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## Study of Myths in Manipuri Literature and Socio-Religious Rituals

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### ABSTRACT

Myths abound in every culture's literature. Its significance to a culture stems from the innate need for humans to ask questions about life's essence, our origin, the origin of universe etc. When we make an attempt to explain the experiences of our life, we create the characters that enliven its stories depicting humans' insatiable quest for a better life, thirst for passion, and hunger for adventure. They were surrounded by the hostile forces of nature beyond their control, they needed an explanation for the good and the bad things happened to them along with those of the favorable and the adversaries. They personified the forces and given names and personalities. This phenomenon was perhaps the first step for having beliefs and religious rituals. Consequently, a number of Gods and Goddesses representing the various elemental forces and qualities appeared. They are the creation of our belief and imagination. They reflect our live; they are the symbols of hopes and aspirations, our miseries and suffering, our fears and uncertainties etc. When we make an attempt to explain the experiences of our life, both the good and the evil things in magnificently constructed and intricately woven stories of Gods and Goddesses, we are actually making art and literature. Gradually, such artistic creations have become the rare treasures of mankind in the form of great religious scriptures. Thus, the abstract thoughts and strange rituals in religion, art and literature were invented.

**Keywords:** *Manipuri God, Myth, Manipuri Literature, Meitei Culture, Lai Haraoba, rituals.*

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