

Identification of a Rare Image of Jalandharāri form of Śiva

MYNENI KRISHNAKUMARI

Andhra University, Vishkapatnam. E-mail: krishnamy9@gmail.com

Abstract: Jalandharāri or Jalandharāntaka is a saṁhāramūrti form of Śiva which is rarely demonstrated in art forms. Generally, we do not come across this form of Śiva either in the temple sculptures or in the paintings that adorn the walls and ceilings of the temples of South India. Among the myriad forms of the representations of Śiva in anthropomorphic form revealing his divine sports or līlas in visual arts, it is highly interesting and surprising to observe the scarcity of the images of the god of this particular form which is well documented in the literary texts. I have encountered one such rare image form of Śiva among the several relief sculptures carved on the pillars of the maṇḍapa hall of Aruṇāchalēśvara temple at Tiruvannamalai in Tamil Nadu State. An attempt is made here to identify the sculpture with the help of the mythological and the iconographical descriptions mentioned in the texts and image of the God known from the other place

Keywords: Chakra, Jalandharāri, Saṁhāramūrti, Tiruvannamalai, Viṣṇu, Mythology, Iconographic

Received : 19 March 2023

Revised : 15 April 2023

Accepted : 26 April 2023

Published : 26 June 2023

TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:

Krishnakumari, M. 2023.
Identification of a Rare Image
of Jalandharari form of Śiva.
*South Asian History, Culture and
Archaeology*, 3: 1, pp. 87-94.

Introduction

Śiva, who is worshipped in the aniconic and iconic forms by the devotees, is represented in both the benevolent and the terrific forms in the visual arts. The Saivite myths construed by the elite in the *Purāṇas* and *Non-Purāṇas* often allude to his character as the bestower of boons to his devotees and as a great warrior-hero who punishes the evil-doers. One can trace his fighting spirits from the Vedic proto-type, *Rudra* and in *Atharvavēda*, (5.21) it is said that *Rudra's* cry echoes in the battle and his voice resounds in the war drum. In the textual sources, it is described how sometimes Śiva engages Himself in battle with the demons (*asuras*) to establish law and order on the earth from time to time when it got disturbed, or with persons when they do not recognise him or to protect his devotees from their enemies. These warlike fighting activities of Śiva can be known from either single iconic forms wherein the main theme is shown in synoptic form as in the case of *Gajāsura saṁhāramūrti*

or *Andhaka-Gajāntakamūrti* or portraying the narrative of the episode in different sculptural panels. Besides the *anugrahamūrti* forms of *Śiva*, the *Samhāramūrti* forms, as well as his terrific forms, also found a place in the iconography of the *Śiva* temples as *āvarana dēvatas* to fulfil the desires of the worshippers. The word *Samhāramūrti* with which *Śiva* is referred to be associated with the names of the demons implies that *Śiva* is the great destroyer of that demon. In the *Stōtra* literature, we find references to the destructive forms of *Śiva*. The *Taittirīya* and *Vājasaneyā Samhitas* mention one hundred names or epithets of *Śiva* by which he is invoked while his one thousand names are referred to in the *Śiva Sahasranāma Stōtra* of *Anuśāsanika Parva* of *Mahābhārata* as well as in the *Līṅga Purāṇa*. The names and epithets of *Śiva* suggest the nature, functional qualities and characteristic iconographical traits of Lord *Śiva*. Although the *samhāramūrti* forms of *Śiva* such as *Tripurāsura*, *Gajāsura*, *Andhakāsura*, *Kālāntaka* and *Kāmānataka* etc are quite well-known from the texts and became very popular through their iconic representations in the temples, the sculptures of *Jalandharāri* form of *Śiva* which is classified under the category of *Samhāramūrtis* of *Śiva* are rarely demonstrated in sculptural art. However, the account of the event of *Śiva* vanquishing the demon *Jalandhara*, a form of evil is associated with the *Vīrattēśvarar* temple at Tiruvirkudi in Tiruvarur district of Tamil Nadu State. It is interesting to note that this temple is counted as one of the eight *Vīrattāna* temples where *Śiva* is believed to have punished *Jalandhara*. The village TiruVirukudi is located 10 KM North of Tiruvarur and 37 KM south of Mayiladuthurai in Tamil Nadu State. Because of the rarity of the sculptures of *Jalandharāri mūrti* an attempt is made here to discuss the mythology of the deity and to identify the stone sculptures noticed at Tiruvannamalai and Nanjangund with the help of the textual descriptions given in *Śrītattvanidhi*.

