscuits and crystallized fruits and served with white cream

*Indian Ladies Magazine* published number of recipes including European and South Indian. The preparation of Christmas cake, and number chocolate puddings and other recipes of Anglo–Indian cuisine were included in each volumes of this Magazine. Mango chutney, the delicious Indian cuisine appropriated by Anglo–Indian house wives, has important role in their menu. The recipes of pumpkin sherbet and coconut fruit cook pie are noticeable ones. The ingredients are a mixture of European and Indian items and most of these recipes are prepared in the European style of cooking. The recipe of coconut pie is an example for this. It is a European dish but the ingredients used for this preparation are Indian. Coconut is the main ingredient in this dish.

Coconut Cream Fruit pie

**Ingredients**

4tab sugar------3 Bananas,5tab cake flour,½ tab salt ,2 cup Milk ,1 baked 9inch pieshel,2 egg whites ,3 egg yolks ,2egg whites unbeated,1cup shredded of cocoanout,2 cup vanilla ,2tab water.

**Cooking Style**

Combine sugar, flour and salt in top of double boiler .Add milk and egg yolks mixing thoroughly .Place over rapidly boiling water and cook to minutes, stirring constantly. Remove from boiling water. Add ½ cup of cocoanut and vanilla. Cool slice 1 banana in to pie shell then fill cooled filling. Make meringue as follows: Place egg, whites, sugar salt and water in top of double boiler until thoroughly mixed place over rapidly boiling water and beat one minute, then remove fire and continue beating one minute or until mixture will stand in peaks. Add flavouring slice overlapping, around meringue. Sprinkle with remaining coconut.

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This is an Anglo Indian dish published in *Indian Ladies Magazine* for its readers. Hybridity became a frequent occurrence in the recipes find in most of the periodicals around this time. For example, a mutton chop recipe or a potato stew recipe contained ingredients like ghee or clarified butter, the latter mostly used for Hindu ritual practices.

Varieties of salad as an important part of British diet, how prepare these salads are new knowledge of Indian wives and they have interested in these new culinary experiences, through the readings of these magazines.94 Besides these culinary columns all the magazines addressed questions concerning Malayalees imaginations of self and caste specific marital practices and women’s role in arranging the domestic spaces and women’s reformation as a central issue contained articles published in it.95 The concept of nuclear domesticity was highly discussed in all areas of middle class life.

A common view of modern family consisting of husband, wife and children had become, around this period of time, the base for building a modern and progressive society. The titles of some of the articles are interesting and noticeable one, they communicate the idea of new domesticity among the Malayalees, some of titles are in rendered in this way, the *Grihakarayagal Suchitwam Souseelyam. Sthreekal ariyentava European Sthreekalude Soundarya Bhramam, Aroghya Sasthram, Kappi Sambradayam, Kudumpangalil Garbha Samrakshaneeyam* and number of hobbies like stamp collection etc. The domesticity of women clearly pictured in these magazines and journals. Dieting first time appear in the women’s magazines, where the concept of body changing among the middle class society. The *Indian Ladies Magazine* of May 1929 carries an articles on ‘Golden Rules of Health’, this article the main themes discussed about the body and diet. Most of the articles write in manner of

instructions given to the readers. They started to think about health and body. The new hygienic concepts are also developed during this time. These all are associated with the female domesticity and part of nuclear family spaces.

The social interaction of native Indian ladies and European ladies was promoted through this medium. This magazine reflected the aspiration of the middle class Indian ladies. They are trying to uplifting their status by following the manners and habits of western ladies. The works and meetings of the women’s clubs and associations of various parts of India discussed through this platform. Indian middle class ladies followed the tastes of European they have get real platform to share their ideas and thoughts about womanhood and domestic life through this magazine. These journals are monthly periodicals some edited by middle class Hindu women’s. One of the interesting fact is that male cooks were wrote recipes at the first issues, and later it was changed and women’s are become writers of these session.\textsuperscript{96} When women’s wrote recipes, they became active agents of the makers of taste. They became responsible for the creation of a modern cuisine, through these writings. These recipe columns aimed to teach modern women in the art of cooking. The readership of these magazines primarily came from women’s of the new middle class families. But cooking in public place becomes a professionalized job associated with masculinity. The cooking in domestic space distinguished as space of femininity. Professionalization of cooking or emergence of male cook in the middle class home was the outcome of this new domesticity emerged in 19\textsuperscript{th} and 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries.

