

## From Purāṇic to Folk: the ‘Kirātārjunīyam Ballade’ and Visuals

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**Abstract.** The present article aims to examine a folk literary motif from the ‘Kirātārjunīyam’. Kirāta (hunter-Śiva) and Arjuna once needed to clash with each other during the forest life of the Pāṇḍavas. Arjuna wanted to obtain the coveted *pāśupatiāstra* from Śiva that could only be awarded to a soldier of mettle to wield the missile efficiently. Arjuna undertook hazardous *tapas* pleased with which Śiva tested Arjuna and finally awarded the *astra*. This myth appears in the *Mahābhārata* dated sometime in the fifth century BCE and its folk origin may get back to the immoral past. This story was retold in a classical work by the poet Sanskrit Bhāravi in eighteen cantos. The article examines a key motif relating to the Penance of Arjuna (cf. the Māmallapuram bas relief) from the Kirātārjunīyam episode, called *pañcāgnitapas* and how the Penance of Arjuna is retold in the ballad understudy? Several folk motifs of *kuṛavaṇ-kuratti* of *Kuṛālakkuravañci* are illustrated in a later phase of the art in Tamilnadu (e.g., the Thousand-Pillared Hall of the Great Maturai Temple of the Nāyaka period). Kirātārjunīyam was a popular motif in sculptural art though the ages.

**Keywords:** Myth; Folk; Classical; Visuals; Performance; Tamil Redactions.

### [es] Del purāṇic al folk: la balada y los visuales ‘Kirātārjunīyam’

**Resumen.** El presente artículo tiene como objetivo examinar un motivo literario popular en el “Kirātārjunīyam”. Kirāta (Śiva cazador) y Arjuna lucharon uno contra otro en el transcurso de la vida de los Pāṇḍavas en el bosque. Arjuna quería obtener el codiciado *pāśupatiāstra* de Śiva, que solo podría otorgarse a un soldado valiente que fuera capaz de empuñar el arma de manera eficiente. Arjuna emprendió un peligroso *tapas* complacido con el cual Śiva puso a prueba a Arjuna y finalmente le otorgó el arma. Este mito aparece en el *Mahābhārata*, datado en algún momento del siglo V a. C. y su origen folclórico se remonta al pasado inmortal. Esta historia fue retomada en una obra clásica del poeta Bhāravi en dieciocho cantos. El artículo examina un motivo clave relacionado con la Penitencia de Arjuna (cf. el bajorrelieve de Māmallapuram) del episodio de Kirātārjunīyam, llamado *pañcāgnitapas* y cómo se vuelve a narrar la Penitencia de Arjuna en la balada en estudio. Varios motivos populares de *kuṛavaṇ-kuratti* de *Kuṛālakkuravañci* se ilustran en una fase posterior del arte en Tamilnadu (por ejemplo, la Sala de los Mil Pilares del gran templo Maturai del período Nāyaka). Kirātārjunīyam fue un motivo popular en el arte escultórico a lo largo del tiempo.

**Palabras clave:** Mito; gente; clásico; visuales; actuación; redacciones tamil.

**Summary.** 1. Introduction: *Kirātārjunīyam* in literature and art though the ages. 2. Kirāta in the *Mahābhārata*. 3. ‘*Kirātārjunīyam*’ in *Pañca-Pāṇṭavar Vaṇavācam*. 4. The Myth. 5. Visual Culture of *Kirātārjunīyam*. 6. Folk elements and *ballade* substance. 7. Conclusions. 8. Written sources and bibliographical references.

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### 1. Introduction

Classical literature may have their roots in bardic poems of immemorial origin. Similarly, itihāsic-purāṇic episodes are likely to be based on ballads, e.g., the *Rāmāyaṇa* of Vālmīki supposed to have been derived from the popular recitals of the *sutas*-Kuśīlava.<sup>2</sup> Clas-

sical poems in Sanskrit and Tamil (e.g., the several versions of ‘*Kōvalaṇ-katai*’) came to be recast in folk forms that may be called ballad (sixteenth century and after). Ballad is a simple spirited narrative poem, rooted in French *ballade* meaning “a dancing song”; cf. Deutsch *bal'lade*, balladry *bal'leden-dichtung*. The aim of retelling popular mythologies in a language

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<sup>2</sup> Kuśīlava ‘a bard, herald, actor, mime, performer’, see Andrea Acri, “More on Birds, Ascetics and Kings in Central Java *Kakavin Rāmāyaṇa*, 24.111-115 and 25.19-22”, in *From Lanka Eastwards*, eds. Andrea Acri, Helen Creese and Arlo Griffiths (Leiden: Brill, 2006) 69, 79, fn. 71.

couched in folk literary style was intended to enact these dance-dramas in-country theatres, called *terukkūttu* when cinema was unknown.<sup>3</sup> Several hundreds of such manuscripts may be found all over India in several languages, and oral traditions. The present article aims to examine a folk literary motif from the ‘Kirātārjunīyam’. Kirāta (hunter-Śiva) and Arjuna had to clash with each other during the forest life of the Pāṇḍavas. Arjuna wanted to obtain the coveted *pāśupatāstra* from Śiva that could only be awarded to a soldier of mettle to wield the missile efficiently. Arjuna undertook hazardous *tapas* pleased with which Śiva tested Arjuna (leading to a *malla-yuddha* “duel”) and finally awarded the *astra* ‘missile’. This myth appears in the *Mahābhārata* (chap. 167, *Vana Parva*) dated sometime in the fifth century BCE and its folk origin may get back to the archaic time. This story was retold in a classical work by the poet Sanskrit Bhāravi in eighteen cantos (anterior to 634 CE). The myth was adapted to Tamil literary taste; e.g., Villiputtūrār *Pāratam* (14<sup>th</sup> century CE) and Kaccilaiyār *Makāpārataccurukkam* (18<sup>th</sup> century). During the *terukkūttu* saga of Tamil culture, a folk work called *Pañca-Pāṇḍavar Vaṇavāvam* (Forest Life of the Pañca-Pāṇḍavas) was written to meet the need of country theatres. This succinct article examines a key motif relating to the Penance of Arjuna (cf. the Māmallapuram bas relief of the imperial Pallava period) from the *Kirātārjunīyam* episode. Called *pañcāgni-tapas*, how the Penance of Arjuna is retold in the ballad under study? Several folk motifs of *kuṛavaṇ-kuṛatti* of *Kuṛṛālakkuravañci* are illustrated in a later phase of the art in Tamilnadu (e.g., the Thousand-Pillared Hall of the Great Maturai Temple of the Nāyaka period). *Kirātārjunīyam* was a popular motif in sculptural art though the ages.