In the traditional list of twenty-five forms of *Śiva* contained in the *Suprabhēdāgama* (1-34, 72-75), *Jalandharavadhā mūrti* form of *Śiva* is included while it is omitted in the list of twenty-five manifestations of *Śiva* given in *Kamikagama* (1, 65, 23-27). The episode of killing the demon king *Jalandhara* by *Śiva* is described in the *Uttara khanda* of *Padma Purāṇa*. It is mentioned in the text that the story was narrated by *Nārada* to the *Pāṇḍavas* to encourage them when they were in distress owing to their misfortunes. (W.J. Wilkins 1882, ch VI:441). While narrating the story *Nārada* reminds them that adversity and prosperity come to all and *Jalandhara*, the son of the Ocean and river Ganges, had conquered the lord *Viṣṇu* on one occasion and he was killed by *Śiva*. The origin of *Jalandhara*, his uncommon military prowess, magical powers and his success over the *dēvas* mentioned in *Śiva Purāṇa* is described by T.A. Gopinatha Rao (1971:188-91) without any illustrations. Stella Kramrisch (1981), Dorai Rangaswamy (1958: 352-58) and Indira Visvanathan Peterson (1989:346) had also described the legend of the death of the demon king *Jalandhara* in their studies based on Puranic texts. According to *Śiva Purāṇa* (J.L. Shastri 1970: ch. XIV v.5: 864) the fire that emanated from the forehead of *Śiva* on the occasion of the killing of the demons of three castles was directed to the Sea where it was joined by river *Gaṅgā*. But T.A.G. Rao (1971:188) has contradicted this statement and mentioned in his description of this episode that it was river *Sindhu* and not river Ganges. The legend of the origin of *Jalandhara* is not given in *Līṅga Purāṇa* but this can be found in *Padma Purāṇa*. Since there are some discrepancies between the account of *Śiva Purāṇa* furnished by TA Gopinatha Rao and the *Śiva Purāṇa* edited by J.L. Shastri, it is needed to consider here some of the details of the legend of the demon *Jalandhara*. The *Śiva Purāṇa* mentions that the boy was of terrific features and when he cries loudly it shook the guardian deities as well as the entire world including both mobile and immobile, by which the divine beings, sages and *Indra* went to *Brahma* to find out the reason. When *Brahma* saw the boy nursed by the king of the Ocean and conversing with him about his parentage, suddenly the boy caught the neck of *Brahma* and shook it several times resulting in tears in the eyes of *Brahma*

(*Siva Purana*, v:20). At the request of the king of the Ocean, *Brahma* narrated the future of the boy by his horoscope and named him *Jalandhara* since the boy was able to make the eyes of *Brahma* fill with water (tears) (*Siva Purana* v. 24). This information of *Brahma* naming the child as *Jalandhara* was not mentioned in the description given by T.A.Gopinatha Rao (1979: 188).

In this connection *Brahma* says:

‘He will become the most valorous, heroic, courageous, invincible and majestic and will be like *Kārttikēya*, the conqueror of all battles. He will become the emperor of *Asuras*. He will conquer even *Vishṇu* and will face defeat from no quarter. He cannot be slain by anyone except *Śiva*. He will return to the place from where he sprang up’ (*Śiva Purāṇa*: vol. II, vv.25-28).