**Professionalization Cooking and its Politics**

In the late 19\textsuperscript{th} century the advent of modernity changed domestic spheres of Malayalee. The act cooking and the role of women in domestic sphere are also

re defined due to this time. Utsa Ray in her study about the middle class Bengali cuisine, she describes that how much the aestheticisation women’s cooking in middle class domestic sphere of colonial Bengal.\(^{97}\) She noted that the non recognition of women’s skill private sphere. The kitchen work or cooking considered as duty of wife or women in domestic sphere in pre-colonial period was also. In the context of Malabar, for example the domesticity of Anthrjanams in Namboothiri illams was highly ritualized one, combined with considerable amount of domestic labour. J. Devika in her studies observed that the life of Anthrjanam in these homesteads was so miserable. She quoted an article which appeared in Lakshmibai, in 1907 that have proved to the non reorganization of women’s labour in the private sphere. That article signed the nature of Anthrajanam labour in the kitchen of these spheres. KPM the author of this article remarked that

Look at the homestead of the Namboothiris, who were esteemed for their wealth and noble birth. In many of these, which require one or two paras(a local measure of weight )of rice and adequate quantities of side dishes to go along with for meal, the whole burden of the cooking is carried by two or three Anthrajanams all by themselves. What’s more even during feasting on occasions like othootu, these women gather some of their female relatives prepare all the dishes quite effortlessly. Even Valalan (Bhima’s disguise in the Mahabharatha, as a skilled male cook) himself would himself would bow in assent if he saw these moon-faced maidens lift up huge vessels brimming with hot cooked rice with their bangle ,vine like, delicate arms and coolly tilting them to drain off the rice gruel, in full view.\(^{98}\)

The emergence of new domesticity in colonial period brought a sea of changes in the private sphere. With the breakdown of joint family system the necessity of having maids and servants increased. Earlier when a female member of the family did cooking, others served food to the children.\(^{99}\) Cooking becomes

more professionalized during this period. Cooking in the public sphere remained a masculine profession. Hiring cooks became a fashion in the middle class family during that period. Male cooks mostly belonged to the upper most rank in the caste hierarchy. They would be Brahmins. One reason behind the hiring of the Brahmin cooks has been cited by Swapna Banerjee in her studies on Colonial Bengal. Banerjee argues that the most significant distinction in the caste status of servants in colonial Bengal was in terms of purity and impurity of upper caste Hindus. Whereas the servants belonging to the lower caste would not have entry in to the kitchen, the Brahmin cooks have great demand at that time. These Brahmin cooks were known as oottupattanmar in the colloquial language. They were not Malayalee Brahmins, but migrants from Karanataka and Andhrapradesh. New food items like coffee were prepared at illams by these Pattar cooks. In Indulekha Chandu Menon has portrayed a male servant of Kesavan Namboothiri called Kuttipattar. Tamil Brahmin cooks were appointed for preparing coffee. Only men were allowed to drink coffee during that time. Women were permitted either to drink or prepare coffee. Restaurants and college hostels acknowledged cooking a male profession. The lower caste women also were appointed in middle class family as servants. But they did not have entry in to the kitchen. They mainly engaged in husking rice and other works outside the house. These classes were paid for in grain. The emergence of rice mills at that time lost them their opportunities. So colonialism discarded the economic side of women’s work. Edassery Govinda Nair his poem Nellukuthukari depicts the emergence of rice mills and the anxieties of working class women in the context of colonial Malabar. The role of women as housewives was reinforced during that time. Women’s cooking in the kitchen was an important debate during that time. For instance an article published in

Lakshmibai in 1906, discusses the nature of changing Malayalee home culture and the role of hired male cooks in upper middle class families. The author doubts the trustworthiness of these male servants in cooking. He stresses upon the importance of wife’s cooking for her husband. Projecting the examples of puranic heroines he argues that the true job of a wife is to serve her husband. Madavadas, the author of this article, advises women how to organize their household:

What are the true job vela of a wife? to serve her husband. Or else why would have Sitadevi and Damayanthi had to struggle in the interior of the jungle with their husbands. To follow those generous models is the duty of Kerala women . . . What is required for such unconditional services for their husbands? Wives must take care of cooking rice and other curries, making tea and coffee etc. Cutting firewood and gathering water could be trusted on the servants . . . Wives are trustable since they wouldn’t mix water, like many servants do, in the coffee if its quantity is less. It is really a mistake to not to allow them to do the kitchen tasks. Mainly officers commit this mistake. They do not even allow their wives to lean down and collect a single waste.

