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INDIGENOUS HEALING SYSTEMS OF ANCIENT MANIPUR IN CULTURAL CONTEXT

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This paper examines the prehistoric tools and technologies of Manipur in direct comparison with selected sites in South Asia, with the aim of situating Manipur within broader subcontinental technological traditions. Using evidence from Palaeolithic, Hoabinhian, and Neolithic contexts, the study compares lithic assemblages from Manipur with the Soanian chopper–chopping tool tradition of northwestern South Asia, the Kurnool cave complexes of peninsular India, and Hoabinhian-bearing sites of Northeast India such as the Garo Hills. Typo-technological analysis highlights shared features including pebble-based industries, direct percussion techniques, flake and blade production, and ground stone tools, while also identifying regional variations shaped by ecology and raw material availability. Neolithic comparisons emphasize affinities in cord-marked pottery, ground celts, and subsistence-related tools across eastern South Asia. The study demonstrates that Manipur’s prehistoric record represents an important eastern extension of South Asian technological traditions and contributes significantly to understanding cultural interaction, adaptation, and continuity within the South Asian prehistoric framework.

KEYWORDS: *Prehistoric archaeology; South Asia; Manipur; lithic technology; Palaeolithic; Hoabinhian; Neolithic; chopper–chopping tools; cave and open-air sites; cultural interaction*

INTRODUCTION

The use of medicinal plants for the prevention and treatment of diseases has been an age-old practice across societies worldwide, forming an integral component of cultural traditions and indigenous knowledge systems. In Manipur, this tradition is deeply embedded in both written and oral records, reflecting a long-standing reliance on plant-based therapies and holistic healthcare practices. The cultural landscape of ancient Manipur represents a distinctive synthesis of spirituality, ecology, and human intellect. Situated in Northeast India, the region's historical development has been profoundly influenced by its physical environment—a fertile central valley encircled by hill ranges, enriched by diverse flora and fauna, and sustained by perennial river systems. This ecological setting not only supported material life but also fostered the emergence of a comprehensive body of traditional knowledge that integrated medicine with ritual and belief systems.

Central to this tradition is the indigenous healthcare system known as the **Maiba–Maibi Layeng**, which occupies a pivotal position in the cultural and intellectual history of the Meitei civilization. This system embodies both spiritual and empirical dimensions of healing, reflecting a complex relationship between humans, nature, and the divine. Rooted in a holistic worldview, illness was understood as a disruption in the balance between body, mind, and spirit. Consequently, healing extended beyond physical remedies to include spiritual purification and ritual intervention. The practitioners—Maibas (male healers) and Maibis (female healers)—functioned simultaneously as physicians, ritual specialists, and custodians of sacred knowledge. Their expertise was transmitted across generations through sacred manuscripts (puyas), oral traditions, and structured apprenticeships. Empirical observation, ritual performance, and the therapeutic application of locally available medicinal plants and minerals together formed a comprehensive healthcare framework grounded in the cultural and ecological context of Manipur.

The mythological foundations of Manipuri traditional medicine are articulated in ancient texts such as *Lainingthou Puthiba*, which recounts the legend of *Sida Hidak Taret* (the Seven Life-Saving Medicines). According to this narrative, the Sun God created seven medicinal plants to heal King Puthiba after causing him injury. Each plant was associated with a day of the week, symbolizing continuity and cyclic renewal in the healing process. These plants were believed to possess analgesic, anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, and antioxidant properties—qualities that resonate with observations in modern pharmacological studies. Thus, *Sida Hidak Taret* represents both a symbolic and practical origin of Meitei medical knowledge, firmly situating healing practices within a spiritual framework.

Ancient manuscripts and royal chronicles further attest to the development of an advanced indigenous medical tradition in Manipur. Texts such as *Poireiton Khunthok*, *Pombirol*, *Hidak Yachal*, *Hidaklon*, and *Kanglei Sanglen Puba Yaya* document diverse aspects of medical knowledge, including the identification of medicinal plants, therapeutic formulations, and anatomical understanding. Authored by Maichous (scholarly priests), these texts reveal sophisticated insights into the physiological and psychological dimensions of health. The human body was conceptualized as a microcosm of the universe, composed of natural elements whose equilibrium was essential for well-being. The *Cheitharon Kumbaba*, the royal chronicle of Manipur, records instances of state patronage to healers and the establishment of *Yoiren Loishang*, an indigenous medical institution that functioned as a royal hospital, indicating the institutionalization of healthcare in early Manipuri society. Traditional healing in Manipur was not merely a clinical practice but an expression of the Meitei worldview, which perceived health and illness as interconnected with moral conduct, spiritual devotion, and environmental harmony. Disease was often attributed to ethical imbalance or divine displeasure, and healing required restoring cosmic order. Household worship of *Lainingthou Sanamahi*, the domestic deity, preceded medical treatment, underscoring the inseparability of faith and medicine. Diagnostic methods employed by Maibas and Maibis included pulse reading, physical observation, and ritual divination, followed by prescriptions of herbal remedies accompanied by chants and incantations. These practices reflected a holistic philosophy in which spiritual and physical states were mutually influential.

