CONCLUSION

The preceding inquiry into the food ways of colonial Malabar portrait the in-depth interwoven of food, society, culture and economy in colonial Malabar. The study explains that, instead of physical necessities, food act as the pivotal cultural resources by which people maintain a symbolic distances in the society. The social and religious powers used food as a tool to operate and made a medium to demarcate the distances in the society, such as the pure and impure, upper caste and lower caste, the colonizer and the colonized. In recent years the interdisciplinary approaches of History made ‘food’ as the metaphor into the academic pursuits and analysed various power relations, prevailed in the social order. Pierre Bourdieu explained the concept of ‘taste’ as a social weapon and socially conditioned object by the choice of an individual that reflects the symbolic hierarchy, which is determined and maintained by the dominant group in social order for enforcing their distance and distinction. Based on these kinds of theoretical aspirations the study has critically analysed the praxis of religion, social norms, gender etc. underwent the making of food and cuisine in colonial Malabar, which were already being redefined and reformulated under the impact of colonialism.

The process of Colonialism made tremendous change in the food culture of the colonialized subjects. The food and food ways used as focal point in the studies about the cultural changes of colonialism in the World. The structural process like Colonialism, Modernity, Urbanisation and Globalization had its impact on the food culture through the process of acculturation, delocalization, commodification, consumerisation etc. These elements made considerable influence in the making of food and cuisine in the society of Malabar. Modernisation and technological advancement had opened up new dimensions in
the process of eating and dietary practices. The conversion of existing ‘traditional’ agrarian system in to the ‘modern’ agrarian policy changed the discourses on food and cuisine in the Malabar.

The sociology of food in pre-colonial society was closely associated with the caste and social norms. The language of food is very complicated when it involves in the practice of religion and rituals, which hyperlinked with worshiper and deity, servant and master and husband and wife. The power relations and social hierarchy were clearly encoded and reflected in the transactions and practices of food. Rituals had a capability to define and redefine the power and social structures of caste hierarchies, through various symbols and signs by taking ‘food’ as one of the agency. The dietary practices and food offerings of Malabar strengthened the position of hierarchies that uprooted in the society. The offering of vegetarian food and non-vegetarian food conveys wider messages on the social norms practiced among various castes in Malabar. The religious concept of ‘purity’ and ‘impurity’ was deeply encoded by the practice of ‘Vegetarianism’ and ‘Non-Vegetarianism’. This is the basic tool to classify the god and goddess as ‘pure’ and ‘impure’ based on menu of food offered. The ‘Vegetarian’ deities considered as ‘higher’ and the ‘Non-vegetarian’ deities considered as ‘lower’ position in Hindu pantheon. The worship of the folk deities with non-vegetarian food and toddy like *Muthappan, Parakutty, Gulikan, Mariyamma* etc. are popular among the non-Brahmins of Malabar. Politics of food offering used to justify the superiority of so-called Vedic religion by the backup of Hindu philosophies.

Development of agrarian society and subsequent growth of Brahmin supremacy paved the way for the growth of division of labour and the introduction of caste system in the Medieval Kerala. Caste system had a considerable influence on all aspects of Malabar society. Each social group had
their own culture and behavioural pattern that reflected in their dietary practices. Manners and habits of eating not only display intricacies of hierarchy but also crucial to the very definition of community, the relationship between the people, interaction between men and their Gods and communication between living and dead.

The concept of pollution is thickly woven with the practices of cooking and dining. Upper castes of Malabar had the right to design the mode of behaviour and the actions of lower class without any limit, marriage ceremonies of the downtrodden of Malabar is the best example for that. The lower class people of the region under study were not allowed to serve pappadam, sugar and payasam during marriage ceremonies and the upper caste of Malabar used ‘beef eating practice of lower castes’ as a metaphor for excluding the from the main stream so called Hinduisim. Later the modernised people used the concept of Vedic religious tradition to criticise the eating of animals, (propounded Ahimsa) particularly the eating of cow. The Paraya community of Malabar insisted the practice of eating dead cow of upper castes demonstrates the fact that it was a means to marginalise the lower caste from the social hierarchies of the society Malabar

The power is communicated through various ‘signs’ for example, offering food to priest is glorified as a divine act similar to the practise of food offering towards a deity. Annadanam, is a ceremony of giving food to the hungry that practiced and glorified in all religions. The major temples of Kerala had separate places for dining, called ‘oottupura’. The Muslim community practiced ‘nercha’– a system of annadanam in the mosques as ritual. The major aims of nerchas are to maintain values within the community. Annadanam, nercha and oottu are the political forms of gastronomy which taken by the religion to encode the power conflicts. The ritualistic fasting is another religious practise to signify the various discourses on the social hierarchies which prevailed in the society.
The power conflicts between men and women in the domestic sphere were deeply coded by various gastro-political forms like fasting and feastings.

Women were responsible for maintaining ritual purity at home in terms of fasting. The gender relations and power relations of pre-colonial Malabar were interconnected with agrarian culture. Hence most of the customs and beliefs were associated with food crops in one way or another. Later on, the changes in production relations transformed society from traditional cultivation of food crops to cash crops.

The British colonial intervention and the rapid social transformation in the 19th and 20th century changed many practices associated with food and cuisine in the society of Malabar. The concept of ‘Colonial Modernity’ redefined social and economic spheres of the colonized World. The modernity transformed traditional agricultural sector, and introduced new ‘foreign’ food in culinary practices of colonized world. The ‘hybridity’ of food, which would, have been possible without the Columbian Exchange. As a result, many new food producing plants introduced in different parts of the region. The concept of ‘global cuisine’ became popular during the course of time. These experiments present new gastronomic pleasures in material life of the colonized subjects especially among the middle class, they were ready to accept these new experiments like drinking of tea and coffee, in their life as part of self-fashoning. But the traditional Hindu communities rejected these changes in the name of religion and caste.