## 2. Kirāta in the Mahābhārata

John Dowson, early authority (later 19<sup>th</sup> century) writing on Hindu mythologies enumerates the myth of Kirāta in a few words. Kirātas were “foresters and mountaineers living in the mountains east of Hindustan”.<sup>4</sup> They are described in the *Rāmāyaṇa* as “islanders, who eat raw flesh, live in the waters, and are man-eaters” (men below and tigers above). Their females are described as “gold-colored and pleasant to behold”, identified with “Cirrhadæ” on the Cōlamaṇṭalam coast by classic writers.<sup>5</sup> Kirātin “crowned with a diadem” is a title of Arjuna and his patriarch, Indra.

An extract from the *Mahābhārata* would reveal when Yudhiṣṭhira lost his kingdom by gambling, and the

Pāṇḍavas were exiled to the forest for thirteen years. Arjuna proceeded to the Himālayas to propitiate the gods and obtain celestial weapons. To obtain the powerful missile, *pāśupatāstra* Arjuna undertook the *pañcāgni-tapas*,<sup>6</sup> and once needed to fight with Śiva who came in disguise as Kirāta and obtained the coveted missile.<sup>7</sup> Indra, Varuṇa, Yama, and Kubera had their share in testing the valor of Arjuna to award celestial weapons. This mythology was later elaborated by Bhāravi in *Kirātārjunīyam*.<sup>8</sup>

The Kirātas seems to be an ancient aboriginal tribe famous since the *Mahābhārata* times (anterior to c. 500 BCE)<sup>9</sup>. Oral mythologies and ballads of the pre-CE are likely to have influenced in the interpolation of a myth relating to the confrontation between Śiva and Arjuna in the *Mahābhārata*. This folk idiom over centuries of telling and retelling reenters the folk circle when the need arose in the post-16<sup>th</sup> century Tamil literature, e.g., the *Pañca-Pāṇḍavar Vaṇavācam*. The formula in this process of literary transaction is:<sup>10</sup>

The folk through itihasic is the root of the cultivation of classicism.

The *Mahābhārata* seems to have been retold in Tamil during the later Pallava period, e.g., the *Pāratam* of Peruntēvaṇār. This work is not extant but for 830 poems cited in other works<sup>11</sup>. The Tamil *bhakti* hymns of the Nāyaṇmār have codified a lot of material on the subject<sup>12</sup>. The *Pāratam* of Villiputtūrār (14<sup>th</sup> century CE) and *Makāpārataccurukkam* of Kaccilaiyār (18<sup>th</sup> century CE) are later works. These works have been cited in articles on the sculptures of *Kirātārjunīyam*<sup>13</sup>; unnoticed

<sup>6</sup> Raju Kalidos, “Stone Cars and Rathamaṇḍapas”, *East and West* 34, no. 1-3 (1984): fig. 5; Michael D. Rabe, *The Great Penance at Māmallapuram. Deciphering a Visual Text* (Chennai: Institute of Asian Studies, 2001), pl. 7; Hans Teye Bakker and Peter C. Bisschop, “The Quest for the Pāśupata Weapon the Gateway of the Mahādeva Temple at Madhyamikā (Nagarī)”, in *Holy Ground: Where Art and Text Meet*, edited by Hans Teye Bakker, (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 251, fig. 38

<sup>7</sup> Vettam Mani, *Purāṇic Encyclopaedia* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1996), 412.

<sup>8</sup> Noted in an inscription dated in 634, Bhāravi is linked with the founder of the Eastern Calukya dynasty, Viṣṇuvardhana or Siṃhaviṣṇu of Kāñci, and also the Gaṅgā Durvīṇita; “but all this is very doubtful”: Nilakanta Sastri, *A History of South India* (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1971), 344; Indira Viswanathan Petersen, *Design and Rhetoric in Sanskrit Court Epic* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), 23.

<sup>9</sup> Arthur A. MacDonnell, *A History of Sanskrit Literature* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1979), 240, date for the great Indian epic is “about the fifth century B.C”. John Brockington, *The Sanskrit Epics* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), judgment is reserved (see Raju Kalidos Kesava Rajarajan, “Reflections on Rāma-Setu in South Asian Tradition”, *QJMS* 105, no. 3 (2014): 1-14; “The Virāt Rāma and Monster Kabandha”, *QJMS* 106, no. 1 (2015): 8-16. We have been repeatedly telling that Sanskrit epics and classical literature should be dated taking the classical Tamil sources in due account.

<sup>10</sup> Raju Kalidos, “Tamil Literary Traditions and their Relevance in the study of Indian Arts”, in *Glimpses of Indian History and Art Reflection on the Past, Perspectives for the Future*, eds. Tiziana Lorenzetti and Fabio Scialpi, (Rome: Sapienza University of Rome, 2012), 58

<sup>11</sup> Nainar Subrahmanian, *An Introduction to Tamil Literature* (Chennai: CLS, 1981), 32.

<sup>12</sup> This data is earlier than the *Pāratam* of Peruntēvaṇār that is considered to be a contemporary of Nandivarman III (c. 846-69 CE).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. the two articles of M. Nagarajan, “Kirāta in the Later Medieval Art of Tamilnadu”, *East and West* 43, no. 1-4 (1993): 295-300; Krishnamoorthi Kandan, “Kirātārjunīyam in Early Indian Art”, *Annali dell’Istituto Universitario Orientale* 51, no. 4 (1991): 436-438.

<sup>3</sup> Indira V. Petersen, *Poems to Śiva, The Hymns of the Tamil Saints* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1991), 3; Lidia Sudyka, “Kirātārjunīya in South India: The Story as Depicted in Literature and Art with a Special Reference to the Lepakshi Temple”, in *Interrelations of Indian Literature and Arts*, ed. Lidia Sudyka, (Kraków: Księgarnia Akademicka, 2011), 161, figs. 19-20.

<sup>4</sup> John Dowson, *A Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology & Religion Geography-History-Literature* (Rupa: Calcutta, 1998), 22-23, 158.

<sup>5</sup> William Joseph Wilkins, *Hindu Mythology: Vedic and Puranic* (New Delhi: Rupa, 2000), 158, fn. 421.

<b>Folk-ballad</b>	<b>Itihāsic</b>
<b>Sanskrit:</b> <b>pre-Epic folk <i>Mahābhārata Kiratājuniya</i></b>	
<b>Tamil:</b> <b><i>Pañca-Pāṇṭavar-vaṇavacam</i></b>	
<b>Classical</b>	<b>Folk-ballad</b>

Table 1. Process of literary transaction. Source: R.K.K. Rajarajan.

by scholars working on literary criticism<sup>14</sup>. The *Tēvāram* hymns providing vital idioms have not been considered by earlier scholars<sup>15</sup>.

