CHAPTER FOUR

DOMESTIC FOODWAYS: TOWARDS INDUSTRIAL FOOD?

While dealing with the domestic foodways the Anthropologists, for analytical purposes, classify the food related activities into various phases as parts of the food system. The term "food system" is used frequently in discussions about nutrition, food, health, community economic development and agriculture. The food system includes all processes involved in keeping us fed: growing, harvesting, processing (or transforming or changing), packaging, transporting, marketing, consuming and disposing of food and food packages. It also includes the inputs needed and outputs generated at each step. The food system operates within and is influenced by social, political, economic and natural environments. In this chapter I will describe the domestic foodways as parts of food system and trace the movement toward industrial food. Goody (1987) provides a conceptualisation of food system, which is oft quoted.

At the backdrop of previous anthropological works Jack Goody (1987) sets his own observations on cooking in West Africa. He criticizes earlier approaches, which overlook the comparative historical dimension of culinary, and other cultural differences that emerge in class societies. The central question that Goody addresses in his book is why a differentiated 'haute cuisine' has not emerged in other parts of the world. His account of cooking in West Africa is followed by a survey of the culinary practices of the major Eurasian societies throughout history - ranging from Ancient Egypt, Imperial Rome and medieval China to early modern Europe - in which he relates the differences in food preparation and consumption emerging in these societies to differences in their socio-economic structures, specifically in modes of production and communication. He concludes with an examination of the worldwide
rise of ‘industrial food’ and its impact on Third World societies, showing that the ability of the latter to resist cultural domination in food, as in other things, is related to the nature of their pre-existing socio-economic structures.

In his view providing and transforming food can be conceptualised in terms of five main processes, each process representing a distinct phase and taking place in a characteristic location, as shown in table 4.1.

**TABLE 4.1**

**FOODWAYS ACCORDING TO GOODY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Processes</th>
<th>Phases</th>
<th>Locus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Growing</td>
<td>Production</td>
<td>Farm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allocating/storing</td>
<td>Distribution</td>
<td>Market/Granary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking</td>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>Kitchen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating</td>
<td>Consumption</td>
<td>Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clearing up</td>
<td>Disposal</td>
<td>Scullery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Taking clue from Goody’s typology, Anthropologists identify five sets of foodways in the domestic sphere: 1) food production and distribution, 2) procuring and provisioning, 3) cleaning and storing, 4) food preparation and serving, and 5) clearing and cleaning. These five sets make up the food system of a given society. I will attempt to elucidate them in the study area.

**FOOD PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION**

In addition to autobiographic reflections a focussed fieldwork has been conducted in Village Taleigao, Taleigao Market, Nagali, Donapaula, and Caranzalem with the help of an interview guide to find out the changing foodways. In village Taleigao food production is actually taking place. The low-lying areas are fields
where two crops are grown, main paddy crop and after that vegetables. In the areas
where underground water table is high two crops are grown. Entire Taleigao village is
gifted with high underground water table. The first and the primary crop is paddy in
the monsoon. Before the onset of monsoon the fields are cleaned of weeds, ploughed,
manure put, and prepared for sowing and implantation (see plate 4.1). Though a few
houses still rear bullocks for ploughing and transporting manure (see plate 4.2), the
small tractors have entered the scene. Several varieties of rice were traditionally
grown in Goa but with the arrival of shorter varieties introduced by Green Revolution
these varieties have disappeared.

The crop that followed the paddy crop is known as porsum. Soon after the
paddy harvest, the farmers of village Taleigao would grow on the same fields quick
crops such as chillies, tomatoes, onions, sweet potatoes, pumpkins, watermelons and
other vegetables. Temporary wells were dug for them as the water was available at a
low depth of about six to ten feet, and water was drawn out and channelled to the
vegetable fields. Some times watering the vegetable plants is done every morning and
evening manually with the help of pots. At the end of the season, in April, these wells
were buried and the ground levelled for the paddy crop.

Usually the womenfolk sell these vegetables either in Taleigao market or take
them to Panjim (see plate 4.3 showing women who are busy in selling the vegetables
grown by them). The Corporation of the City of Panjim has provided a separate place
for these women in the market yard. Those villagers who do not have a fixed place
sell their produce to those who regularly sit there.

Goans attach much importance and pride in consuming locally grown
vegetables and fruits, which they call gaunti (of the Gaun, or village or local) as
opposed to ghanti or from above the Ghats or mountains. In Goa the identity question
is very pertinent. Even a food item is used to demarcate the *inside* from the *outside*. The latter refers to the vegetables and fruits that come from above the Ghats or the Sahyadri ranges mainly from Northern Karnataka. They include beans, carrot, beetroot and the like. Though many of these vegetables are cheaper to the former, the women selling local vegetables and fruits have brisk trade thanks to the extension of political notions of Goan and non-Goan to the realm of taste. Those whom I talked to near these local vegetable vending women told me that the *gaunti* vegetables and fruits are tastier. They have a pragmatic reason why it is so: The local cultivator uses traditional manure. Some customers want to help the hardworking Goan women who sell these vegetables. Needless to say those whom I met are from Goa.

