

Ancient Sri Lankan and African Agricultural Ceremonies: A Comparative study

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The foundation of economy of hydro-based civilization was agriculture. Both the ancient Sri Lankan society and African society can be included into that category. The main cultivation of the Sinhalese was the paddy farming and that of tribal people was yam cultivation. Agriculture was the main economic activity and the basic method of food supply as well, in both the cultures. The pleasure gained by a flourished harvest was a sensitive emotion for both Sinhala farmer and tribal farmer. After harvesting, offering the first portion to the Buddha and the other gods was the Sri Lankan tradition. That is why the people conduct the *Aluth Sahal* ceremony. In the tribal society, they also offer a portion of their harvest to the gods before consuming. It was known as the 'New Yam Ceremony'. They conducted this ceremony to show their respect and loyalty to the goddess 'Ani'. There are a lot of similarities among these two parties in worshipping the gods and as well as the customs done before conducting this ceremony. The tribal people fulfil their purposes on both the economic and religious sections by conducting the New Yam Ceremony. However, in *Aluth Sahal* ceremony the factors are different. It is apparent on the basis of the above information, that the ancient Sri Lankan community and African tribal people have performed similar ritual activities in terms of honouring the blessing of the deities, despite belonging to two continents, two countries and two separate. However, it is noted that these similarities occur due to the fact that they both represent agriculture as the principal source of living.

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