The rich data from the *Tēvāram* presents an interesting picture of the ‘Kirātārjunīyam’ mythology<sup>16</sup>. The *Tēvāram*-[T] calls Kirāta ‘Vēṭaṇ’ (T 1.42.3, 1.43.3) and *maṛavaṇ* (T 5.182.5), cf. *eyiṇar/vēṭar* (*Cilappatikāram* 12, *Vēru* 4-5). Arjuna is ‘Aruccuṇaṇ’ (T 2.229.9), ‘Pārttaṇ’ (T 1.62.5), ‘Taṇaṇcayan’ (T 4.43.5) and ‘Vicayan’ (T 1.44.8). The missile is *pācupatam* (T 1.62.5, 4.7.10) that was a golden staff, *poṇṇetunkōl* (T 2.2.65.8). The wild boar is *paṇṇi* (T 4.58.1, 4.9.4.1), *kēlal* (T 7.66.4) and *varākam* (T 6.293.9)<sup>17</sup>, cf. *ēṇam*-493 in the ballad (*infra*). The Kirāta’s fitting included garments made of skin, *tōluṭai* (T 5.146.2), and that he was a *kuṛavaṇ* (T 7.18.6), cf. *kuṛṛālakkuravaṇci*<sup>18</sup>. Arjuna is signified as the son of Pāṇḍu, ‘Pāṇṭuvīṇ-makaṇ-Pārttaṇ’ (T 5.185.8), and that he carries the *kāṇṭivam/Gāṇḍīva* (T 6.282.4). Śiva is Pācupataṇ/Pāsupata (T 6.222.2, 7.20.5, 7.22.6, 8). Interestingly, the *sthala, vaṭa-tiru*-Mullaivāyil seems to have been dedicated to the cult-Mūrti Pāsupata as Cuntararmūrti-nāyaṇār invokes ‘Pācupatā’ in ten hymns (T 7.69.1-10, cf. Kandaswamy 2011: II, 1042-54); also, Tirumutukunṇam/Vṛddhācalam (T 1.131.2, cf. Ragunath 2014: 14-23).

Though cryptic, these notes are infinite riches in little rooms that suggest the *Tēvāram*-trio must have been familiar with the mythologies told in the *Mahābhārata* or/and some folk Tamil ballads of the seventh century CE. Bhāravi was probably a contemporary of Ṇāṇacam-pantar and Nāvukkaracar. Peruntēvaṇār came later who must have been familiar with the *Tēvāram* hymns if not

Bhāravi’s epic. Therefore, when the ‘Kirātārjunīyam’ myth was retold in Tamil later in the post-16<sup>th</sup> century the authors of these ballads must have been familiar with the *Tēvāram* hymns in addition to the pan-Indian epic, the *Mahābhārata* or its retelling in Tamil, e.g., Villiputtūrār-*Pāratam* and Kaccilaiyār’s *Makāpārataccurukkam* (see Jegannathacharya 1985). Scholars writing on ‘Kirātārjunīyam’ in art and literature have not considered the Tamil sources seriously<sup>19</sup>. Raju Kalidos has examined the *Tēvāram* hymns from the iconographical point of view<sup>20</sup>. The theme was popular in the visual and dance-drama arts of the subcontinent down to contemporary time (Figs. 9-10). I have illustrated twelve specimens (Figs. 1-12) that include folk motifs<sup>21</sup>.

### 3. ‘Kirātārjunīyam’ in Pañca-Pāṇṭavar Vaṇavācam

This ballad gives no clue to its authorship or from where the MS was procured at the time of publication (maybe in the 1950s)<sup>22</sup>. The tenor of composition would suggest it was meant for *terukkūttu* performance which in those times was enacted late in the night beginning at

<sup>14</sup> See the works of Rabe, *The Great Penance at Māmallapuram*; Indira V. Peterson, *Design and Rhetoric in Sanskrit Court Epic. The Kirātārjunīya of Bhāravi* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003).

<sup>15</sup> Both the works Peterson, *Poems to Śiva...*, has the English translator of select hymns from the *Tēvāram* but has not considered the *Tēvāram* hymns in the light of *Kirātārjunīyam*.

<sup>16</sup> For a brief account of the Kirāta-Pāsupatāstramūrti based on the *Tēvāram* see Raju Kalidos, *Encyclopaedia of Hindu Iconography: Early Medieval* (Delhi: Sharada Publishing House, 2006), 2: 40-41.

<sup>17</sup> Rajukalidos Parthiban, “Varāha’s Tusks Rejuvenation of Mother Earth”, *Folia Orientalia* 62 (2020): 471-490.

<sup>18</sup> S. Kumaran, “Quixotic Motifs in South Indian Pillar Sculptures”, *QJMS* 106, no. 1 (2015): 44-50.

<sup>19</sup> T. Narayanan Ramachandran, “Kirātārjunīyam in Indian Art”, *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art* 18 (1950-1951): 1-110; Mirle Srinivasa Nagaraja Rao, *Kirātārjunīyam in Indian Art* (Delhi: Akam Kala Prakashan, 1979); Rabe, *The Great Penance at Māmallapuram*; Peterson, *Design and Rhetoric in Sanskrit Court Epic*.

<sup>20</sup> ‘Kirātārjunīyam’ was a popular theme in Indian art since at least the Pallava period (cf. Rao, *Kirātārjunīyam in Indian Art*). Raju Kalidos has reported not less than five specimens from the early medieval (c. 550-850) art of South India; e.g., Kailāsa of Ellora, Kailāsanātha at Kāñci (Kandan, *Kirātārjunīyam in Early Indian Art*: pl. 3, Shore temple at Māmallapuram (Kalidos, *Encyclopaedia of Hindu Iconography*, 2, pl. 75), Virūpākṣa temple Paṭṭadakkal, unfinished rock-cut cave at Viḷiṇam (H. Sarkar, *An Architectural Survey of the Temples of Kerala*, pl. 3-A). See Raju Kalidos Kesava Rajarajan, “Recollection of Memories: Hymns of Kāraikkālammaiyaṛ - South Indian Śaiva Iconography”, in *Śaiva Iconography: A Facet of Indian Art and Culture*, eds. Sudipa Ray Bandyopadhyay and Swati Mondal Adhikari (Kolkata: Sagnik Books, 2018), 77; Kāraikkālammaiyaṛ, *Arputatiruvantāti*, 62.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Nagarajan, “Kirāta in the Later Medieval Art”, fig. 2, has illustrated an interesting Marāṭha painting from the Kāviri delta. Devī is found walking with Śiva carrying a pot of ale on the head, followed by the small boys, Gaṇapati and Murukaṇ, and also dogs.

<sup>22</sup> The date of the first publication and the subsequent editions are not given. It seems the original script has been published unaltered as few of the illustrations are in the 1950s style of drawing.

