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A Historical Analysis on the Differences in the Rites and Rituals of Sri Lankan Food Culture

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The objective of this study is to investigate the changes undergo in Sri Lankan food culture according to the functions and festivals. This research was carried out based on the primary sources such as Mahawamsa, Saddharmalankaraya, Saddharamarathnawaliya, Pujawaliya, Rasavahini and several other secondary sources.

In the ancient days, the folks had followed several rites and rituals based on their daily routines. This research scope covers a historical analysis on those rituals and rites since the beginning of the Anuradhapura period. Some of these rituals were mainly concerned on food. One such is the ceremony where a baby is fed for the first time: "indul katagaema" in Sinhala. Moreover, special cuisines had been followed in wedding ceremonies and funerals. Hence, based on this a "food culture" had been created. Irrespective of the difference in occasions, the same food item was being made in several methods according to the function. Furthermore, during puberty and Pregnancy periods, the food cuisines had undergone various changes depending on the nutritional needs. This is not only unique for Sri Lanka, but applicable for many countries in the world. However, there are distinct differences in the food culture between the rich and the poor. Nonetheless, depending on the method how the food is being used, their classifications can be differed. Conclusively, it can be stated that Sri Lanka has a unique food culture since ancient times.

Key words: *Rites and Rituals, Food, Culture, Cuisines, Ceremonies*

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