Gendering of Food Culture

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ABSTRACT:
In the following work “Gendering of Food Culture” gender, food and culture are the main themes, which are interconnected. I have tried to look at the multiple of sources in order to get a better sense of gender, food and cultural history. Generally, gender history is limited to the study of male and female. But it has a broad perspective. Gender is related with culture, custom and even with food also. This paper revolves around the food culture. Food is a new topic, which became a part of historical and anthropological studies. Food history is very interesting, as lot of things connected to it is revealing. Idea of food history came later, which is something new and interesting. Like a gender history, food history is a modern study. Infact there are variety of ancient and medieval sources, which do mentions about food culture and practices. It’s a stereotypical concept to symbolise women as food. As Caroline Walker Bynum said that the religious significance of food changed its meaning under medieval women. I have tried to trace the concept of feasting and fasting. Besides, I have also tried to look at the method of food practice in the west and the east.

KEY WORDS: Food Culture, History, Gender, Fasting, Feasting, Feminism

Food history is a really, very new topic of research. Earlier, historians were least bothered about this arena, but now historians are looking to it also as a part of research, coming with new ideas, like the system of kitchen and food, as a part of cultural, social genealogies etc. Food is also a personal place of interest. In order to know about food history, about its practices, food as anthropological study, one needs to look at the chronology, genealogy and practices, in order to know it in a proper way. One needs to look at multiple sources, in order to get a better sense of food history. One need not to do just cherry picking portion of food that just talk, because that will not give clear idea, as those are just nugget of portion without any context. We need to look at the nature, patron and audience of source before doing any research.

Eating is not simple act of consuming something or satisfying one’s