10-11 and lasted till early in the morning. The ‘Kīrātār-junīyam’ is the last “act” that includes several “scenes”; e.g., Shakespeare’s plays consisting of five acts and five or more scenes. That means the “Forest Life of the Pañca-Pāṇḍavas” ends with Arjuna taking the *pāśupatāstra* from Śiva. The text on the subject is in about 520 lines, each line consisting of 5-6 words. The chapter number is 12, named ‘Kāla-Pairava-Vaṇam’ (Forest of Kāla-Bhairava). That is to say, the scene is set in the Forest of Kāla-Bhairava<sup>23</sup>.

#### 4. The Myth

The Pāṇḍavas had completed eleven years of exile and finally arrived at the Kālapayiravavaṇam<sup>24</sup> at the beginning of the twelfth year. The *ṛṣis* (sages) living in the forest meet them to say they were conducting penance for years together but had not yet got the *darśana* of Śiva. It is added they stood in the fire but could not find out the Lord; *pañcāgnitapas* is ear-marked (*tīyīṇil-nil-20*). The Pāṇḍavas were advised to visit the Kailāsa. Hearing these words, Arjuna moved to the Kailāsa and undertook a strenuous penance. The stage for his performance was set as follows placing one above the other (Fig. 1):

A *kampam-33* [*stambha*] measuring seventy feet high - seven full coconuts [*iḷanūr-34*] - seven wood-apple fruits [*viḷā-35*] - seven lime fruits [*eḷumiccai-36*] - seven areca-nuts [*koṭṭaiappākkku-37*] - seven red seed of crab’s eye [*kunṛimaṇi-38*] - seven mustards [*kaṭuku-39*] - seven needles [*ūci-40*] - seven red-oleander [*cevvalari-41*]

Arjuna stood up on this stage lifting one leg and conducted the *pañcāgni-tapas* (cf. Figs. 9-10)<sup>25</sup>; *akkiṇi-naṭuviruntāṇ-48* (cf. Rajarajan 2012: fig. 36). He was undaunted when the sun was scorching, rain torrential and snowfall heavy. It was an *akōratavam/agh-oratapas* and *aruntavam* (meticulous penance). Unable to bear the conflagration arising from the *tapas*, Śiva ordered his attendant to summon the presence of Māya-Viṣṇu, Mayilōṇ-Murukaṇ, Pīramaṇ-Brahmā, Piḷḷaiyār-Gaṇapati, Vāyu, Varuṇaḷ, Iti (God of Thunder) and Intiraṇ-Indra. Listening to the summoning, the gods arrived seated on their respective vehicles: Kariya-Māl (Black-Viṣṇu) on *karuṭan-Garuḍa*, Indra on *āṇai-Airāvata*, Kaṇṭaṇ-Skanda on *mayil-peacock*, and Piḷḷaiyār-Gaṇapati on *peruccāḷi-bandicoot*. The *muppatu-mukkōṭi-tēvar* (thirty-three crores of gods) was present<sup>26</sup>. Śiva spoke to Viṣṇu telling his solitude is disturbed

and wanted to find out who is doing the fire-generating *tapas* [Tamil *tapacu-360*]. He was told it was the son of Pāṇḍu soliciting the Lord’s grace<sup>27</sup>. Śiva pretended [*naṭi-491* “act”] to say he could not grant boons to anyone.

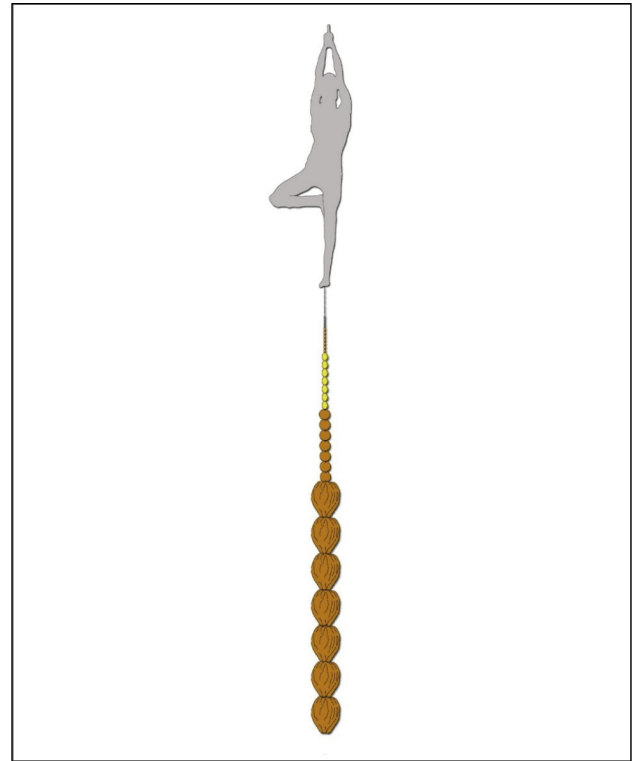


Figure 1. Arjuna performing *pañcāgnitapas*. Source: Vijaya-Raghavan Vira-Visodhana.

Śiva invited Vāyu [Kāṛṛaracaṇ-138 “wind king”] and ordered him to ruin the *tapas*. Viṣṇu, called Māyavaṇ/Māyaḷ ran fast and informed of the brooding danger. He was advised to withstand the tempest with vigor. Vāyu could not shake Arjuna and was crest-fallen. Arjuna told Vāyu he wanted the *pācupatam-186* from Śiva otherwise he would “break his skull”, “cut the head”, “burn the body” and “embrace death”. Vāyu blessed him success in his endeavor and left giving his best *astra* (*vāyuvāstra*). The firmness of Arjuna was informed to Śiva. Vāyu said he was helpless.

Śiva then invited the God of Thunder<sup>28</sup>, Itiyaracaṇ-206 who was commanded to destroy Arjuna’s *tapas*. ‘Kōṭaiyiṭipakavāṇ’-213 (God of mid-summer Thunder or “king of thunder”) was also defeated and returned offering the thunderbolt-*astra* [*Itiyāstiram-234*. An important dimension of the confrontation with “Thunder” was that Arjuna demanded a boon to the effect that the Thun-

<sup>23</sup> See *Śilpaśāstras*, K. S. Subrahmanya Śāstri ed. and transl. *Śrūtatanidhi*. (Tañcāvūr: Sarasvati Mahal Library, 2001), 126-131 and Jeyapriya Rajarajan, *Terrific Manifestations of Śiva: Virabhadra*. (New Delhi: Sharada, 2009), 2-3 list *aṣṭāṣṭa* (sixty-four) Bhairavas brought under eight batches of eight (8 x 8 = 64).

<sup>24</sup> The reference to the text is denoted by the line number following a word, e.g., Pañcavar-1 means the word Pañcavar (i.e., Pañca-Pāṇḍavas) appears in line 1 of the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter on ‘Kālapairavavaṇam’. Pañcavar also denotes the Pāṇḍyas of Maturai.