I attempted to know the extent of the preferences for locally grown food items such as rice, coconut and salt among the 350 women interviewed with the help of a guide, which included questions on their preferences. The graphic representation of the answers is given in the figure 4.1. This figure cannot be used to generalise the preferences for entire Goa, for these 350 women are from the study area whom I met purposively without any sampling exercise. The figure only indicates the prevalent ideas.
Plate 4.1 PREPARING FOR PADDY PLANTATION
PLATE 4.2 BULLOCK CART
STILL USED
4.3 Woman Selling Locally Grown Vegetables
14.3 WOMEN SELLING LOCALLY GROWN VEGETABLES
4.4 A country boat with its net ready to sail to sea
L.S. FISH CATCH IN SHALLOW WATER
In Taleigao such vegetables as ladies finger, *tendli*, *tamdi bhaji*, pumpkin, drumstick and *brinjals* are grown. Many of the vegetables are season specific available in plenty in certain seasons. Therefore looking at the vegetables available in the market one can make out the season. The preference for the local is extended to coconuts and coconut oil too. Those who sell coconut also keep with them coconut oil in old alcohol bottles. Many tourists mistake these bottles for feni bottles. The women selling coconut oil now grumble that the popularisation of new bottled coconut oil has affected their business. In Goa coconut oil is used only for smearing on the body and head before bath. It is not the cooking medium as it is in other coastal areas.

When I visited the fields where vegetables are grown I observed that mostly the elder members of the family are engaged in the work in the field along with unmarried daughters. The grownup boys usually do not help in the manual work in the field. The farmers who grew vegetables did so, not only for economic reasons,
though it is the main reason. They have been doing so since their childhood and they loved doing so and got pleasure out of the job. All villagers do not possess land and all are not involved in this primary activity. The neighbours who own fields give extra vegetables to the neighbours. A lady in the field says: "I give some fruits and vegetables to my neighbours and relatives. They feel happy and it also helps to maintain good relations. When I need their help they readily oblige me." It can be said that locally produced food acts as a linkage between the individual families and the larger community.

Along with coconut villagers grew varieties of fruits in the garden around their houses. The study of essays by historians on food production informed that the sea routes discovered by the Portuguese contributed to the circulation of food items across the globe. This route linked Goa with Africa, Europe, and Latin America. Gracias et al. (273- 287) give a detailed account of global migration of food items during the Portuguese colonial period. Their examination shows that the Portuguese used various methods to introduce food habits, recipes and related customs. Though people of all communities in Goa have been influenced by the Portuguese cuisine, the influences from the outside world are more evident among the Christian community than the Hindus and Muslims.

In Mennel's (1992: 75) review of sociology of food, the impact on food of colonialism and migration has been recognised as an area less researched by the sociologists than anthropologists and historians. These essays, though scarce, by historians and anthropologists are of much use to sociologists to know about the migration of foodstuffs, delocalisation of food supply along with migration of people. The travelling overseas, followed by colonialism and widespread migration has brought about a two-way exchange of foods: the import of staple products and other
food stuffs from the colonised to the colonising countries and vice versa. The most well known examples are potatoes, maize, sugar cane and salt. These products travelled around the world and were incorporated in foreign diets, each in its own way. In his developmental perspective on food Goody considers this an example of development of ‘world cuisine’.

The course of the development of ‘world cuisine’ may be conceived in terms of three phases in world history. The first is the geographical discoveries and the founding of the new world consisting of the United States, Canada, and Australia. These places were melting pots made of people from diverse places on earth. People migrated here with their food items and cuisine. The second is the phase of industrial revolution facilitating colonialism and empire building. With this phase the possibilities for exchange of people and foods were enormously enhanced. After the Second World War, the third phase, the colonial empires slowly crumbled away. With this the process of migration did not come to an end. On the contrary, new waves of migration and flow of people in the form of tourism took place and continue to take place.

These processes of colonisation, decolonisation and migration have had implications for introduction of new food items and foodways. At least for Goa these changes have implications for evolution of unique culinary practices, which are almost absent in other parts of India. Adding to this the Portuguese connection in this part of the subcontinent introduced several new food and fruit varieties.