The above quote reflects the specific demarcations made between the loyalty or commitment of a servant and the faithfulness and dedication of a wife in the nuclear family background that clearly redefines the term gender and its different roles in domestic space and outside of the family. Woman as the nurturer has been prominent theme in the literature of the period. For instance Rabindranatha Tagore criticized the eating out culture of English educated middle class people of India. He observed the emergence of restaurants and hotels as a sign of the declining family system of India. In his opinion the lady of house was entirely different from the hired cooks, because she did not cook for wages. She cooked for her family.

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*Indian Ladies Magazine* discusses the servant problem in India. The British officials also faced the same problem. They wanted cooks and servants who were familiar with European cuisine. When the English came to India as merchants the scarcity of the ingredients used in the English food, paucity of European women, their intention to imitate the ruling class of India and the employing of the Indian cooks drastically changed the food customs of the British. They appropriated the native dishes and thoroughly modified them and on occasions hybridized the native food to suit their taste. Hence, the typical and distinctive Anglo-Indian cuisine emerged over a period of time due to negotiation and collaboration between the expatriate British and the local people. *Curry* and *mulligatawny* are the best examples to mention as to how they appropriated, modified and owned the South Indian dishes. The passion of ‘Memsabs’ for mouth watering dishes made them cross over the boundaries of India to distant lands. Mrs Beeton's Book of *Household Management* published in 1861 came out with her recipe for Indian curry-powder. In 1861 she found the historic Anglo Indian recipe from Dr Kitchener’s book *Apicus Redivivus, The Cook’s Oracle*, first published in 1817. She adapted this recipe and popularized it in her work. In late 1860s there were several versions of curry powder circulating in England and America. Soon the colonizer understood the potential marketability of these tasty cuisines and sold the packed forms of the powdered ingredients (curry powder) used in them even in the places of their birth.

However the increasing racialization of the British Raj after 1857, the domesticity of British in India became a more powerful signifier of Britishness. Diet and dress became a cultural artefact on which a sense of difference between British and their Indian subject was maintained. The changing domesticity helped the publication of cook books possible in the public sphere. Leong-Salobir in her discussions on the colonial cook books in India argues that the new ideas about sanitation in the medical and government circles have influenced the
domestic sphere also. These new ideas and concerns about sanitation were propagated through the household manuals and even cookbooks. Salobir noted that sanitation in the home was important not only for health but also to maintain the prestige of empire.\footnote{Leong –Salobir, \textit{The Culture of Food in Colonial South Asia}, Routledge, New York, 2005, p. 211.}

\textbf{Colonial Cookbooks and Domestic Manuals: A Replica of Ruling Elites}

The printing press and other developing technologies made a new genre of cook books possible in colonial India. These cookbooks were mainly for the middle class urban women. Vandana Gavasakar notes that most of these cook books were conceded around the world by European colonialist.\footnote{Vandana Gavasakar, ‘Domesticating Empire: Figuring Womanhood at Home and Abroad’, \textit{South Carolina Review}, Vol. 46, No. 1, September, 2013, pp. 24-38.} Victorian influence could be seen in the social and cultural articulation of the sphere of domesticity in the British homes and this became indistinguishable with the establishment and maintenance of Empire.\footnote{Ibid.} British subjects, here women, were to make home in the image of Empire. The cook books were one of the instruments to assert their identity in India.

Nupur Chaudhuri has opined that the British wives were part and parcel of the colonial social structure.\footnote{Nupur Chadhuri, \textit{Op. Cit.}, p.76.} These colonial wives, representing home culture in the alien land, celebrated birthdays. Each British woman came to the colonial world equipped with her original social and cultural patterns.\footnote{Ibid.} The boom in print culture created a wealth of information that addressed readers in personal and domestic terms: ‘The revolution in the reading habits of the nation meant a massive increase in the reading market for periodicals and new audiences from all classes of society which the proprietors and editors of new journals were keen to capture and conscript, often making use of a similar rhetoric of direct readily address to that deployed by Victorian novelists.’\footnote{Vandana Gavasakar, \textit{Op. Cit}, pp. 24-38.}
The contact zones of Empire were created within as well as outside England. Similarly, Usta Ray observes that the revolt of 1857 supplanted the rule of the East India Company in India with the direct rule by the crown. This was followed by a high degree of racialisation of colonial politics. The British residents in India tried to keep their distance from the natives. As Alison Blunt says, it was the time of the accumulation of imperial domesticity. Based on this phenomenon most scholars have reached a conclusion that it was to avoid the earlier Indian ensemble of food (which the British began to consider too native, rich and spicy to be included in their diet) that the British changed their diet after 1857. The revolt of 1857 was considered as turning point in the dynamics between the two cultures. Utsa Ray argued that this change was visible more in Wyvern’s *Culinary Jottings* than in any other record. Wyvern asked his readers to concentrate on simple meals. He explains that subject of cookery is worthy of study, and one to which English people would do well to give their attention He argued for a reformist cookery by which he implied a reformation of Anglo-Indian cooking. This reformist cookery meant to do away with even the use of curry powder in Anglo-Indian cooking. However, it was prescribed could not be called a typically English cuisine.