Alongside its ritual dimensions, the empirical foundation of Manipuri traditional medicine demonstrates a high level of diagnostic and therapeutic sophistication. Healers utilized pulse examination, urine and stool analysis, and systematic physical assessment—methods comparable to modern clinical approaches. Treatment modalities included herbal and mineral preparations, dietary regulation, and physical therapies such as *Khuli Suba* (hand-pressure massage) and *Puk Suba* (abdominal therapy). Ritual healing, known as *Thou Touba*, constituted another vital component of this medical landscape, addressing ailments believed to arise from supernatural causes. Ceremonies such as *Irat Chaban Thaba*, *Ushin Touba*, and *Naheiba* involved symbolic offerings, ritual chants, and purification rites aimed at restoring harmony between the afflicted individual and unseen forces. The longevity of Manipur's traditional healthcare system can be attributed to its adaptability and deep roots in local ecology, cultural ethics, and spiritual philosophy. Despite the introduction of external influences—ranging from Hindu medical ideas to Western biomedicine—the indigenous system retained its core principles of holistic healing and spiritual integration. Even in contemporary times, many communities in Manipur continue to depend on herbal treatments and ritual healing, attesting to the enduring relevance of indigenous knowledge systems in sustaining cultural identity, ecological balance, and community well-being.

TRADITIONAL HEALING PRACTICES OF MANIPUR

NAME OF PLANTS (SCIENTIFIC, FAMILY, LOCAL NAMES)	TRADITIONAL USE	SCIENTIFIC REPORTS
Phlogacanthus thyrsoformis (Roxb. ex. Hardw.) Mabb. (Fam.: Acanthaceae) Nongmangkha in Meitei Manipuri Vasaka in Hindi; Ram basak, Lal basak in Bengali	To cure fever, jaundice, skin infection, pox, high blood pressure, boils, diarrhoea, dysentery, cold, cough, body ache, constipation, etc.	Analgesic activity, antibacterial activity, antidiarrhoeal activity, anti-asthmatic activity, analgesic, anti-inflammatory, and antioxidant activities, anticancer activity.
Tinospora cordifolia (Willd.) Hook. f. & Thom. (Fam.: Menispermaceae) Ningthoukhongli in Meitei Manipuri Geloy, Guduchi in Hindi and Bengali; Heart-leaved Moonseed in English	To cure diabetes, piles, asthma, fever, jaundice, migraine, muscular sprain, diarrhoea, etc.	Anti-cancer activity, immunomodulator activity, post-menopausal syndrome relief, hepatic disorders, mental disorders, digestive activity.
Kaempferia rotunda L. (Fam.: Zingiberaceae) Leipaklei in Meitei Manipuri Bhumi champa in Hindi & Bengali; Indian crocus in English	To cure sinusitis, abortifacient, mumps, tumour, high blood pressure, wound, swelling, etc.	Anthelmintic activity, wound-healing activity, antioxidant activity, antimutagenic activity, anti-allergic activity, antibacterial and anti-tumour activity.
Stellaria media (L.) Vill. (Fam.: Caryophyllaceae) Yerum Keirum in Meitei Manipuri Buch-bucha in Hindi; Chickweed in English	To cure skin infection, skin itching, allergy, burn wounds, and bone fractures.	Anti-obesity effect, anti-inflammatory and analgesic activity.
Datura metel L. (Fam.: Solanaceae) Shagol hidak in Meitei Manipuri Dhatura in Hindi & Bengali; Moonflowers in English	To cure piles, dizziness, muscular sprain, dysentery, asthma, joint pain, etc.	Anti-cholinergic activity, analgesic, anti-asthmatic treatment.
Cassia siamea Lam. (Fam.: Caesalpiniaceae) Laihidak in Meitei Manipuri Seema/Kassod in Hindi; Kassod tree in English; Minjiri in Bengali	To cure malaria, stomach pains, hypertension, diabetes, insomnia, anxiety, swellings, etc.	Antibacterial, antidiabetic, sedative, antidepressant, antipyretic, analgesic, anti-inflammatory, diuretic, antioxidant, and anticancer activity.
Litsea monopetala (Roxb.) Pers. (Fam.: Lauraceae) Thang hidak in Meitei Manipuri Maida lakdee in Hindi; Meda pata in Bengali; Indian laurel or Soft Bollygum in English	Used as nerves and bone tonic, stomachache stimulant, analgesic, antiseptic, etc.	Anti-microbial, anti-hyperglycemic, antimicrobial, antidiarrhoeal, cytotoxic, and anti-inflammatory activities.