<sup>25</sup> This is purely a folk *ballade* description. No illustration of this theme is yet detected in the plastic arts.

<sup>26</sup> This invocation is purely a dramatic convention in *terukkūtu* performance. The plays being with an invocation to Gaṇapati and

the multitude of gods: *muntimunti-Vināyakarē-muppatu-mukkōṭi-tēvarkaḷē...*

<sup>27</sup> In this connection the names of the other four Pāṇḍavas are noted; Tarumar/Dharmarāja, Vīmar-Bhīma, Nakulaṇ-Nakula and Cakātēvaṇ-Sahadeva.

<sup>28</sup> ‘Itiyaracaṇ’ is King of Thunderbolt that denotes Indra. No god for *itī* is known in Vedic-Sanskrit or Caṅkam-Tamil tradition. The folk are free to create new gods based on names of natural forces, e.g., *mīṇḷal-aracaṇ* “king of lightning”.



Figure 2. Śiva-Arjuna duel, Upper Śivālaya, Badāmī, Western Calukya, 7th Century. Source: R.K.K. Rajarajan.



Figure 3. The Arjuna's *tapas* bas-relief, Māmallapuram, Pallava, 7th Century. Source: R.K.K. Rajarajan.

der-God should not attack any person when the name “Arjuna” is uttered (popular saying in country-side)<sup>29</sup>:

*Kali-yukattil-eṅkē-yiṭittālum/ Arccuṇā-veṅ-pēr-ār-virumpic- coṅṅālum/ nīr-otuṅkip-pōyviṭuvīr* [236-238]  
 “in the Kali age wherever it thunders, if anyone utters the name ‘Arjuna’ you [*iṭi*] must quit the place (without harming)”

“Thunder” offered the boon and ran away saying “leave me free” [*appā-viṭu*-342]. To this day the folk believes when it thunders uttering the name “Arjuna” protects them. “Thunder” returned to Śiva and told him “even if the Cosmos is turned upside down, Arjuna could not be defeated” [361].

Śiva sent a battalion of white-ants [*cellukaḷ/kaṛai-yāṅ*-374/389], Varuṇaṅ-398, *kaḷuku*-Kūḷi-440 (eagles and ghosts), killing *kuruvi*-441 (tiny birds), and *kuḷavi*-442 (wasps)<sup>30</sup>. All these pernicious elements were



Figure 4. Śiva and Arjuna shooting boar, narrative miniature, Paṭṭadakkal, Western Calukya, 7th Century. Source: R.K.K. Rajarajan.

annihilated. The noses of Kūḷis were cut and the poisonous beaks of eagles and wasps broken (ll. 450-451). All the efforts of Śiva to foil the penance of Arjuna proved futile. Arjuna was steadfast to obtain the divine missile from Śiva.

<sup>29</sup> Arjuna is popularly known as Dhanañjaya in the Pātāleśvaram Nākanātar Temple near Tiruvārūr, to get rid of the effects of thunder storm (Ramachandran, *Kirātārjunīyam in Indian Art*, 94).

<sup>30</sup> *Cellukaḷ, kaḷuku, Kūḷi* (see *Kalīnkattupparāni*, cf. Raju Kalidos Kesava Rajarajan, “Pañcanṛtyasabhās: Dancing Halls Five”, *Religions of South Asia* 8, no. 2 (2014): 201-202), *kuruvi* (cf. *kārikkuruvi* in *Tiruvilaiyāṭar Purāṇam*, Episode 47; Raju Kalidos Kesava Rajarajan and Jeyapriya-Rajarajan, *Mīnākṣi-Sundareśvara: Tiruvilaiyāṭar*



Figure 5. Śiva-Arjuna duel, Hoysalesvara Temple, Halebidu, Hoysala, 12th Century. Source: R.K.K. Rajarajan.

Śiva's *tiruvīlaiyāṭal*-205 (sacred sport) was not complete. To confuse Arjuna, Śiva sought shelter in secret *maṅṭapam/maṅḍapa* (pavilions) such as *kaṛpūra*- (camphor), *veṅṅīru*- (hot-water), *vipūti*- (sacred ash) and *pāṭāla*- (underground). Arjuna released effective *astras* to remove these illusions.



Figure 6. Śiva and Arjuna fisticuffs, Amṛtapura Temple, Amṛtēśvara, Hoysala, 12th Century. Source: R.K.K. Rajarajan.

Finally, Śiva decided to have a confrontation with Arjuna. He invited Ēmaṅ-493 (Yama)<sup>31</sup>, converted him a *māyā-varāha* (illusion-boar) and shot it (Figs. 1, 3-8). Kāṅṭīvaṅ-494 (Gāṅḍīva-Arjuna) rescued the boar. It was safely brought to Arjuna's cottage and kept under custody<sup>32</sup>. Śiva came to the spot disguised a Kirāta, *vēṭaṅ*. It is added Piramaṅ-Brahmā, Vināyakaṅ-Gaṅapati, Kantaṅ-Skanda, Tēvēntiraṅ-Devendra and Māyavar-Māya-Viṣṇu accompanied him in the guise of hunters. Devī was Vēṭacci (Figs. 9-10), i.e., Kirātā, cf. Śiva/Śivā,

Kirātī is the celestial Gaṅgā<sup>33</sup>. They were fitted with the dress and ornaments of hunters such as leather-chapels, hides as garments and caps [*kullā*]<sup>34</sup>. They were followed by dogs, *karunāy* (black) and *cennāy* (brown). Śiva negotiated with Arjuna<sup>35</sup> to release the boar saying it was his property and that he needed it to feed his starving family. Arjuna talks of *ahiṃsā* and says it is not ethics to kill living creatures. Ultimately both engage in fisticuffs and roll-on earth<sup>36</sup>. Pārvati/Pārvatī was viewing this duel with wonder. Since Pārvatī viewed the scene, Arjuna got the name Pārtha "king"<sup>37</sup>. Pleased with the heroism of Arjuna, Śiva offered the coveted *pāśupatāstra*<sup>38</sup>.

<sup>33</sup> Dowson, *A Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology*, 108. Most of the figures under study, depicts Kirāta and Kirātī, while Tārācuram renderings is different. Kirātī is not present during the combat, but in the climax panel Kirāta and Kirātī shown seated on the Nandi and delivering the weapon. It is interesting to note the presence of Kirāta and Kirātī in *Mahābhārata*, while *Kirātārjuniya* omits the Kirātī character. As pointed out by both Petersen (*Design and Rhetoric...*, 182) and Sudyka (*Kirātārjuniya in South India*, 148), in the Sanskrit Court Poem the erotic-mood is tasteless at the battle-field. For the Classical Tamil Poem, both the *vīra* 'bravery' and *śṛṅgāra* 'erotic' moods are relevant and goes together (see *Kuruntokai*, *Ātimantiyār*-5). The best example from Tamil poem is *erutaluvutal* (today popularly *jallikattu*), the brave hero chases his beautiful heroine in the bloody bull-fight.