The Portuguese brought goods to India for their own consumption, or as a part of their trade. They carried them to other areas in Asia. Food products and recipes came from such far places as Brazil. From the routes discovered by the Portuguese came a host of plants/roots producing fruits and vegetables never seen or heard before.
such as potato, tomato, chew nut, pimento, papaya, passion fruit, pumpkin, aubergine, pineapple and guava. According to Nandakumar Kamat, a Botanist (quoted in Coelho and Sen 2001: 149) “the Portuguese imported about 300 species of useful plants to India, and Goa was her chief emporium. For example, cashew, chickoo, papaya, and tobacco came to India through Goa. Chilly came in via the Portuguese...as well as guavas and pineapples...Before Vasco-da-Gama, India did not cultivate sweet potatoes, tapioca, tomatoes, or pumpkins.”

In the same way as food varieties came to Goa they also migrated from Goa. Goans carried recipes of how to prepare sorpotel, Goan sausages and prawn curry to various places in British India, Burma, Australia, Canada, Europe, the Americas, Africa to name a few. Many of these especially Goan food items are now distributed outside Gôa through a network of international marketing.

Fishing is an important economic activity in food production throughout the 105 km long coastline in Goa. Alvares (2002: 173) estimates that around 40,000 to 50,000 people are dependent on fish harvesting for a living and states “it is difficult to overstate the importance of this commodity in either the Goan economy or diet.” Stating further the significance of fish in Goan diet Alvares writes:

Walk into any restaurant and half the menu is composed of seafood. Visit any Goan family at lunch and you are served fish curry. Travel in many a bus in Goa and your nostrils are assailed by the smell of fish being transported to the market or being carried home.”

Fish catch constitute an important primary occupation concerning food in Donapaula area where there are no fields but only riverside. Except for the fisher folk families in the Dona Paula region other houses adjacent to the Zuari River own small country canoes that are taken early morning to the sea via the river mouth for fish
catch (see plate 4.4). A few families in the region own mechanised fishing vessels. They use them for commercial fishing. The small country canoe owners primarily fish for daily consumption. If the crew arrives back with plenty of fish the women take the catch to market after earmarking for domestic consumption. The practice in most Goan fisher folk families is for the husband to go out fishing and for the wife to take the produce to the market. The fisherwoman is one of Goa's familiar sights.

In village Taleigao I have also noticed the primary food production activity of domestication of pigs and hens for domestic consumption as well as commercial purposes. The women are the custodians of this activity. Those who are rearing pig said that initially they started to rear pig for two reasons: scavenging and business. The use of septic toilets is a recent phenomenon in Goa. The villagers were attending to nature's calls either in the isolated places covered with bushes near by the residence or in pig toilets. Found in traditional Christian households these toilets were built on a platform with an opening on the rear end. Pigs wait from that end for excreta. Pigs were, in this sense, scavengers. They used to eat human excreta and also used to live on left over food items from the owner's and neighbours' houses. After fattening, the pigs are sold either directly or in the form of pork meat in the Sunday market. Even sausages are made at home and sold. Domestication of pigs has now become a habit for many women and even after the construction of septic toilets villagers are still continuing tending pigs. The pig has set some routine for a woman's life. The routine includes such chores as bringing leftover food and rice cleaned water from the neighbours and properly storing them and cleaning the pig-stay.
Consumption related domestic foodways

Many foodways centre on food consumption. These foodways are mundane and taken for granted, therefore, the contribution of those who participate in them go unnoticed. For analytical purposes these foodways are identified as: procuring and provisioning, cleaning and storing, preparation and serving, and clearing and cleaning. These are also the activities associated with food. I wanted to know who in the domestic domain are associated with these activities and what they think about these activities and what are the recent trends.

The sociologists of food in Europe have given considerable attention to these foodways. They had extensively dealt with food linkages in the household. A useful review of such works is available in Beardsworth and Keil (1997: 75-99). Mary Douglas, a structural anthropologist describes foodways in the family as marking the boundaries of the family. By following an unusual methodological strategy of studying culinary practices in her own family, she first argues that there is a crucial distinction between drinks and meals. Meals are sequenced through the day and their elements are linked together in pre-determined combinations and successions of courses. Drinks, on the other hand, are not so organised. Her main aim was to find out the universal meaning structure that underlies food consumption. She finds that the people with whom they shared meal are close to them, and, with strangers and not so close people they shared only drinks.

Consumption related foodways within the family communicate more than the meaning structures in structural sense. They exhibit certain linkages between families and show the positioning and privileges of members of the family. They show even power distribution within the family. Theopano and Curtis (1991) through their in depth study of two Italian-American families in an industrial suburb of Philadelphia
demonstrated the multiple linkages that foodways can establish. The families belonged to a close-knit community, which they referred to by the pseudonym ‘Maryton’. Their findings make it very clear that women bear the main responsibility for sustaining domestic and social life and maintaining social networks. They conclude that through the food system, women express and maintain their social positions in the community.