*Table: Sida Hidak Taret, Traditional Medicinal Plants of Manipur their traditional uses along with scientific reports
(Adapted from Tombi Raj et.al, 2024 & Ningombam et.al. 2014)*

The traditional healthcare system of Manipur, known as Maiba–Maibi Layeng (Maiba–Maibi System of Treatment), forms an integral part of the state’s cultural and medical heritage. This system is rooted in indigenous knowledge preserved through manuscripts, inscriptions, and oral traditions.ⁱ



Figure: Illustration of medicinal plants suggested for week long treatment of accidental injury as per Manipuri ancient therapeutic protocol —Sida Hidak Taret|| (Life Saving Medicine Seven), a particular plant suggested for a particular day of the week. (Source- Tombi Raj et.al, 2024& Ningombam et.al, 2014)

According to the mythological manuscript Lainingthou Puthiba, the tradition of healing in Manipur is traced back to the episode of the “*Sida Hidak Taret*” (Seven Life-Saving Medicines). This narrative describes how the Sun God, after injuring Puthiba, produced seven medicinal plants to heal him. Since then, the *Sida Hidak Taret* has been regarded as the foundation of traditional medicine in the Meitei community, prescribing seven different plants for use across seven days of the week. Modern scientific studies have confirmed that these plants exhibit properties such as analgesic, anti-inflammatory, antipyretic, antiseptic, anxiolytic, antacid, and antioxidant effects, aligning with modern trauma care protocols.ⁱⁱ

MANUSCRIPTS AND RECORDS RELATED TO TRADITIONAL MEDICINAL PRACTICES IN MANIPUR

The traditional medicinal knowledge of Manipur has been extensively documented through a variety of manuscripts, inscriptions, and historical records, reflecting a rich healthcare heritage preserved over centuries.

Among the earliest sources is *Poireiton Khunthok*, a travelogue of Prince Poireiton, which not only recounts the migration of people to Manipur but also highlights the use of ethnomedicinal plants such as Tairel (*Toona ciliata*), Yembum (*Knoxia roxburghii*), and Yendung (*Cycas pectinata*), demonstrating the health practices of the first century A.D.ⁱⁱⁱ



Toona ciliata (Tairel)



Cycas pectinata (Yendung)



Syzygium jambos
(Nongnang Kori)



Knoxia roxburghii
(Yembum),

Figure: List of some important traditional medicinal plants

The story of "Kabui Salang Maiba" further revealed the rich traditional health care system prevailing in the Kabui (Rongmei) community of Manipur. Use of "Nongnang Kori" (*Syzygium jambos*) plant as one of the components of traditional medicines of Manipur.^{iv} While texts like *Hidak Yachal* serve as traditional medicine formularies, detailing various medicinal preparations.^v *Pombirol (or Pombilang)* focuses on human physiology and anatomy, providing insights into the scientific understanding of the human body among ancient practitioners. *Hidaklon* combines ritual hymns, chanting, and knowledge of medicinal plants, and preparation of medicine illustrating the integration of spiritual and herbal practices in healing.^{vi}

Further evidence of the Meetei community's medical knowledge is found in manuscripts authored by the scholars known as *Maichou*, including *Kanglei Sanglen Puba Yaya*, *Taoroinai Yangbi*, *Khepalon*, *Laihatlon Lambuba*, *Singligi Maram*, *Sikaklon Mikouron*, and *Hidaklon*. Historical chronicles such as the *Cheitharon Kumbaba* provide abundant information on herbal medical practices, while stone inscriptions, copper plates, and ancient manuscripts corroborate the longstanding tradition of healing in the region.^{vii}

Traditional healers, often known as maiba and maibis, were accorded high social status. They were assigned to *Maiba Maibi Loishangs*.^{viii} The royal establishment of *Yoiren Loishang*, an indigenous hospital, catered to both the royal family and common people. The palace also maintained private medical healers, and a separate residence, *Amaiba Loishang*, designated for local practitioners, reflecting a well-organized healthcare system.

