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Tamil Silappathikaram and the Greek Argonautica and Medea – Comparative Literary Mythological Studies on Characterising and the Philosophy of Fate and Chastity

By Dr. D Pugazhendhi

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TAMIL SILAPPATHIKARAM AND THE GREEK ARGONAUTICA AND MEDEA COMPARATIVE LITERARY MYTHOLOGICAL STUDIES ON CHARACTERISING AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF FATE AND CHASTITY

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Greek and Tamil are classical languages that deal with lot of ancient literatures. These literatures have many myths. Some myths are common in both the languages. The myths which are in the Greek epics Argonautica and Medea have resemblance with the myths of Silappathikaram in Tamil. The myth which is not clear in one epic can be made understood by the other epic. So comparing these epics will give a clear understanding and gives light to the literary relationship between Tamil and Greek¹.

Greek Epics

There are many myths in the Greek literatures. One such myth is Medea. It is mentioned in the Hesiod's Theogony of the Greek language around 700 BC.

ἠελίω δ' ἀκάμαντι τέκεν κλυτὸς Ὠκεανίη
Περσηὶς Κίρκην τε καὶ Αἰήτην βασιλῆα.
Αἰήτης δ' υἱὸς φαεσιμβρότου Ἡελίοιο
κούρην Ὠκεανοῖο τελέηεντος ποταμοῖο
γῆμε θεῶν βουλήσιν Ἴδυϊαν καλλιπάρηον.
ἦ δέ οἱ Μήδειαν εὐσφυρον ἐν φιλότῃτι
γεῖναθ' ὑποδηθεῖσα διὰ χρυσέην Ἀφροδίτην.

And Perseis, the daughter of Ocean, bore to unwearying Helios Circe and Aeetes the king. And Aeetes, the son of Helios who shows light to men, took to wife fair-cheeked Idyia, daughter of Ocean the perfect stream, by the will of the gods: and she was subject to him in love through golden Aphrodite and bore him neat-ankled Medea.

956 – 963, Theogony, Hesiod.

This myth of Medea was crafted as epics Argonautica and Medea. The epic Medea seems to be the continuation of the epic Argonautica. So it is necessary, first, to see the story of Argonautica.

Argonautica

The Argonautica (Ἀργοναυτικά) is a Greek epic poem written by Apollonius Rhodius in the 3rd century BC. It describes the myth of the voyage of Jason to retrieve the Golden Fleece from a remote place. The story started with the hero Jason losing his one sandal when crossing the river along with an old lady and then he came to the king's court with one sandal. The king feared that the man with a sandal will create danger to his Kingship. So he directed Jason to take on a great voyage. Along his journey, he came across many coastal areas. Besides, it was thought that the death of some his friends on their journey was due to their fate. He took the voyage to attain the golden

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¹ D Pugazhendhi (2020) Comparison between the Grammar of Greek Sapphic and Tamil Seppal Songs. Athens Journal of Philology. D Pugazhendhi (2021) Tamil, Greek, Hebrew and Sanskrit: Sandalwood (Santalum album) and its Semantics in Classical Literatures. Athens Journal of Philology.

fleece. During that time, he met a lover named Medea. She had a very sound knowledge in music and medicinal herbs. Here it was mentioned that their love should be not be shallow but divine as that of Ariadne. Medea's love helped Jason to tame a peculiar bull. When Medea made the snake to sleep by her music, he stole the golden fleece that was guarded by snake. Jason made his return journey with golden fleece and Medea. Several times Medea threatened Jason by saying that he should not leave her at any cost in future. On the return journey, they met a metal made man. Medea said Jason that she herself individually could fight with that metal man also and she got victory in this attempt. Then they made their return to their home land. This story dealt in Argonautica was continued in the epic Medea.

