

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The primary purpose of this dissertation is to explore the place of food scholarships in the cultural life of Mising community. This chapter focuses mainly on the basic premises of all the chapters. The need for the development of food studies is observed and an analytical study has been made to analyze the strong need of this area as a field of research.

The introductory chapter sets the outline of the research and throws light on the framework of the whole research work. The general overview of the study is focused by statement of the problem, review of literature, area of research, followed by themes limitations of the study and chapterization of the work is stated. A case for an academic study of food culture is made in this chapter with reference to Mising food culture.

The following chapter incorporates with the historiography of the subject and an overview is given on the concept of writing historiography and its problem. This chapter provides us ideas about the importance of food studies, local history, and theoretical concept on historical methods with oral history to study food in different framework. This chapter is divided into various sub- chapters which deal with different aspects.

A detailed account of food studies and oral history and historical methods are discussed. It describes mainly three points; how historiography becomes a problem, the impact and nutritional structure of Mising food, how to locate Mising community from the perception of food. Along with these, this chapter also analyzes some case studies centred on their beliefs, customs and nutritional support of food.

The third chapter incorporates with the representation of food in various aspects of life including ceremonies, festivals, rituals etc. In doing this, the migratory history of Mising community is also discussed in this chapter. In addition to the economy, seasonal cycle and food production are discussed. The study also provides us with a detailed description of the preparation methods of various recipes of Mising community. How the life of this society

is related to every day food is also included in the discussion. Along with these, the chapter also discusses on methodological problem with regard to research in food, different methods like folklore, ethnographic and oral sources are also the part of the study. The researcher has directly linked with the fieldwork and the account of Mising community with the contemporary reality is also analyzed in the concluding part of the chapter. Many aspects of Mising life are not recorded and are thus brought out only by fieldwork and this is a clear empirical base of this chapter that is also original.

The fourth chapter provides the theoretical framework on gender relations to food and the involvement of women in kitchen spaces. It starts with an idea about how the concept of gender is related to this community and thus constructed the nature of gender identity.

This chapter begins with the discussion of folk beliefs, narratives and eating practices to establish the role of women in response of culinary practices of Mising society. The theoretical discussion on kitchen and space which follows by gender, power, and culinary practices give the idea on gender relationships to food. The researcher has also thrown light on representation of women in the context of food to shed light on women as the provider of food.

It is observed that the trend of kitchen and dining space as well as food and space is a very enhancing area of food research. Case studies are discussed to analyze the role of gender in Mising society. It is observed that the insecurity of food is a common phenomenon and thus a serious topic of discussion. Food has always linkage with nature. With the changes in time, the connections between nature and culture have changed which lead to the problem like food insecurity.

The fifth chapter discusses the problem of locating Mising culture in a globalized world. The phenomenon of globalization has been discussed in a very elaborate way. The effects of globalization on Mising culture is also discussed in a brief account by contextualizing the field. Now the concept is very well known to all and the theoretical and conceptual framework of globalization provides how it has affected the local culture with the regional and national in the context of the world.

This chapter is again divided into various sub- chapters to discuss the whole notion of globalization in different aspects. It tries to examine in short how the trend of new economy, new culture, new media, information and communication has shed light on globalization for its effects on acceptance of such trend by our society. Globalization has curved the idea in such a way that the whole world is now converted into a small village and we can fulfil our own need at our hand as globalization has provided us online market and products like ready to cook food in a minute. Thus time frame is very easily possible by the effect of globalization.

Along with these, this chapter examines how globalization has affected food globally and locally in different context of consumption. The most popular and common topic of changes and continuation of Mising food habit is taken into account and discussed with the reference of the findings of the field data and to place within a stereotyped framework to find out the reasons behind the understanding and acceptance of such changes in society. The trend of global market, the online market, the ready to eat foods concept that has brought changes in our lifestyles is also discussed in this chapter. This chapter also analyzed globalization in India and North East and tries to discuss globalization as an uneven process with unequal distribution of benefits and losses to all the regions of Indian union.