Collectively, these manuscripts and records reveal a sophisticated system of medical knowledge in Manipur, blending herbal, ritual, and anatomical expertise, and preserving a rich legacy of traditional medicine that has persisted since antiquity.

TRADITIONAL BELIEF SYSTEM, HEALERS AND THEIR PRACTICES

In the traditional Meetei worldview, health and healing are understood through the interrelationship of three fundamental entities: God, evil spirits, and humans. The Meiteis believed that the events and experiences in a person's life—whether beneficial or harmful—were consequences of their actions, emphasizing a moral and spiritual dimension to health. Central to this system was faith- devotion to God and confidence in oneself were integral to the practice of traditional medicine.^{ix} Every Meetei household worships Sanamahi, the household deity, and before treating a patient, local healers would offer prayers to Sanamahi, seeking guidance and blessing. The Meiteis hold that all living and non-living entities are creations of Sanamahi, and that all ailments, suffering, and natural phenomena originate from him. Consequently, illness could be both caused and cured through divine influence, making spiritual faith inseparable from medicinal practice.^x

Beyond the practical treatment of diseases, Meetei traditional medicine embodies a profound philosophical understanding of the human body. The body is seen as the dwelling place of the soul, constructed from natural substances in a precise balance. Health is achieved when these substances are in equilibrium, and illness occurs when imbalance arises. Meetei priests maintained that by replenishing the body with natural medicinal products, the body's strength and vitality could be restored. Healing was thus a combined process of applying natural remedies and performing accompanying rituals, reflecting a holistic approach where spiritual, physical, and natural dimensions are intertwined. This belief system underpins the unique character of Meetei traditional medicine, where treatment is not merely a mechanical intervention but a spiritually guided restoration of harmony within the human body and with the cosmic order.

In traditional Meetei society, there existed a formal office of medicine for healers under royal patronage, with Yoirel Loishang serving as the central medical authority of the state. This institution was further organized into two main divisions: Amaiba Shanglen for male healers and Amaibi Shanglen for female healers. Within the

Amaiba Loishang, there were two additional branches, Laibi Shanglen and Metpi Shanglen.^{xi}The Maibas (male healers) and Maibis (female healers) were responsible for diagnosing illnesses—whether ordinary or complex—and determining the appropriate treatment procedures. Their methods combined occult rituals, therapeutic techniques, and herbal remedies to cure patients. Healers serving in Yoiren Loishang attended both members of the royal family and commoners, while the kings also maintained private physicians within the palace. For instance, Meidingu Senbi Mungyamba employed Ningthoujam Kiyamba, Konok Thengra served King Khagemba, and King Garibniwas had Moirang Lalhaba as his personal healer.^{xii}During King Garibniwas's reign, traditional medicine began to evolve through interaction with medical practices brought by migrants from the East and the West. This cultural assimilation contributed to the gradual development of a uniquely adapted medical system. Similar to contemporary medical practices, traditional healers administered medicines in various forms—liquid, solid, and semi-liquid—and closely monitored patients' responses by observing physical indicators such as skin color, pulse, urine, and facial appearance. Hand pressure therapy, known as Khuli Suba, was also commonly employed, reflecting the healers' detailed understanding of the body and their comprehensive approach to treatment.

PREPARATION AND APPLICATION OF TRADITIONAL MEDICINE

In the Meetei traditional medical system, healers followed a structured set of rules for diagnosing and treating illnesses. Diseases were classified according to type, and the appropriate treatment was determined to restore the patient's vitality and help them overcome the ailment. A key aspect of diagnosis involved examining the patient's pulse; experienced healers could even predict critical outcomes, including the timing of death, through careful pulse reading. This specialized knowledge was traditionally transmitted orally from teacher to student.

Before beginning any treatment, the healer offered devotion to Lainingthou Sanamahi, the household deity worshiped by all Meetei families, seeking divine guidance for the healing process.^{xiii} Upon arriving at the patient's home, the healer would first chant incantations over the patient's palms and fingers, then examine various pulse points—including the wrist, fingers, face, chest, and nose—to assess the patient's condition. The healer would also gauge body temperature by touching the forehead and determine whether the illness was caused by natural or occult forces.