Accordingly, *Jalandhara* became the powerful king and married the daughter of *Kālanēmi* called *Brindā*. When he learnt from *Rāhu* who came to his court that the *dēvas* had taken away the precious gems from the ocean when it was churned by the gods and demons, *Jalandhara* wanted to bring them back and to that effect, he fought with the *dēvas* successfully. Even *Vishṇu* could not resist the strength of the demon and was defeated in the combat. *Vishṇu* admired the valour of the demon and granted a boon to *Jalandhara* resulting in the residence of *Vishṇu* and *Lakshmī* in his capital. In the process of inducing enmity between *Śiva* and *Jalandhara* for the benefit of the *dēvas* as the demon could only be killed by *Śiva*, *Nārada* was successful. When the battle has ensued *Jalandhara* was successful in fleeing the *Śiva gaṇas* and others sent by *Śiva* and when *Śiva* appeared before the demon personally *Jalandhara* employed his magic spells. *Śiva* forgot everything and mesmerised by the music and dance of the *apsaras* while the demon went to see *Pārvatī* in the disguise of *Śiva*. *Jalandhara* assumed the form of *Śiva* with ten hands, five faces, three eyes and matted hair, seated on the bull (*Śiva Purāṇa*, *Rudra Saṁhita*: vv.38-38: 903) On seeing her beauty he lost control over his senses and let drops of semen fall and his limbs became benumbed (*ibid*,v.41). *Pārvatī* then recognised the demon and vanished from the scene while *Jalandhara* returned to the battle. *Pārvatī* approached *Vishṇu* and asked him to violate the chastity of the wife of *Jalandhara* as a retort to his unlawful doings, for which *Vishṇu* agreed (*ibid*, v.42) Wendy Doniger (1981:185) who analysed the episode of *Jalandhara* has viewed that *Jalandhara* was successful on the battlefield and gained an upper hand and *Nārada* has to work so hard to kindle a sexual desire in the mind of *Jalandhara* for *Pārvatī*, the wife of *Śiva*, so long as he was chaste and faithful to his wife. It is explained that by his chastity only he could put *Śiva* under the illusion of the dancing *apsaras* for some time when he left the battlefield for *Pārvatī* in the guise of *Śiva* which he lost it as soon as he sheds his seed. When *Śiva* regained his consciousness from the illusion of the demon he decided to kill *Jalandhara* for the harsh words spoken by the demon addressing him as the ascetic. Besides *Śiva Purāṇa*, *Liṅga Purāṇa* also describes in detail the duel fight that ensued again between them. *Liṅga Purāṇa* (J.L.Shastrī 1998: 525)states that *Śiva* inserted his big toe into the Ocean that churns the water from which the terrible weapon *Sudarśana Chakra* was created. *Śiva* challenged the demon and he says:

‘I shall certainly fight with you, but first you must raise this *chakra* with your big toe. I will fight with you only if you succeed.’ (*Liṅga Purāṇa*: 525)

Liṅga Purāṇa which elaborates this event of the death of *Jalandhara* states that in response to the challenge made by *Śiva*, the demon clapped his hands and seized the discus and attempted to kill *Śiva* with that. Although he managed to raise the *chakra* and place it on his shoulders with an effort the weapon sliced off his head and his flesh and blood cluttered upon the Universe with which *Yama* constructed a hell called *mahā raurava* on the instructions of *Śiva* (*Linga Purana*, vv.37-38). A different

version is given in the *Padma Purāṇa* concerning the death of the demon king. In this *Purāṇa*, the creation of the *chakra* from the waters of the ocean or the challenge posed by *Śiva* to the demon is not mentioned. Instead, it states that when *Śiva* cuts off the head of the demon, the severed head resumes its place and then *Śiva* summoned to his aid the *mātrikas*, the female energies of the male gods who drank the blood of the demon by which *Śiva* succeeded in killing *Jalandhara* (W.J. Wilkins:44).

The iconographical description of *Śiva* as *Jalandharasamhāra mūrti* is given in *Śrītattvanidhi*, a treatise on iconography and iconometry of the nineteenth century authored by Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar of Mysore (1997). According to it, the complexion of the body of *Śiva* is to be red and he should have three terrific eyes and a single pair of arms (*raktābham-ugra nayanam dvi bhujam tri netram*/). He should rest on a pair of sandals (*pādayōḥ pādukāyuktam*) and he should carry in his right hand an umbrella and water pot in his left hand (*Dakṣiṇa haste sthitam chchatram vāme pūrṇa kamaṇḍalam*/). He is bedecked with all ornaments and wears a sacrificial cord. He wears sandals on his feet and should be shown as about to move away (*kiñchit vaigamanōnmukham*). He should be shown with dishevelled *jaṭābhāra* with a crescent moon and *Gaṅgā* in it (T.A.G. Rao 1970: 197; S.K.Ramachandra Rao 1989: 238-39). While describing the demon it is mentioned in the same text that he is two armed with the body complexion in yellow. He should be shown with two arms, three eyes and be decorated with *kirīṭa* and all other ornaments including *hāra* on his neck, armlets and *nupuras* on the ankles (*dvibhujam ca trinētram ca kirīṭakaṭakānvitam; sarvālamkāra saṁyuktam hāra nūpura saṁyuktam*). While explaining the iconographical details given in the text T.A.Gopinatha Rao (1970: 191) has completely omitted the reference to the three eyes of *Jalandhara* mentioned in it and S.K. Ramachandra Rao (1989: 239) has interpreted it as two eyes. Further,