<sup>34</sup> *Kullā* is a folk word, the equal of *topi/toppi*. In pedestrian parlance means "to fool one"; cf. a movie song of the 1950s (in 'Gulebahāvali') *allāvē-ṅiyum-ēmāntiṭṭa-pōṭṭiṭṭuvāṅ-kullāve* "even if God (*allā*), you are fitted with a cap to make you a fool".

<sup>35</sup> Arjuna in this context is addressed 'Caṅkamar'/Jaṅgama, a class of Vīraśaivas or Liṅgayats (TL III, 1223).

<sup>36</sup> The wrestling between Śiva and Arjuna is more popular in Hoysala temples, especially at the Amṛtēśvara temple, Amṛtapura (cf. Fig. 6) and in the Cennakeśava Temple at Somanathapura.

<sup>37</sup> Vaman Shiram Apte, *The Student's Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 333, in Tamil *pār* means "see".

<sup>38</sup> Marguerite E. Adicēam, "Les images de Śiva dans l'inde du sud, 11. - Pāśupatamūrti", *Arts Asiatiques* 24 (1971): 31, figs. 1-8, works on Pāśupatāstramūrti, classifies two types of imagery, *astradevas* (figs. 1-3) and Pāśupatamūrti (figs. 4-8); Rabe, *The Māmallapuram Prasasti*, 226, fn. 122, hints that the belly masked dwarf as the personified *pāśupatāstra* in the Arjuna's Penance relief at Māmallapuram (cf. Fig. 3). Similarly, a *gaṇa* 'dwarf' is presenting the *pāśupatāstra* to Arjuna in the high Cōla temples (cf. Figs. 7 - 8). Both the Cōla visual narratives, clearly depict a dwarf image presenting the *astra* to Arjuna. Bakker and Bisschop, *The Quest for the Pāśupata Weapon* (251, fig. 38) identify the Rajaona (Bihar), four-armed chubby form as the *astra* 'missile' itself, but in the South Indian visuals the similar chubby dwarf is just two-handed carrying an arrow '*astra*', as if giving it to Arjuna. While Arjuna is in *aṅjalibandha*, and in a receiving mode. In the Southeast art, Arjuna receives the weapon from Śiva himself (cf. Boreth Ly, "Narrating the Death of Drona and Bhurisravas at the Baphuon", *Arts Asiatiques* 58 (2003): 134-137, fig. 8; Adalbert J. Gail, "Narrative Panels from the Baphuon temple, Angkor Thom", *Pandanus* 16/1 *Nature in Literature, Art, Myth and Ritual* 10, no. 1 (2016): 7-28, figs. 8, 12; Peterson, *Design and Rhetoric...*, 266, fn. 55, brings-in Bhāravi's description and points out

<sup>31</sup> It was a demon called Mūka (Wilkins, *Hindu Mythology*, 421; Petersen, *Design and Rhetoric...*, 139-160).

<sup>32</sup> All the wild boars in the forest were brought under the custody of Pārtīvaṅ-496 (Pārtha-Pārtīvaṅ-Arjuna) by shooting an arrow: *kāṅakattu-panṛikalai-kāṅṭīvaṅ-ampai-viṭṭāṅ* (500).



Figure 7. ‘Kirātārjunīyam’ story, Bṛhadīśvara Temple, Tañcāvūr, Middle Cōla, 10<sup>th</sup> Century.  
Source: R.K.K. Rajarajan.

## 5. Visual Culture of *Kirātārjunīyam*

The largest relief sculpture of the story is the Arjuna’s *tapas* at Māmallapuram (Fig. 3). Similarly, the complete story is narrated in the ceiling murals of the *natyamandapa*, Vīrabhadra Temple, Lepākṣī (Fig. 11). Nowhere in Indian Art, the *Kirātārjunīyam* story received such an appreciation as in Lepākṣī.<sup>39</sup> The treatment of *Kirātārjunīyam* myth in visual culture is as follows:

- Most commonly the Arjuna and Kirāta is depicted in archery combat for the boar,
- In the Hoysala art, they both are engaged in wrestling (Fig. 6),
- Arjuna penance, standing with one leg is a common feature,
- The boar as a common feature<sup>40</sup>, in between the fighters,

- Śiva as a warrior with bow and arrow is Tripurāntaka in Indian iconography, Kirāta is another form depicted with bow and arrow as a hunter,<sup>41</sup>
- Arjuna receives the Pāśupatāstra from the dwarf,
- The dwarf as *astradeva* (see note 24),
- Śiva gives the Pāśupatāstra to Arjuna<sup>42</sup>.

The variety of *Kirātārjunīyam* depictions shows that there were regional variations in the myth and iconography. The visuals are regularly attributed to classical figuration and rarely with folk design (cf. Figs. 2, 10-13). Today the *utsavaberas* are adorned with folk attire, during the festivals (Fig. 10)<sup>43</sup>. In the pan-Indian typology, it is Kalyāṇasundaramūrti, while in Tamilnadu it is popularly Mīnākṣī-Sundareśvara *Kalyāṇam*. The former type at times may become a foreign term to the local populous.

## 6. Folk elements and ballade substance

An important clue to the date of the *Pañca-Pāṇṭavar-vaṇavācam* and its integral part ‘*Kirātār-*

the *astra* as *mūrti* ‘lord’ as the personified form and also the embodiment of Śiva. Pāśupatāstramūrti has multiple inlaid meanings, both in myth and visual culture. Those visual values can be understood only when the folk, regional and classical mythologies are clearly deciphered.

<sup>39</sup> The Story depicted in almost thirty-five meters of murals in the ceiling. For complete display of the mural, see Vijay Chandru and Nalini Rao, “Interactive Plan of Lepakshi Veerabhadraswamy Temple Natyamandapa Ceiling Paintings”, Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, July 8, 2020, <https://www.iiaed.org/South-Indian-Murals/Lepakshi/Veerabhadraswamy-temple/Natyamandapa/%20Ceiling/index.html>. Usually, the epic *Rāmāyaṇa* gets such a commemorative treatment under the Vijayanagara-Nāyaka rulers, both in sculpture and painting. Kirāta is a celebrated icon for the tribal hunter in Andhra and Tamilnāḍu. Śiva is Ceṅju-Mallaiya ‘the God of Wrestler for the Ceṅju tribes’, in the Mallikārjuna temple, Śrīśailam. See Lidia Sudyka, “*Virūpākṣa-vasantotsava-campū* of Ahobala or What Can Happen During the Hunting Festival”, *Cracow Indological Studies* 21, no. 1 (2019): 280-282.