In addition to physiological assessment, the healer considered environmental factors such as local geography and climate, which were believed to influence health. If the disease was determined to have a supernatural origin, the healer performed specific occult rituals, including Irat Chaban Thaba, Thou Touba, Ushin

Touba, Naheiba, Anam Athou Kokpa, and Lai Tainaba. Chanting incantations was an essential component of these rituals, reflecting the inseparable link between spirituality and medicine in traditional Meetei healing practices.^{xiv}

Meetei traditional medicine emphasizes both the careful preparation and the precise application of remedies by skilled healers, reflecting a long-standing cultural practice. Ancient manuscripts, or *puyas*, such as *Chengleirol*, provide detailed descriptions of medicinal preparations using natural substances. Other significant texts include *Hidaklon*, *Kanglei Sanglen Puba Puya*, *Shingligi Maram*, *Laimuron*, *Taoroinai Yangbi*, and *Thapalon*. These works outline principles and guidelines for preparing and administering medicines, illustrating the systematic nature of Meetei medical knowledge. Further ancient texts, including *Khebarol*, *Shingligi Maram*, and *Mihun Lang-on*, elaborate on the traditional medical system. For instance, during King Kyamba's reign, a widespread dysentery outbreak—including affecting the king—was reportedly treated successfully using *Pongheiton* (guava), a medicinal plant gifted by the Pong king.^{xv}

A key aspect of preparation, known as *Hidak Semba*, involves mixing two or more substances to evaluate their medicinal properties. Meetei alchemy relies on combining materials to understand the qualities of individual components. While traditional medicine is believed to be free from harmful side effects, healers carefully tested each substance before prescribing it, using methods such as tasting, smelling, and even licking the materials to ensure their efficacy.

The process of gathering ingredients, called *Hidak Hekpa*, involved sourcing herbs, leaves, seeds, fruits, and occasionally animal parts. Administering medicine to patients was referred to as *Hidak Thaba*. Remedies were generally delivered in three forms: liquid, solid, and semi-solid. A popular Meetei proverb, "*Laithung Makhak Thamphade*," emphasizes that illnesses should not be left untreated. The careful preparation and administration ensured the absence of *Yemmounaba*, meaning food poisoning, highlighting the healers' deep understanding of safe medicinal practices.

During treatment, healers closely monitored patients' responses, observing changes in skin color, pulse, urine, and stool, to ensure that the medicine was effective and to detect any adverse reactions. This attentive and systematic approach reflects the sophisticated and empirical nature of traditional Meetei medicine.

TRADITIONAL THERAPY AND RITUALS

Hand pressure therapy, known as *Khuli Suba*, was an integral component of Meetei traditional medicine, focusing on massaging specific body organs. Before beginning the therapy, the healer, or *Maiba*, recited mantras

over his fingertips. The massage typically started at the belly, especially the navel area, and continued across various parts of the body. The procedure involved squeezing, rubbing, and folding the limbs, which not only facilitated physical healing but also revitalized the patient's mind and body.

For *Puk Suba*, the practice of applying pressure to the abdomen, the patient would lie on their back with the face upward and legs spread in a triangular position, ensuring relaxation of the abdominal region.^{xvi} The *Maiba* prepared his seat using a twisted cloth arranged in a circular shape before commencing the therapy. Initially, the healer placed his hands gently on the *Khoijikha*, the lower portion of the navel, which was considered the center of the human body and the dwelling of *Taoroinai Pakhangba* (a divine entity). According to Meetei belief, six souls resided in this area, making it essential to begin the therapy from this point.

The *Maiba* gradually applied pressure to the abdomen, carefully moving across the small and large intestines without causing pain. This method helped expel undigested food, facilitated digestion, and alleviated intestinal disorders. Additionally, it aided urinary flow and, for women, regulated the menstrual cycle while reducing depression and promoting overall mental and physical well-being.

Healers possessed in-depth knowledge of the nervous system and used massage to stimulate paralyzed or weakened areas, activate nerves, and prevent further health complications. *Khuli Suba* not only enhanced physical health but also relieved mental stress, promoting quicker recovery and maintaining overall wellness.

Occult practices, locally called *Thou Touba*, were an indispensable element of Meetei traditional medicine.^{xvii} This ritual involved offering items requested by gods or evil spirits that were believed to enter the human body and cause illness. The practice was closely tied to Meetei tantric knowledge. While some diseases might have been caused by invisible germs carried through wind or water, the Meeteis attributed many ailments, including mental disorders, to occult forces or divine intervention. Certain healers, believed to possess supernatural or magical powers, employed occult rituals for treatment.