Medea

Euripides wrote an epic with this myth in 431 BC. In this epic, Jason tried to leave Medea and their sons to marry another woman. Medea takes vengeance on Jason by murdering Jason's wife as well as her own children. The body of the children were taken to the Hera temple. After that, she escaped to Pandion kingdom. One more epic was also related with Pandion kingdom in the Tamil language.

Tamil Epic Silappathikaram

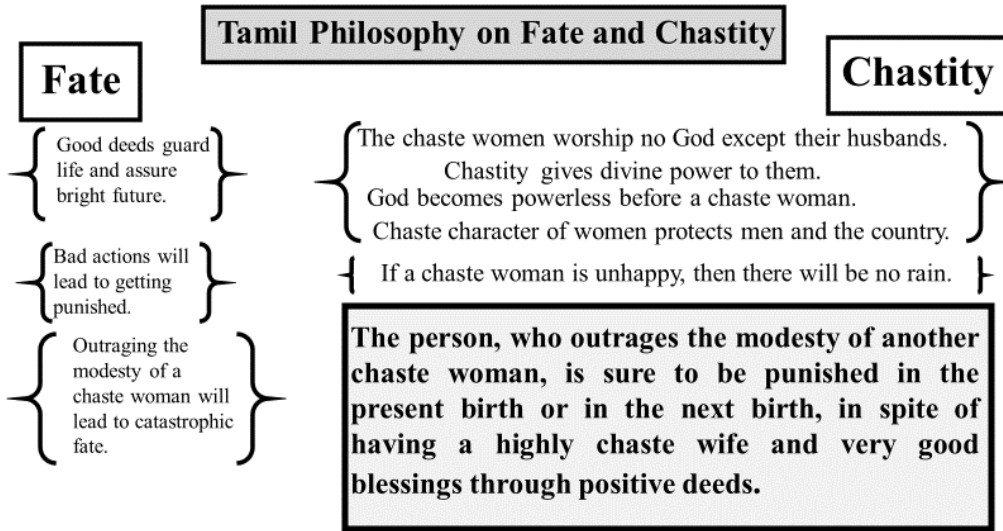
Tamil language is one of the classical languages like that of the Greek. It has a vast literary heritage. Many foreign contacts were mentioned in this literature. The first available literature called Sangam literature had some of the poems that belonged to 1200 BC.² This literature mentioned a myth which was made into an epic called Silappathikaram probably composed around 100–250 CE. Silappathikaram is a combination of two words, "silambu" and "adikaram". In Tamil, 'Silambu' means anklet.



² 'According to a research on ancient Greek literature which is related with Atthi and Cybilie, the era of the Tamil Sangam literature goes up to 1200 BC.'

The Greek Root Word 'Kos' and the Trade of Ancient Greek with Tamil Nadu, India by D. Pugazhendhi, World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology, International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, Vol:14, No:3, 2020, p. 188.

'Adikaram' means story. Hence the title of the epic 'Silappathikaram' means the 'Tale of an anklet'. Ilango Adigal composed it with 5,730 lines. This epic insists upon some philosophies related with fate and chastity.³



Insisting this philosophy, a myth was scripted by the author. In this myth, which is an epic, the main character was a woman called Kannagi. She married Kovalan. During this time, Kovalan met Madhavi, the courtesan. She was well trained in music and dance. Kovalan left Kannagi and fell in love with Madhavi and bought her by offering gold. Madhavi lived with Kovalan and delivered a child called Manimegalai. When all of his wealth was lost, Kovalan returned to his wife Kannagi leaving Madavi. Kannagi gave him one of her anklets to make money out of it by selling, which can be invested to rebuild their life. This anklet was finely crafted with many precious stones including a special type of stone, Ruby, called in Tamil as 'Manikkam'. Kannagi and Kovalan travelled to Madurai which belonged to Pandian kingdom with a saint called Kavunthi adigal, a spinster, who had divine power attained by her chastity. With this lady saint and his wife, Kovalan crossed the river Kaveri with one anklet in his hand. Kovalan tried to sell it to a merchant, but the merchant who remembered seeing a similar type of anklet owned by the queen falsely framed charges on him as having stolen the anklet from the queen. The king ordered for the execution of Kovalan. Kannagi protested against this injustice and wanted to prove that her husband Kovalan was innocent. So she came to the king's court, broke open the anklet seized from Kovalan. The anklet of Kannagi had the precious stones called Manikkam meaning ruby as opposed to the queen's anklets which contained the precious marine pearls called in Tamil as 'Mutthu' which was famous in the Pandion kingdom. Realizing the fault, the king killed himself in shame, after having given huge unjust judgement. Kannagi cursed that the entire city of Madurai be burnt, which was the capital city of Pandion kingdom. Madhavi christened her child as Kannagi, who later professed Buddhism and became a monk.