<sup>40</sup> In Tamil literary traditions, the boar has shifting identities between Viṣṇu and Śiva. Viṣṇu’s Varāha *avatāra* and Śiva’s mother-swain form in the *Tiruvilaiyāṭṭar Purāṇam*, the *sthalamāhātmya* of the Mīnākṣī-Sundareśvara temple at Madurai (Raju Kalidos Kesava Rajarajan, “Legend of Madurai in Arts and Festivities”, in *Cultural*

*Contours of History and Archaeology*, eds. K. Krishna Naik and E. Siva Nagi Reddy (Delhi: B.R. Publications, 2015), 8: 3.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Sharada Srinivasan, “Techno-Cultural Perspectives on Medieval Southeast Asia and Southern India: Pallava Bronzes and Beyond”, in *Materializing Southeast Asia’s Past. Selected Papers from the 12th International Conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists*, eds. Marijke J. Klokke and Véronique Degroot (Singapore: NUS Press, 2013), 177, fig. 13.7.

<sup>42</sup> Two Cōla temples connected to the Pāśupatāstra myth are Sundareśvara Temple, Veṭṭakuṭi (sung by Nāṇacampantar) and Vijayanatēśvara Temple, Vijayamaṅkai (sung by Nāṇacampantar and Nāvukkaracar). For Southeast Asian visual example see Gail, Narrative Panels from the Baphuon temple, Angkor Thom: fig. 8.

<sup>43</sup> The Veṭṭakuṭi *utsavabera* is known as Veṭṭamūrti. The *utsavabera* bronze idol is classical in aesthetic appreciation and as brāhmanical deity. While the *utsavabera-ulā* ‘procession’ is folk in nature and attire. Because the procession and the festivals have more a regional color and they are not always same in the Hindu world. A good example is the Mīnākṣī *kalyāṇam* is of brāhmanical nature, while Aḷakar festival is of folk culture.



Figure 8. ‘Kirātārjunīyam’ narrative panel (reading bottom to top), Tārācuram, Later Cōla, 12th Century.  
Source: R.K.K. Rajarajan.



Figure 9. Śiva as Vētaṅ-Kirāta and Vētaṅgi-Kirātī, Kāpālīśvara temple Gopura, Mayilapūr, post-Nāyaka.  
Source: R.K.K. Rajarajan.

junīyam’ is that the word *tiruvilaiyāṭal* [Il. 205, 373, 398] is employed in the context of Śiva dispatching his emissaries to ruin Arjuna’s *tapas*. The *Tiruvilaiyāṭar Purāṇam* of Parañcōti is dated in the 16<sup>th</sup> century popularized in the festivities of the Great Maturai temple during the Nāyaka period, particularly Tirumalai Nāya-



Figure 10. Kirāta and Kirātī (processional *utsavaberas*), Kāpālīśvara temple, Mayilapūr, post-Nāyaka.  
Source: R.K.K. Rajarajan.

ka (1623-59 CE).<sup>44</sup> This is to suggest the ballad under study may be dated in the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>45</sup> Śiva taking shelter in various *maṇḍapas* would further attest the impact of Nāyaka culture. It was only during the Vijayanagara-Nāyaka period that so many *maṇḍapas*<sup>46</sup> were added in macro temples (e.g., Maturai, Śrīraṅgam) to enact festivities and for the accommodation of *utsavaberas* (Fig. 11).

Arjuna preaching *ahiṃsa* to Śiva is an interesting theme. It recalls minding the *Bhagavat Gītā* where the Kṛṣṇa advocates *dharma-yuddha* to annihilate terrorism. Arjuna was unwilling to kill his *pitāmaha* (Bhīṣma) and *gurus* (Kṛpācārya and Droṇācārya). *Ahiṃsa* is not the subject-matter of the *Gītā*. It advocates war to protect the peace-makers, cf. the UNESCO’s dictum:

“Let us fight for Peace”

*Ahiṃsa* was the breath-spell of Mahātmā Gāndhi. This idea seems to have been propagated through the *terukkūttus* during the movement for independence in the history of Tamilnāḍu. *Terukkūttu* seems to have been an effective medium for the propagation of the ideals of freedom fighters, e.g., the popularization of the melodies of *mahākavi*-Bhāratīyār in the movies and dramas down to 1947. In this medley, the Indians were Pāṇḍavas, the British Kauravas and the French Kṛṣṇa (e.g., Pāratīyār seeking shelter in Putuccēri).

Śiva is addressed with several folk Tamil names that are listed below. It is to suggest that Tamilization of Sanskritic idioms began with the ballads of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>44</sup> Rajarajan and Jeyapriya, *Mīnākṣī-Sundareśvara*..., 1-20.

<sup>45</sup> Rajarajan, *Legend of Madurai in Arts and Festivities*, 1-7.

<sup>46</sup> Raju Kalidos Kesava Rajarajan, *Art of the Vijayanagara-Nāyakas: Architecture and Iconography* (New Delhi: Sharada, 2006), 192-198.





Figure 11. Pāśupatiāstramūrti panel, Lepākṣī, Vijayanagara, 17th Century.  
Source: R.K.K. Rajarajan.



Figure 12. Śiva as Kirāta, Kōṭṭayam dance-drama contemporary. Source: Vijaya-Raghavan Vira-Visodhana.

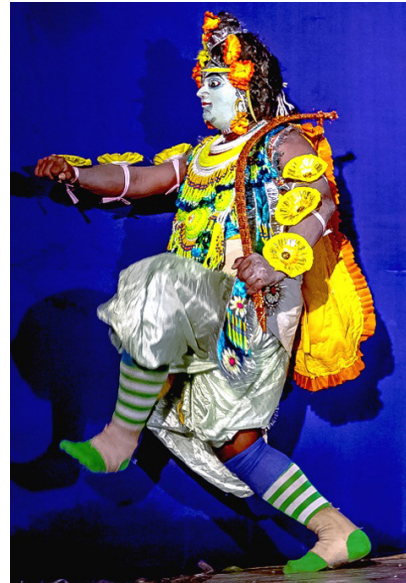


Figure 13. Arjuna in Kirāta episode, Kōṭṭayam dance-drama contemporary. Source: Vijaya-Raghavan Vira-Visodhana.

These names of Śiva deserve a detailed examination vis-à-vis the *Śivasahasranāma*<sup>47</sup>; e.g.,

Arakarā-Civaṇ-52 (Hara-Hara Śiva); Araṇ-17 (Hara); Ātīcivaṇ-57 (Ādiśiva); Attiyurittaparaṇ-80 (Lord who flayed the elephant, Gajasamhāra); Civaṇ-16 (Śiva); Kayilācamalai-25 (Kailāsaparvata); Kayilācanātar-60 (Kailāsanātha); Karttaṇ-46 (Karta “creator”); Ōm-Namacivāya-53 (Pañcākṣara); Matilmūṇṇerittavaṇ-197 (Tripurāntaka); Nimalaṇ-47 (devoid of *malas* “impurities”); Paraṇ-18 (Para, of the other world); Paramacivaṇ-26 (Paramaśiva “Eternal Śiva”); Umāpati-191 and so on.