The positive picture of women’s dealings with foodways found in the above study may not be taken as universal. Dealings with food need not always make women powerful in the domestic and community set up. However studies conducted from feminist perspectives identify foodways at home as reinforcing gender stereotypes and perpetuating gender discrimination. For long it has been assumed that women wield considerable power at home acting as ‘gatekeepers’ controlling the flow of foods into the household and controlling the channels through which food reaches the table. However, McIntosh and Zey (1989) and others demonstrate that though women deal with food they do not have control over it. Actually the earning male members (father and husband) exercise power in making food related decisions.

In my field area the women attend to the chores related to food. All jobs associated with foodways such as procuring and provisioning, cleaning and storing, preparation and serving, and clearing and cleaning are attended to and managed by the women.

In a few cases of husband and wife working outside the home the male members participated in procuring and provisioning. The women who go for selling vegetables and fish did this work also. I have noticed the joint participation in these works in the upper class settlements in Donapaula area.
Today the kitchen lay out has undergone a total change. The prototype of Goan kitchen in figure 3.4 is found in only a few households I visited. Such a reorganisation of modern kitchen has made some to lament the disappearance of the traditional kitchen (Rodrigues: 2000). It is modern and fitted with latest gadgets including a Refrigerator, Washing machine, Mixer/Grinder and the much needed cooking gas facility. Even in the villages firewood is used for certain purposes like heating water for bath or boiling home grown paddy. Every house possesses cooking gas with essential equipment. Kitchens are now stylishly designed giving a show of sophistication compared to the traditional kitchens. Much of the kitchen tools are now limited. (Even desiccated coconut and masalas are available in readymade packages. Grinding is slowly vanishing.) The heavy (cooking for large number) type of cooking is hardly possible in modern day kitchens. Hence majority of items available as pre-cooked food items in markets and stores. These are stored at home as long as they have shelf life.

**Housewives and Foodways**

A housewife or an adult woman was to look after the four major foodways of 1) procuring and provisioning, 2) cleaning and storing, 3) food preparation and serving, and 4) clearing and cleaning.

Three hundred and fifty housewives were met and inquiries were made about the type of food items they prepared at home and those purchased from outside. They were also asked about the food preferences of the members whether they preferred the traditional food items or the latest food stuffs sold in the market. About seventy percent declared that they consumed certain items that were basically traditional but the technique and the ingredients used varied from one individual to another. Village housewives strictly prepared traditional menus, for example, paddy rice by those who
owned fields. They also prepared coconut curry by grinding the masala with the use of grinding stones. Most of them consumed fish and vegetables. For breakfast they either purchased locally baked fresh bread or made chapattis at home. The employed housewives usually made use of electrical gadgets for cooking like grinder, cooking gas as shown in table 4.2.

TABLE 4.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SI No</th>
<th>Techniques</th>
<th>Frequency of use</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Use of old fashion grinding stone</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Modern gadgets for cooking</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Preserving items (para, pickle, salt fish)</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Storing of items before the onset of monsoon</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of them used readily available masala and various items available at local stores. Career women in charge of cooking preferred food items that could help save time and which could be cooked easily. Time is the important factor, which has compelled many a housewives to resort to purchase foodstuffs that are ready to eat precooked items or take away food. For example, stalls opened at different points in this area sell cooked food comparable to that of house preparation. Many plan their meals in such a way that house members outside the home often consume lunch. The housewives state that the children always carried tiffin boxes to school. Now they prefer to purchase snacks from the school canteen. In the Donapaula area, the family assembles only for the dinner.
TABLE 4.3
WHO COOKS AT HOME?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Housewife</th>
<th>Husband and wife</th>
<th>Husband Grown up children</th>
<th>Maids</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Taleigao village</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Nagali</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Donapaula</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Caranzalem</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>350</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in the table 4.3 the well to do families of the Donapaula area have housemaids who make most of the cooking. Women, both working and housewives, in this area manage procuring and provisioning. On the basis of their location the households may be classified as semi rural and new settlements. Donapaula is an example of a new settlement in Goa. The number of new settlements has been increasing. In these new settlements a clear trend towards industrial food has been noticed. These settlements depend on the market for ready-made food. As testimonies of emerging industrial food new influences such as ‘curry in hurry’ and ‘tiffin service’ can be identified. ‘Curry in a hurry’ is a brand name of packed fish curry powder. Use of this readymade masala saves time for the housewives. This brand is becoming popular among diasporic Goans too. Some houses prepare food in large scale and as per orders supply lunch and supper in tiffin boxes. This service is fast gaining popularity among the working couple and also the elderly. As the interest in industrial food is observed more in the new urbanised settlements this study generates a hypothesis that more the urbanisation of an area higher will be the use of industrial food.