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LEGENDS AND THEIR CULTURAL MANIFESTATIONS- THE CASE OF THE LEGEND OF YAKSHI IN KERALA

Abstract:

The state of Kerala lies in the South- West of the Indian peninsula. Kerala has a rich history and folk culture. The stories of Yakshi, the blood sucking, man-eating seductress vampire is very popular among the older and younger generations of Keralites. This paper is an exploration into the legend of Yakshi and how it is demonstrated in the society and culture of Kerala. These legends have influenced Kerala's art and literature significantly. Numerous stories were written and movies were made with Yakshis as subjects where they were given both sexual appeal and annihilating power. Visual media gave Yakshis a new lease of life by attributing more human characteristics to them. Yakshis are worshipped as deities in some parts of Kerala. The legend of Yakshi is a perfect example of how legends are intertwined with the religion and culture of a society, the reflections of which are manifested in the art and literature.

Keywords:

legends, Yakshi, Kerala, culture, art, literature, society