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55. அரைசியல் பிழைத்தோர்க்கு அறம் கூற்று ஆவதாஉம்,
உரைசால் பத்தினிக்கு (Chastity) உயர்ந்தோர் ஏத்தலு
ஊழ்வினை (Fate) உருத்து வந்து ஊட்டும் என்பதாஉம்,
குழ் வினைச் சிலம்பு காரணமாக,
சிலப்பதிகாரம் என்னும் பெயரால்
60. நாட்டுதும் யாம் ஓர் பாட்டு உடைச் செய்யுள்'

Pathigam. Silappathikaram

The myths dealt in the epics of two different languages such as Argonautica, Medea and Silappathikaram have some resemblances.

		Tamil	Greek
1	Epics	1. Silappathikaram 2. Manimegalai	1. Argonautica 2. Medea
2	Myth	Sea Traders	Sea Voyage
3	Related with	Pandion Historical Person	Pandion
4	Hero	Unheroic	Unheroic
5	Hero having	One in a pair of Anklet	One in a pair of Sandal
6	Love	Guest-love	Guest-love
7	Lover	Proficiency in Music and Dance	Proficiency in Music and Drug
8	Love Related with	Gold	Gold
9	Child Related with	Buddhist Goddess	Greek Goddess
10	Philosophy	Chastity and Fate	Chastity and Fate

In these resemblances, the Kingdom of Pandion is more important, because it is related with history.

Kingdom of Pandion

Kingdom of Pandion mentioned in the epic Medea is the palace where she goes in the end of the myth. At last, Medea went to the Kingdom of Pandion.

αὐτὴ δὲ γαῖαν εἶμι τὴν Ἐρεχθέως,
Αἰγεῖ συνοικήσουσα τῷ Πανδίωνος.
σὺ δ', ὥσπερ εἰκός, καθανῆ κακῶς,
Ἄργοῦς κάρη σὸν λειψάνῳ πεπληγμένως,
πικρὰς τελευτὰς τῶν ἐμῶν γάμων ἰδών.

As for myself, I shall go to the land of Erechtheus to live with Aegeus, son of Pandion. But you, as is fitting, shall die the miserable death of a coward, struck on the head by a piece of the Argo, having seen the bitter result of your marriage to me.

1384 – 1388, Medea, Euripides

The ancient Greek work called 'Periplus of the Erietherian Sea' confirmed that the palace of Pandion kingdom belonged to Tamil Nadu.