it is described that *Jalandhara* must have a sword tucked below his forearm while he should join his two hands in *añjali hasta* and on the hands is placed the *chakra* (*haste chakram dadham*). Except for these iconographical descriptions given in *Śrītattvanidhi*, we do not find any other textual sources to reconstruct the iconography of *Śiva* as *Jalandharāri*. Unlike the *samhāramūrti* forms of *Śiva* wherein *Śiva* is represented with multiple hands and several weapons or attributes in the sculptures, *Śiva*, the destroyer of the demon *Jalandhara* is portrayed in the text as an ascetic or mendicant holding an umbrella, water pot and the hair arranged in *jaṭābhāra*. The demon is also described with a single pair of arms joined together in supplication with the *chakra* on them. The entire description of both the characters suggests that the ferocious act of *Śiva*



Fig. 1: *Śiva* and *Jalandhara* (Illustration from *Pratimakośa* vol. II; Place of origin of the image is unknown)

killing the demon by the *chakra* is completed by then and that the demon supplicates himself to Śiva.

In an illustration of Śiva as *Jalandharāri* (or *Jalandharahāra*) given by S.K. Ramachandra Rao (location of the image is not mentioned) (**Fig. 1**) Śiva is shown as an ascetic holding an umbrella in one hand and a water pot in the other hand. He wears a long *dhōti* that covers his lower body with an additional sash cloth tied around his waist. Above his shoulders is another loose garment (*uttarīya*) that hangs down below his waist on either side. While some of the long *jaṭas* drop over his shoulders the remaining *jaṭas* are neatly tied above his head. A crescent moon adorns the *jaṭāmakūṭa* of the deity. The third eye is not depicted for Śiva in this image. A long garland is shown as hanging below with loose ends that reaches below his knees besides some *haras* and necklaces around his neck. In front of him stands the demon *Jalandhara* holding the *chakra* with his two hands folded in front of his chest. He wears *kirīṭamakūṭa* on his head and his face is turned to his left looking towards Śiva. His dress and ornamentation are similar to that of the image of Śiva and both of them are shown with a single pair of arms. Both the images are demonstrated as more humanly and the height of the demon is less in comparison with that of the standing figure of Śiva.

The *Śrīkanṭhēśvara* temple at Nanjangund (Lat. 12.11 N; Long. 76.69 E) is one of the biggest temples of Karnataka and it is situated on the right bank of the river *Kapila*, a tributary of river *Kāvērī*. The god of the temple is also known as *Nanjundesvara* referring to Śiva as the devourer of the great poison (*hālāhala*) that emerges out during the churning of the milk ocean according to Hindu tradition. The temple has several stone sculptures and one thousand *liṅgas* besides the 63 *Nāyanārs* who became very popular because of their great devotion to Lord Śiva. In this relief sculpture (**Pl.1; Fig.2**), Śiva is shown on an elevated *pīṭha*, with two hands holding an umbrella and *kamaṇḍalu* in his right and left hands, respectively. A third eye is shown vertically on his forehead. The *jaṭas* of the deity are neatly arranged as a bundle over his head and he wears necklaces around his neck, short *yajñōpavīta*, *udarabandha*, *kuṇḍalas* on ears, *bhujavalayas* on his shoulders, armlets and bracelets on his hands. He wears the *ardhōrūka* that is tied around his waist and covers his body from waist to above knee level. He wears a leg let with a small bell on his right leg and anklets. He wears sandals on his feet and is shown in the act of moving away with his right leg placed forward and the body below his waist is slightly turned to the left while the upper part of the body is stiff and facing to the front.