Modern education and changes in the economy broadened the outlook of the individuals. The ‘westernization’ promoted the ideas like secularism egalitarianism and rationalism among the educated Indians. It brought occupational changes in the traditional way life and the caste system was critically redefined in this period and led reform movements against caste system through various social and caste organisations like various establishments of
Theosophical Society, and *Samudaya Bahishkarana Sangham* formed in the 20th century Malabar.

The social reformers used food as a weapon in their struggles against the traditional caste system. The social reform struggles in Malabar conducted inter dining practises against the caste system prevailed in Malabar. The politics of inter dining movement was questionable in many ways. The reform leaders started their food culture with Brahiminical food logic. Their magazines and publications promoted Brahiminical food culture and the ideology of ‘Sankritistion’ influenced these movements. In the 20th century the adoption of vegetarianism across a range of situation even by Kerala’s lower castes reveals a capitulation to Brahiminical logics and to underlying conviction that Vegetarian foods are somehow purer and superior in some ways non-vegetarian food. The Inter dining movement imbricated by the middle class social reformers but intangibly it was a colonial fabrication. The response of the middle class reformers towards colonial conditions was multi-faceted and they articulated it through various gastro political forms. The hunger strike of Indian national movement was a sign of their protest against the alien culture. It was powerful way of struggle in the political issues which were effectively used by Indian national leaders in their struggles.

Tradition and modernity was always a debatable issue in the social and political discourses of Indian nationalism. Nationalist leaders put forward a theory that traditional food ways are more superior to health than western food habits by claiming the argument that foreign food was not suit for Indian climate. The new diet proposed by the Allopathic physicians vehemently criticised by the national leaders. The discourse on Ayurveda and its dietary practices were used as a resistance in the struggle against modernity.

Middle class discourse on tradition and modernity articulate through the
various culinary practices they followed. As the result of colonial modernity new middle class intelligentsia emerged and they accepted colonial practices, similarly they also indigenized culinary practices and used as a tool to protect their self-identity which separate them from others. The development of new hotels and coffee house culture enabled the middle class people to experience the new taste outside home. The breakup of the joint family system and the subsequent emergence of nuclear families created a space new domesticity, this become the lab for new culinary experiments.

Colonial discourses of education were capable to define the act of cooking as a ‘feminine duty’. The Victorian ideas categorized the process of cooking through the separate curriculum prepared for girl’s schools generally in India and Malabar in particular. Knowledge of cooking, needle work and family management were part of the syllabus. Domestic science included as compulsory subject in the female schools in Madras presidency. Thus colonial modernity treated women’s education as a way to enter in to the house hold of the colonised.

The new ideology of domesticity witnessed an emergence of a new cultural artefact-cook book, during the period. The emergence of print capitalism also enabled a space for the middle class women to write the cook books, which enriched new type of cuisine and hybrid food practices in the colonial societies. Middle class women nationally linked their culinary experiences through this cook books and recipe columns published in women’s magazines. Cookbooks in contemporary India were published only after independence and food overcame its moral and medical overtones and led to the emergence of a national cuisine. The popularisation of cook books and the concept of national cuisine became the matter of discussion only after post-independence period. Exchange of recipes
which cut across regional barriers reflected an emerging culinary cosmopolitanism in the cities and towns of India.

The globalization changed the consumption history of all regions in the world. The McDonaldisation is an attempt to make foreign taste as a familiar one through the creative response. The restaurants thus should be regarded as a part of system of the social codes; as institutionalized and commercialized venues, restaurants also provide a valuable window through which to explore the social meanings of food consumption. Introduction of fast food culture in Malabar is mainly due to the high rate of Gulf migration. Indian fast food industries are not new; the primitive versions were developed in the latter half of the 19th century in the presidency towns such as Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. It was mainly a response to the needs of some people those who had entered in the colonial political economy and they have long distance from home to work. One part of menu on which the restaurants thrived was at least in name, English or French, cutlets, chops, omelette and so on. In the early period, the eating outside home considered as a taboo among many castes and religion.

The women’s magazines in the colonial period were reachable only to the elite middle class and upper castes of the society. But in the contemporary period, such magazines were easily accessible to each and every sections of the society of Malabar. Hence such a way magazines popularised new culinary practices in the society.

The attitude of women were much influenced by these popular magazines such as Vanith, Grihalakshmi,etc. and these magazines published articles with number of food recipes. These magazines are brought by migrants or middle class villagers with aspirations towards a modern and sophisticated life. They also learn to cook pasta; pizza, stuffed chicken, and chocolate cake so on from
the cookery programs telecasted by Malayalam channels. The acceptance of new cooking culture became part and parcel of *Malayalee* life. This change in culinary realm makes the food as global one.

On the basis of these discussions it can be argued that food and its preparation, distribution, tastes and consumption are not a simple social process of everyday life in human society. Within the society food serves number of meanings including the provision of nutrients, the prolongation of tradition and symbol of religious ideologies. Food in colonial Malabar was the site of multiple connotations during the colonial and postcolonial period. The conceptual representation of ‘Malabari Food’ indicates the geographical regions like Arabia, Chinese, Portuguese and English etc. with its political and historical entity.