The concluding chapter highlights the summary of all the chapters of this dissertation. Field study has been done to explore how food constructs the identity and social relations in a community. To conduct the survey interview method and observation both the method are used and conclusion drawn to find out the relevance of the study in the present day context. The whole work is analyzed by primary and secondary sources. Both the sources reveal the importance of research in the area like food studies from the interdisciplinary perspective is very enhancing in the present day context.

This chapter provides light on the impact of food in a community and how food is ethnicized to find identity of a community in their food related practices. The food related practices are observed in traditional Mising society. Field study has been carried out with semi structured interviews and

observations which help us to draw the attention of this area of work and to find out the relevance of the work in the present day. The analysis of field data helps to understand the importance of this area of study in the context of North East. The analysis has been made on the basis of primary and secondary sources of data to reveal the continuation of food related cultural practices in Mising community. In the absence of such data restricted work can only be undertaken and as the data size is large, it can be used for generalizations as it is also robust. Further, it has broadened the scope of understanding of the Mising society by bringing out new data for the first time which is another finding of the thesis.

It is seen that the current cultural transformation in most of the societies receives much analytical attention. Food as a prime factor of life and part of material culture has also been included in the process of knowledge construction and validation, the work of food processing; production and distribution have also been given value. There are various perspectives to interpret the domain of food culture. The ethnic groups of Assam are also known for unique food habits and each society constitutes different methods of processing and preparation of food in their own technique. The structural adjustment with various time provide us the continuation of food practices in Mising society. The knowledge of these practices is transmitted from generation to generation orally regarding food. Therefore, this transmission process is not considered as vague and bias. This notion is accepted as the strength of society to correlate the modernity with tradition through the perspective of food. The regular preparation and processing of food provides us the information that the group of Mising people are having cultural identity and group survival. In the age of globalization, cultural practices, in general and cultural preservation, in particular are important notions to be observed. Food represents the symbol of a community and it asserts the group identity. The deeper understanding of Mising culture is feasible as women are categorizing as the provider of food. Women are represented in the domestic sphere; the paradigm of food production provides that women are playing the role of distributing the food. They are the preserver of culture of a community.

The representation of food in present day is very important but the limitations of study generalize the findings only by conceptualising the framework. As food related cultural practices are still being explored and a great scope for further exploration in future of this area is feasible. Food research endeavours should be directed towards a more comprehensive model to explore this area. The present work tries to explore the significance of how food plays an important role in the context of cultural practices. Through the construction of theoretical and conceptual framework related to food; this study investigates the role of food in a community. Food scholarship is very important to signify a group identity. Additionally, a conceptual model was developed to demonstrate the involvement of food in a community with respect to the socio- religious festivals, food related events and how involvement in case of food plays important role in giving a systematic structure to the society.

It is seen that from the discussion that food is a prism of a society which represents the cultural practices of it; with the continuation of its own culture. It is also conceptualising that nature and culture is inter related. What is natural and what is constructed is also internalized by the role of food in the process of socialization. The other concept is drawn by conceptualizing various social constructs related to food, identification of food in cultural practices; overall construction of food in globalization and gender issues are also discussed in brief.

The main finding of this work is to draw the attention of Mising food culture in today's globalized world. It showcases the presence of an indigenous food culture in a regional particularity in Assam. How the local products made in home are possible to create demand across the globe through online is also the aim of representation of food in cultural aspect of life. The current study has involved a comprehensive field work for food scholarship and more importantly, establishes a foundation to expand and continue to work on future theory development for culinary practices. In addition to this, the current study provides food related cultural practices with a meaningful approach to develop strategies or plans for further benefit. Overall, this study is an exploration of Mising food culture, though the findings may not be generalized from all the aspects. This study represents an initial underpinning and has provided a

framework for understanding food involvement in a community. This is a very fertile ground for academic research and involves food in rituals and festivals as gaining knowledge of food scholarship to understand rapidly growing culinary approach of study. Future research endeavours should be directed towards more a comprehensive model to explore this area with the challenges of different perspectives. This could be an interesting area based on this initial effort to provide more possible way of research by the links needed to study from different perspectives. As it is a fertile area there is a strong need of further research to explore this area. With this study there is potential for further study into the relationships the Mising community have with food. Further research could also include a larger respondents based on more structured interview questions to further analyze the dynamics of Mising community and connections with food role and relationships.