Βασιλείας δ' ἐστὶν ἡ μὲν Τύνδις Κηπροβόθρου, κόμη παραθαλάσσιος ἔνσημος· ἡ δὲ Μουζιρίς βασιλείας μὲν τῆς αὐτῆς, ἀκμάζουσα δὲ τοῖς ἀπὸ τῆς Ἀριακῆς εἰς αὐτὴν ἐρχομένοις πλοίοις καὶ τοῖς Ἑλληνικοῖς· κεῖται δὲ παρὰ ποταμὸν, ἀπέχουσα ἀπὸ μὲν Τύνδεως διὰ τοῦ ποταμοῦ καὶ διὰ θαλάσσης σταδίου πεντακοσίου, ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ κατ' αὐτὴν εἴκοσι. Ἡ δὲ Νέλκυνδα σταδίου μὲν ἀπὸ Μουζιρέως ἀπέχει σχεδὸν πεντακοσίου, ὁμοίως δὲ τε ποταμοῦ (καὶ πεζῆ) καὶ διὰ θαλάσσης, βασιλείας δὲ ἐστὶν ἐτέρας, τῆς Πανδίωνος· κεῖται δὲ καὶ αὐτὴ παρὰ ποταμὸν, ὥσει ἀπὸ σταδίων ἑκατὸν εἴκοσι τῆς θαλάσσης.

— παράγραφοι 53-54,

Περίπλους τῆς Ερυθρᾶς Θαλάσσης

Tyndis is of the Kingdom of Cerobothra; it is a village in plain sight by the sea. Muziris, of the same Kingdom, abounds in ships sent there with cargoes from Arabia, and by the Greeks; it is located on a river, distant from Tyndis by river and sea five hundred stadia, and up the river from the shore twenty stadia. Nelcynda is distant from Muziris by river and sea about five hundred stadia, and is of another Kingdom, the Pandion. This place also is situated on a river, about one hundred and twenty stadia from the sea.

The capital of this Pandion kingdom which is in Tamil Nadu was Madurai. This place is very famous for pearls, which is used in the making of ornaments. Here it is necessary to undertake research on the relationship between Tamil Nadu of India and the Greece.

The Greek Historian Arrian attest this relationship.

Ἡρακλέα δέ, ὄντινα ἐς Ἰνδοὺς ἀπικέσθαι λόγος κατέχει, παρ' αὐτοῖσιν Ἰνδοῖσι γηγενέα λέγεσθαι. τοῦτον τὸν Ἡρακλέα μάλιστα πρὸς Σουρασηνῶν γεραίρεσθαι, Ἰνδικοῦ ἔθνεος, ἵνα δύο πόλεις μεγάλαι, Μέθορά τε καὶ Κλεισόβορα: καὶ ποταμὸς Ἰωβάρης πλωτὸς διαρρέει τὴν χώραν αὐτῶν. τὴν σκευὴν δὲ οὗτος ὁ Ἡρακλῆς ἦντινα ἐφόρει Μεγασθένης λέγει ὅτι ὁμοίην τῷ Θηβαίῳ Ἡρακλεῖ, ὡς αὐτοὶ Ἰνδοὶ ἀπηγόρευονται.

"The Hercules who penetrated so far, the Indians tell us, was a native of their country. He is particularly worshipped by the Suraseni, who have two great cities, Methora and Cleisoborus, and the navigable river Jobares, passes through their territories. This Hercules, as Megasthenes asserts, and the Indians themselves assure us, uses the same habit with the Theban Hercules. 4- 6, Chapter viii, Indica, Arrian

Thus Theban Heracle of Greek⁴ was related with the Indian Heracle.^{5,6} The Argonautica also attested the relationship between Thebes and India.

ὄκα δὲ Καλλιχόροιο παρὰ προχοῶς ποταμοῦ ἤλυθον, ἐνθ' ἐνέπουσι Διὸς Νυσηῖον υἱά, Ἰνδῶν ἠνίκα φύλα λιπῶν κατενάσσατο Θήβας,

And soon they passed the outfall of the river Callichorus, where, as the tale goes, the Nysean son of Zeus, when he had left the tribes of the Indians and came to dwell at Thebes, 2. 904 – 6, Argonautica

These references ensure the relationship between the Greeks and Tamils in India. The Methora (Μέθορά) is called as Madhurai, the place which is famous for pearls and is the capital city of Pandion Kingdom in Tamil Nadu.