The entire stone sculpture of Śiva is surrounded by *prabhāmaṇḍala* supported by two pillars with an arch above decorated with *kīrttimukha* at the top and a stylised lion on either side at shoulder level. In front of this figure and to the left of Śiva is represented a standing figure of the demon on a separate *pīṭha* with a long sword held by his left hand that rests on his shoulder. While the sculpture of Śiva is carved as a life-size figure, the demon is shown in small proportion and the height of the figure reaches approximately to the waist of Śiva. No additional arms are shown for *Jalandhara* and

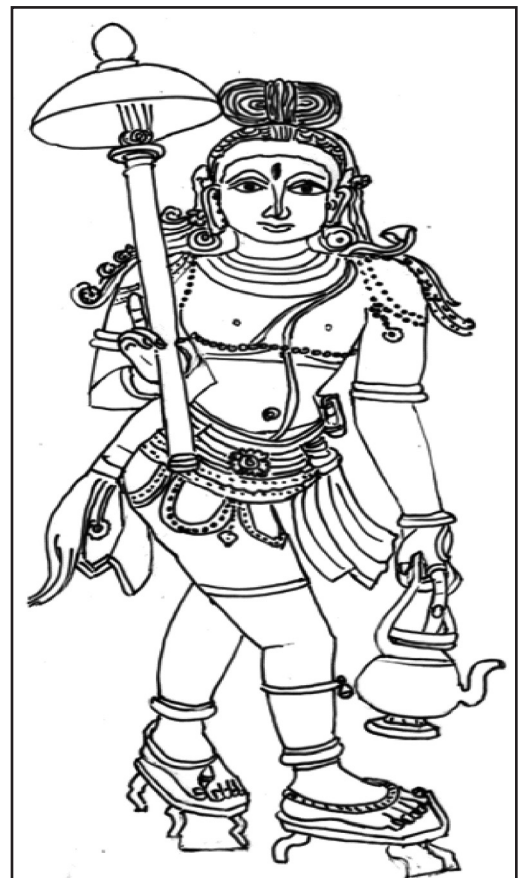


Fig. 2: Śiva as *Jalandharāri*, *Śrīkanṭhēśvara* Temple, Nanjangund

both the hands are shown in front of his chest holding the weapon *chakra*. He wears *kirītamakuṭa* and all other ornaments on his body and a long *dhōti* cover his lower body from the waist to ankles. It is interesting to note that both the figures are depicted simply as ordinary human beings without any additional pairs of hands. While *Śiva* is shown as an ascetic with *jaṭas* over his head, an umbrella and *kamaṇḍalu*; the demon is portrayed as a warrior-king with *kirītamakuṭa* and a long sword in his hands. A clear-cut distinction is made between the main figure and that of the demon concerning the iconometric proportions suggesting the overpowering nature of the god and his success over the demon. The sculptor is successful in conveying the idea of the completion of the task of vanquishing the demon and moving away from the scene by way of turning his lower body to his left and at the same time giving audience to the devotees through the carving of the upper body as stiff and facing to the front. The iconography of the *Jalandharāri* form of *Śiva* of Nanjangund agrees well with the description of the deity given in *Śrītattvanidhi*. Another relief sculpture carved on the shaft of a pillar in the *maṇḍapa* hall of *Aruṇāchalēśvara* temple at Tiruvannamalai can be identified based on the mythology and the iconography as that of *Jalandharāri mūrti* (Pl.2; Fig. 3).



Fig. 3: *Śiva* and *Jalandhara*, Relief sculpture on a pillar, *Aruṇāchaleśvara* Temple, Tiruvannamalai

Śiva is shown in this bas-relief sculpture with four arms. *Aṅkuśa* (elephant goad) and black-buck are displayed in his upper right and left hands, respectively. The natural right hand is bent at the elbow is turned towards the demon with *tarjanīhastā* (threatening hand gesture) while the front left hand is in *dōlā hastā*. The third eye on his forehead is not visible. He wears a *jaṭāmakuṭa* that is decorated with flowers. *Kuṇḍalas*, *hāras*, *bhujavalayas*, armlets, *kaṅkaṅas*, and *mēkhalas* adorn the body of *Śiva*. A long *dhōti* covers the lower body of *Śiva* as well as the demon while the upper bodies are bare. Both *Śiva* and the demon are shown as standing barefooted and share the same *pīṭha*. The size of the two figures is different and the height of the demon is less in comparison to the figure of *Śiva*. The demon is shown with *kirītamakuṭa* on his head that was split into two halves vertically by the *chakra*. The