After the discussion on Mising food culture on important counts, it may be summarizing that the food habits of Mising community is undergone changes. The wave of globalization is vehemently responsible factor for such changes. Even at this matrix of change, they are able to maintain the traditional food habits through the pursuit of variant cultural forms and practices. However there are some inescapable circumstances which have affected the lives of urban people. However, one of the major concerns regarding continuation of food habits is discussed in chapter 5 of this thesis. Although foodways in general advocate the cause of harmony and ethnic identity of a community whereas there are certain disharmony emerging in urban area due to rapid changing of lifestyle. As observed in fieldwork, the reason behind this is because of unavailability of natural ingredients in urban areas. Even in urban areas people celebrate festival like *Ali- a:ye- Li'gang* where the organizer are not the agriculturalist or they don't have paddy field in urban areas but they are celebrating such festival to organize a get-together, to celebrate joy and trying to maintain their traditional festival in urban areas. As the contemporary life of man has undergone change in many ways.

One of the finding of this work has been connected with the gender role. As discussed in the chapter 4 of this thesis it is observed that the role of women in Mising community is active and their involvement is seen from food

preparation to distribution. The relationship of women have with kitchen space is discussed in detail. The present study begins with Mising community's relationship with food and kitchen space, gender relations are complex and dynamic. Also the food related cultural practices prevailing in Mising community is taken into account. The food relationships are influenced by local food tradition and history, as well as the outside forces of globalization in the form of public and economic policy and global culture through popular media. Additionally food and a community's relationships are reinforced through the organization of food space, particularly kitchen space. As there is no caste division in Mising community therefore homogenous food preparation method get so embedded in the lives of the Mising community. This chapter analyze the concept of power in case of food preparation and processing, culinary practices; food in the context of space and gender to denominate the contours that support the study of women and food. Further research is needed to fully understand the relationships that Mising community have with food and space.

Food is an important mode to relocate into a culture and consequently locating oneself anew in relation to the old it, leads to a socio- cultural reorientation. It is needful for immigrant community to establish continuity and the two cultures is maintained as correlative not as substitutes. The new world is shaped by inevitable forces of changes and these must be accepted to mix with old world values and food. They left socio- cultural connotations of the world. To reclaim one's own culture different strategies must be projected and coking is one of them. Food and culinary practices especially the way of cooking emerges as one of the most prominent cultural markers of the immigrant communities. Further research is needed to explore how immigrant community recreate itself through culinary skills? The transformation of food in raw and cooked form as food is largely free from cultural associations and cooked in a specific way. The study of the role of food in reconstruction and deconstruction of diasporic community is a serious subject of intermixture of cultures- old and new.

Another finding of the thesis is the association of culture and the natural products has lent an element of continuity to missing food culture that is a part

of their identity and thus the food culture which is sustainable has helped in the sustenance of the missing culture over the years. It is very important to confess that the role of food is to define and shape the human existence and identity. Most of us still tend to regard it as a mere source of nutrition as but in reality, food touches everything that is important to people. In the chain of being human food plays an important role. It is necessary to create consciousness regarding study of food and eating habits as food is vital for human existence and it is not sufficiently available for all the times. In anthropological theory and in debates the aspects of food have proved to be valuable. The creation of value in socio- economic, political, symbolic, social construction of memory all have illuminated broad societal processes by study of food. The importance of food studies is increasing across the globe. The north east region of India is home for tribes and communities practising traditions which are not uniform. There is a resurgence of interest to utilize food tool properly. If this tool is properly utilized, then it can be used to examine the socio- economic, political aspects of the tribes and communities of this region to make the comparisons of these aspects. Different thought process and opinions have arisen on the study of food and eating habits within this region. Different study of the food habits of north east India has slowly dragged from remote peripheries to national level which is acknowledge by the section of conscious class. The celebrations of food festivals across different parts of the country over the last few years, we find the food of north east India has received high demand and popularity among the people outside the region, the rustic charm and delicious flavours of the ethnic food of northeast India when tasted is sure to make mouth water everywhere.