In these practices, healers performed *Irat Chaban Thaba* (offerings to the gods) and *Mantra Sonba* (recitation of incantations), followed by *Lai Khurumba* (devotion to God) and *Thou Touba* (occult rites) as part of the healing process. Rituals such as *Changting incantation*, and ceremonies like *Helloina Chenba*, *Haoreima Sambubi Oknaba*, *Lamleima Oknaba*, and *Jogi Moyoknaba* were performed to expel harmful spirits. Tools like water sprinkled with *Tairen Pungphai* leaves, Tairen tree branches fixed on walls, and burning *Khoiju Leikham* at the corners of a house were common to purify spaces.^{xviii}

Another ritual, *Ushin Touba*,^{xix} reflected the healer's understanding of the universe's creation and the origins of life. In this practice, the patient's suffering was symbolically transferred to a living creature—such as a cock, duck, dove, or fish—which was then offered to the gods. Philosophically, this represented the exchange of energy or potency between similar forms in nature.

Meetei beliefs also considered certain snakes or pythons as sacred beings. Encountering such snakes could cause illness, including ascites or skin discoloration, believed to be the result of the python's poisonous emissions. Healing involved performing specific incantations, often drawn from the *Laihatlon Lambuba*, which contains diverse ritual chants. Another practice, *Naheiba*, aimed to purify the mind, strengthen faith in recovery, and expel evil spirits. Tairen leaves, commonly used in *Naheiba*, were sprinkled in water to bring the subconscious mind into conscious awareness and remove spiritual impurities.^{xx}

Thus, Meetei traditional medicine integrated natural products, herbal remedies, therapeutic procedures, and ritual practices to maintain health and prevent disease. This body of knowledge, transmitted orally across generations, reflects centuries of collective wisdom and empirical experimentation. Ancient manuscripts, known as *Puyas*, serve as a testament to this rich heritage, demonstrating the depth of understanding embedded in Meetei healing traditions. According to Meetei belief, even modern allopathic medicine could not easily replace these traditional practices, which remain inseparably linked to the region's rituals, ethics, and customs.

CONCLUSION

The traditional medicine and healing practices of ancient Manipur, embodied in the *Maiba–Maibi Layeng* system, reveal a profound synthesis of scientific understanding, spiritual insight, and cultural identity. Rooted in the cosmological framework of the Meetei civilization, this system evolved as a holistic approach to health—where the well-being of an individual was seen as inseparable from moral virtue, social harmony, and ecological balance. The ancient healers (*Maibas* and *Maibis*) served as custodians of both physical and spiritual knowledge, integrating empirical herbal science with ritual and metaphysical practices. Their healing philosophy emphasized prevention, purification, and restoration through natural means, reflecting a deep respect for the interconnectedness of all forms of life. The manuscripts and oral traditions—such as *Hidaklon*, *Hidak Yachal*, *Cheitharon Kumbaba*, and the mythic narrative of *Sida Hidak Taret*—demonstrate that the people of ancient Manipur possessed a structured and sophisticated medical tradition comparable to other classical systems of Asia. These texts reveal the use of medicinal plants, pulse diagnosis, hand therapy (*Khuli Suba*), and ritual healing as integrated components of a unified worldview. Far from being mere folklore, these practices represented an indigenous science rooted in centuries of observation and experimentation, harmonized with spiritual discipline.

and ethical living. The continuity of this indigenous medical heritage through centuries reflects its adaptability and resilience amidst changing cultural and political environments. Even as external influences such as Hinduism, colonial administration, and modern biomedicine entered Manipur, the essence of *Maiba–Maibi Layeng* persisted—both as a living tradition among the people and as a cultural symbol of self-reliance and identity. Today, with the growing global recognition of traditional knowledge systems and holistic healthcare, the healing traditions of Manipur stand as a valuable resource for sustainable health practices and cultural preservation.

In conclusion, the *Maiba–Maibi Layeng* system is not merely an ancient medical practice but a philosophical articulation of life itself—anchored in the balance between body, mind, spirit, and environment. It offers a timeless message for humanity: that true healing begins when humans live in harmony with nature and the divine order. The study and preservation of this indigenous system are essential not only for understanding the intellectual heritage of Manipur but also for revitalizing traditional wisdom in the quest for a more integrated and sustainable future in healthcare and cultural continuity.

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