καὶ τάδε δὲ μετεξέτεροι Ἰνδῶν περὶ Ἡρακλέος λέγουσιν, ἐπελθόντα αὐτὸν πᾶσαν γῆν καὶ θάλασσαν καὶ καθήραντα ὃ τι περ κακόν, καινὸν εἶδος ἐξευρεῖν ἐν τῇ θαλάσῃ κόσμου γυναικίῳ, ὄντινα καὶ ἐς τοῦτο ἔτι οἷ τε ἐξ Ἰνδῶν τῆς χώρας τὰ ἀγώγισμα παρ' ἡμέας ἀγινέοντες σπουδῆ ὠνεόμενοι ἐκκομίζουσι, καὶ Ἑλλήνων δὲ πάλαι καὶ Ῥωμαίων νῦν ὅσοι πολυκτέανοι καὶ εὐδαίμονες μέζονι ἔτι σπουδῆ ὠνέονται τὸν μαργαρίτην δὴ τὰν θαλάσσιον οὕτω τῇ Ἰνδῶν γλώσση καλεόμενον. τὸν γὰρ Ἡρακλέα, ὡς καλὸν οἱ ἐφάνη τὸ φόρημα, ἐκ πάσης θαλάσσης ἐς τὴν Ἰνδῶν δυναγινέειν τὸν μαργαρίτην δὴ τοῦτον, τῇ θυγατρὶ τῇ ἑωυτοῦ εἶναι κόσμον.

Certain of the Indians tell the following story about Heracles, that when he had passed over every land and sea and had rid them of every evil beast, he found in the sea a woman's ornament, such as up to the present day those who bring wares from India to us still buy with zeal and carry away. In former times the Greeks and now the Romans who are fortunate and wealthy with still greater zeal buy what is called in the Indian tongue the marine pearl. The ornament seemed so fine to Heracles that he collected pearls like this from all the sea and brought them to India to be an adornment for his daughter. "

8 – 10, Chapter viii, Indica, Arrian

καὶ τοῦτω ἄρσενας μὲν παῖδας πολλοὺς κάρτα γενέσθαι ἐν τῇ Ἰνδῶν γῆ — πολλῆσι γὰρ δὴ γυναιξίν ἐς γάμον ἐλθεῖν καὶ τοῦτον τὸν Ἡρακλέα —, θυγατέρα δὲ μουνογενέην. οὖνομα δὲ εἶναι τῇ παιδί Πανδαίην, καὶ τὴν χώραν.

[Heracles has] Many male children, but only one daughter was born to him in India, for he married many women. The daughter's name was Pandaea, and the land where she was born, and over which Heracles placed her as ruler, was named Pandaea after her." Arrian, Indica, Chapter viii

⁴ ἡμεῖς δ' ἐπεὶ περὶ τῶν Ἡρακλέους στηλῶν ἐμνήσθημεν, οἰκεῖον εἶναι νομίζομεν περὶ αὐτῶν διελεῖν. Ἡρακλῆς γὰρ παραβαλὼν εἰς τὰς ἄκρας τῶν ἠπειρῶν τὰς παρὰ τὸν ὠκεανὸν κειμένας τῆς τε Λιβύης καὶ τῆς Εὐρώπης ἔγνω τῆς στρατείας θέσθαι στήλας ταύτας.

But since we have mentioned the pillars of Heracles, we deem it to be appropriate to set forth the facts concerning them. When Heracles arrived at the farthest points of the continents of Libya and Europe which lie upon the ocean, he decided to set up these pillars to commemorate his campaign. Diod. 4.18.4

⁵ 1042. You, the god of the tall majestic Thiruvēnkaṭam hills, took the form of a pillar, split it open, emerged from it in the form of a man-lion and killed the Asuran Hiranyan. Your arrows never fail to hit their targets. 10. Thiruvēnkaṭam, Periya Thirumozhi, Thirumangai Azhvar.

⁶ D Pugazhendhi (2021) Greek, Tamil and Sanskrit: Comparison between the Myths of Herakles (related with Iole and Deianira) and Rama in Hinduism. Athens Journal of Philology.