In most of the menus suggested by Wyvern the majority of the dishes were of French origin. From *The Indian Cookery Book*, published in 1869, it seems that so-called reformist endeavours of those who tried to erase whatever

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111 Ibid.
116 Ibid.
‘Indianness’ was left in British cuisine, were in vain. He launched a number of Hindustanti dishes in his book. The description of the author of this book who had stayed in India for thirty five years was not eager to do away with the kind of hybrid meals that prevailed before 1857.\footnote{Anonymous author, A Thirty-Five Years Resident, The Indian Cookery Book: A Practical Handbook to the Kitchen in India Containing Original and Approved Recipes in Every Department for Summer Beverages and Home-Made Liqueurs: Medicinal and Other Recipes Together With a Variety of Things Worth Knowing, Thacker, Spink & Co, Rpt., Calcutta, 1869, p. 71.}

Jennifer Brennan’s memoir of India makes it clear that hybridity was a part of the British cuisine even in the 20th century. Brennan was born in India in1935.\footnote{Anonymous, The Duties of Servants: A Practical Guide to the Routine of Domestic Service, Frederic Warne & Co, (Publication year Unknown).} She admits that the lunch or tiffin that the British had in the 20th century was much not heavy than in the previous century. This tiffin, for example, included spiced tomato soup with saffron cream, cool green almond, water cress soup and similar items. Brennan acknowledges that they went on having cucumber raita (yogurt dish), tamatar bhujia (a vegetarian dish made out of tomatoes), machi kebab (fish kebab), saagghosh (mutton with spinach), aam murghi (chicken with mangoes), pathan chicken pilaf, dhal charchari, and jhalfraizie for lunch.\footnote{Jennifer Brennan, Curries and Bugles: A Cook Book of the British Raj, Penguin Book, New Delhi, 1990, p. 145.} The cook books published during that period makes it obvious that rice was consumed by most Europeans families at breakfast, tiffin and dinner. The cook book writers valorised French tastes in their writings. Varieties of French cuisine became the part of these manuals. The manuals and cook books carried details on the preparatory methods of Portuguese dishes like bindalao or vindalo. Bindalo is a well known Portuguese curry made of beef, pork or duck. In these dishes they used Indian Ingredients and vegetables. Thus the Colonial modernity turned out to be a two way process. Indians received new fruits and vegetables and the British started to include Indian ingredients in their cooking, even though they kept away from Indian styles of cooking.
Collingham argues that the new cookbooks were specifically written for the British women in India who wanted to create a home environment in the colony. Thus the focus was more on cheese crumb croquettes, thick kidney soup, and Yorkshire pudding rather than on curries and Indian *pulaos*. However, there was a counter-part of this experience; the experience of the Indians. Pleasures that became available to the entire world grew out of this experience. This experience was essentially hybrid. The new Indian recipe books that were being written contained both British and Indian recipes. As Arjun Appadurai observes in his essay on cookbooks in contemporary India, ‘food overcame its moral and medical overtones and led to the emergence of a national cuisine only after independence’. Appadurai explicates that new cookbooks were a result of the popularity of the print media and the cultural ascend of the new middle-classes.

A vast majority of the population was distant from the process of modernity. So the modern cuisine that emerged as the result of the work of middle class women did not find market for itself until very recently. This lack of commercialization of hybrid cuisine actually became a marker of the superiority of the newly educated middle class discourses. Although capitalist modernity ushered in by colonialism often denuded women’s work of its economic content, in many ways capitalism also created a new space for middle class women. This space was created by the Malayalee middle-class women themselves who began writing about food. In many ways the capitalism created a new space for middle class women. The colonial discourse on the nature of cooking has transformed in a significant way. It becomes more gendered than in pre-colonial period.

122 Ibid.