chakra is shown here as facing to the front fully on its flat surface in the stationary position which can be referred to as *sama-sthiti chakra* (S.K. Ramachandra Rao 1989, vol.II:195). The two hands of the demon are shown as joined in front of his chest in the hand gesture of *añjali mudra*. The iconography of this relief sculpture is not in accordance with the textual description given in *Śrītattvanidhi*. Śiva is depicted here with four arms with Saivite attributes in his hands and not as an ascetic holding umbrella and water pot. Although the demon is shown here with *añjali hasta* no sword is depicted. *Chakra* is shown prominently in between the sliced head of the demon. Carving of the wheel against the head of the person standing in front of Śiva enables us in the proper identification of this bas-relief sculpture on a pillar as that of *Jalandharāri mūrti* form of Śiva. This sculpture of the *Vijayanagara* period of the fourteenth or fifteenth century CE demonstrates the legend of Śiva punishing the demon who was invincible and who cannot be killed by anyone except Śiva as he was born out of the seed of Śiva. Though we can observe several deviations in the iconography of this form of Śiva from the textual description the sculptor has successfully demonstrated the main theme of the legend by emphasizing the depiction of *chakra* as cutting the head of the demon and representing Śiva in his usual form with four arms and not as an ordinary ascetic. The entire legend of punishing *Jalandhara* by Śiva is portrayed succinctly in this mono-scenic narrative relief that could be categorised as the synoptic mode. The sculpture narrates the idea of the undue desire of the demon for *Pārvatī* and how Śiva undermines the power of the demon with the loss of the chastity of his wife as well as his life by the *Sudarśana Chakra* evolved by Śiva from the Ocean.

Thus the study brings to light for the first time two different iconic representations of *Jalandharāri mūrti*, a *Samhāramūrti* form of Śiva from Karnataka and Tamil Nadu states which belong to the *Vijayanagara* period (fourteenth to sixteenth century CE). So far we do not come across the sculptural representations of *Jalandharāri mūrti* from North India or Eastern India or its reference in the North Indian iconographic texts like *Aparājītapriṅchha*, *Rūpamaṇḍana* and *Dēvatāmūrti Prakaraṇa*. It is interesting to note that while the sculpture from Nanjangund is strictly following the iconographical description given in *Śrītattvanidhi*, the narrative sculpture on a pillar of the temple at Tiruvannamalai does not tally with the textual iconographic description. The identification of the sculpture attempted here is made possible owing to the narrative of the legend contained in the *Purāṇas* and the emphasis laid on *chakra* splicing the head of the demon into two halves in the sculpture.

Bibliography

- Arunachalam M 1983, the *Śaivāgamas*, Kalakshetra Publication Press, Tiruvanmiyur, Madras
 Doniger Wendy O Flaherty 1981, *Śiva the Erotic Ascetic*, Oxford
 Indira Visvanathan Peterson 1989, *Poems to Śiva Hymns of the Tamil Saints*, Princeton
 Kramrisch Stella 1981, *The Presence of Śiva*, Princeton University Press, Princeton
 Ramachandra Rao S.K. 1989, *Pratimā-Kōśa* vol. II, Bangalore
 Ramachandra Rao S.K. 1993, *Śrītattvanidhi* vol. I, Hampi
 Rangasvami Dorai 1958, *The Religion and Philosophy of Tēvāram* volume I, Madras
 Rao T.A.G. 1971(Reprint) (1914) *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Motilal Banarasidas, Delhi
 Shastri J.L. 1979 (edited) *Śiva Purāṇa*, vol II, Delhi
 Shastri J.L. 1998(Reprint) (1973) *Liṅga Purāṇa*, Delhi
 Wilkins W.J. 2015 (1882) *Hindu Mythology, Vedic and Pauranic*, Library of Alexandria, Alexandria
 Wodeyar, Mummadi Krishnaraja 1917, *Śrītattvanidhi*, Oriental Research Institute, Mysore.

Illustrations



Plate 1: *Jalandharāri mūrti, Śrīkanṭhēśvara temple, Nanjangund, (Karnataka)*



Plate 2: *Jalandharāri mūrti, Aruṇāchalēśvara temple, Tiruvannamalai*