Several words in folk circulation are employed, e.g., *cummātu*-3-4 (load-pad for the head TL III, 1520); *turantōr*-11 (those that had renounced mundane pleasures); *piḷḷai-kuṭṭi*-537 (children and small ones) and so on. This seems to be anti to Sanskritization. Long before the advent of the DK movement, the need for Tamilization had begun in the *terukkūttu* literature.

The question of why Śiva was treated a *kirāta* is relevant from the sociological point of view. *Kirātas* was also known as *niśāda* (hunters of beasts or fishermen) and *pārasava* that were *anulomajas* born to a father of higher *varṇa* and mother of lower *varṇa*.<sup>48</sup> Śiva’s com-

<sup>47</sup> Raju Kalidos Kesava Rajarajan, “Śivasahasranāma in the Art Historical Context”, in *Samāpti-Suprabhātam – Reflections on South Indian Bhakti Tradition in Literature and Art*, eds. R.K.K. Rajarajan, Rajukalidos Parthiban, and Raju Kalidos (New Delhi: Sharada, 2017), 307-320.

<sup>48</sup> Vālmiki’s interaction with a *niśāda* that hunted a *krauñca* bird leading to the origin of the *Rāmāyaṇa* (Cf. Raju Kalidos, “Historical Setting of Caste and Communalism in India”, in *Studies in Art History of India*, eds. Raju Kalidos Kesava Rajarajan and Sethuraman Ganeshran (New Delhi: Sharada Publishing House, 2010), 74-78).

ing as a *kirāta* may be a historical justification for the elevation of the hunting tribal into the higher Vaiṣṇava (cf. Dāśarathi-Rāma and the *niṣāda*-Guha) and Śaiva vs. Śaṅkarācārya<sup>49</sup>, also consider the revolt of Dakṣa-Prajāpati against Rudra-Śiva.<sup>50</sup> These trends in religious history present a case for the profane heading toward the sacred. Today, there is no question of *kṣatriya* or *śūdra*. All come under the *varṇasaṃkara* or *vrātya* category because none follows the *dharma* expected of his professional affiliation; one may ask “who maintains the *pañcāgni*?” in whichever part of the world he may live. Do all the *dvijas* consider the *yañjopavita* sacrosanct? It is not the case in Tamilnāḍu.

## 7. Conclusions

The conflict between the high-man (caste Hindu, Arjuna, *kṣatriya* in the present study) and the under-dog (*kirāta*, hunter treated lower in social hierarchy) is a perpetual problem in the history of nations. The ill-treatment meted out to a “black” finally resulted in the ousting of an American President in recent time. Man was born free but everywhere he is in chains. To set an example and lead humanity toward the righteous path, God Śiva himself appears a low-man in the ‘Kirātārjunīya’ myth. Taking origin in the *Mahābhāra-*

*ta* (c. 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE) the theme continued to receive popular appreciation through the ages down to the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>51</sup> During India’s movement for independence *kirāta* was identified with the unfriended India, and the high-minded British *rāj*, the pretending monk<sup>52</sup> with the *tapasvin* Arjuna. The subject percolated to the realm of visual art since the Pallava to the Vijayanagara-Nāyaka time, which means societal sympathy was always on the side of the oppressed. In the delineation of artistic idiom, the folk element was dominant to emphasize the common man’s vital role.

Indirectly, the idea of the high-man (*brāhmaṇa*) and low-man (non-*brāhmaṇa*) was the main cause behind the formation of political parties in South India,<sup>53</sup> during the later half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that came to power toward the end of the 1960s and retains its hold over today. Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Those political parties that came to power based on certain ideologies of human fraternity and equality have forgotten their fundamental philosophies, a *brāhmaṇa* heading the party leading to worse demoralization. The man at the lower rungs of the society is suffering more, confusion is worse confounded. We need another Kirāta to appear on the stage to salvage the suffering nation. Perhaps, that may be the reason why the ‘Kirātārjunīya’ myth was popular in Indian literature and visual art, including the theatre, through the ages.

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<sup>49</sup> Śiva as Kirāta was the *caṇḍalaguru* of Śaṅkarācārya who, to begin with, was a fanatic *brāhmaṇa*; cf. *brāhmaṇa*-Paraśurāma overcome by the *kṣatriya*-Rāma. By a strange historical paradox, the *vrātya-brāhmaṇas* converted all *kṣatriya* communities into *śūdra*, *pañcama* or tribal (e.g., the Cermumans of Kērala, considered the Cēras of immortal past) during the British-*rāj* in the name of census reports: Edgar Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India* (Madras: Government Press, 1907).

<sup>50</sup> Jeyapriya, *Terrific Manifestations of Śiva...*, 1-4.

<sup>51</sup> Asko Parpola, *The Roots of Hinduism. The Early Aryans and the Indus Civilization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), says *kōli* in the Indic literature (c. 2000 BCE) is to be connected with the “horned archer”. Rudra in Vedic lore is a cruel hunter who shoots arrows at animals and people. He is also called in Sanskrit *Hara*, “seizer, taker, robber”, which could reflect the Dravidian word *kōl*, “seizure, plunder, robbery.” There is also a homonym *kōl*, “hitting, killing”, from the root *koḷ*, “hit, shoot with bow, kill.” Rudra, whose original name was probably *rudhra* “red”, seems to have been represented by the red planet Mars, called in Sanskrit *Rudhira* “blood (red)” and *Āngāra* “live coal.” The latter name has a counterpart in Proto-South-Dravidian *koḷli*, “firebrand, glowing ember”, which may also be the name of the Harappan archer-god. The mountain-forests of Koḷḷimalai, Mēkamalai, and Ciṅmalai in Tamilnāḍu are still free from modernization, with its original *vēṭaṅ* living population. The strange spectrum of history is these tribes are treated low by the ‘civilized (caste) Hindus’.

<sup>52</sup> Raju Kalidos Kesava Rajarajan, “Saṅgama of Buddhism in Asiatic Diaspora: Imagery of the Monks-Bodhidharma and Aravaṇa-aṭikaḷ in Visual Art”, *Journal of Fine Art* 2, no. 4 (2019): 4-17.

<sup>53</sup> See Anita Diehl, Periyar E.V. Ramaswami. *A Study of the Influence of a Personality in Contemporary South India* (Bombay-Madras: B.I. Publications, 1978).

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