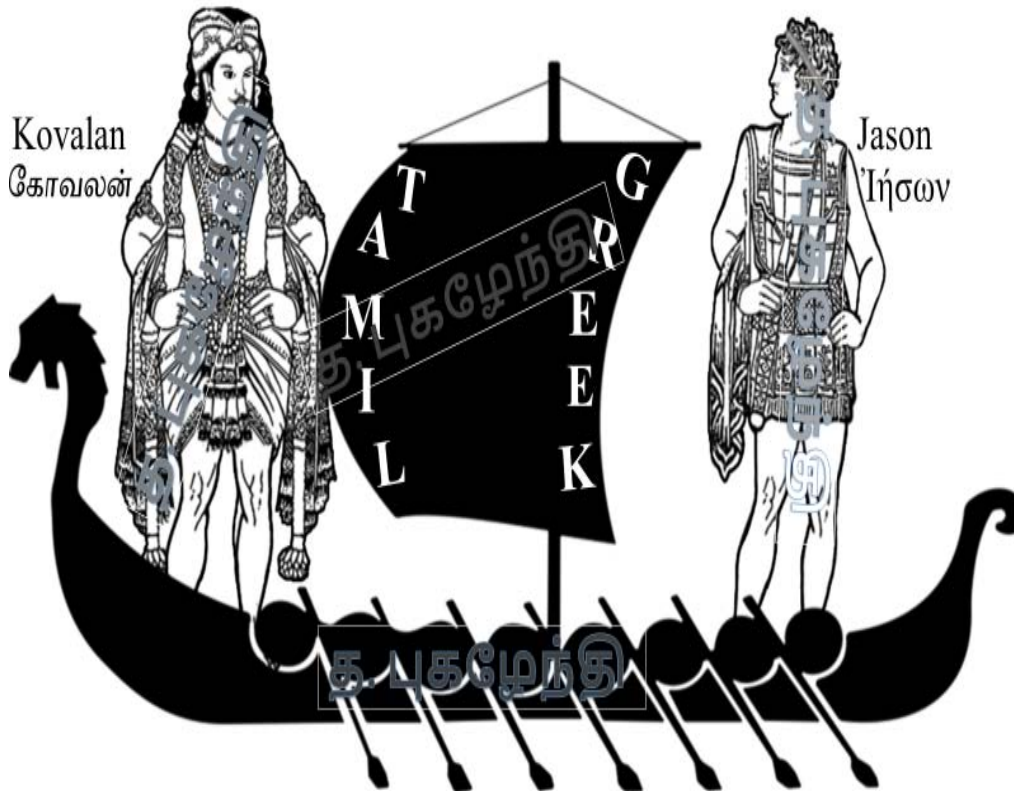
Thus, Arrian confirmed both the occurrence of pearls and that of Methora (Μέθορα). Besides, he also gave the reason behind the name of the place which clarifies the reason behind root word Pandion. Thus, the Pandion kingdom, the capital city of Pandion Kingdom (Μέθορα) Madhurai and the precious pearls which were mentioned by the Greek Historians have special mention in the Tamil epic, Silappathikaram. It mentioned that the main incident occurred in the place called (Μέθορα) Madhurai which is famous for pearls, the capital of Pandion Kingdom of Tamil Nadu. Thus, the myths of these epics are related with the kingdom of Pandion. Further, this Pandion kingdom had historical values in Tamil Nadu. As per the Periplus of the Eritheranian Sea and the Indica by Arrian, the relationship between the Greek and Tamils particularly of Pandion kingdom happened only through sea trade. So there is a need to research about the sea relationship of these Greek and Tamil epics that which talks about the Pandion kingdom.

Relationship with Sea

Hesiod's Theogony mentioned that the mother of Medea is Idyia, who is the daughter of ocean. Thus the myth of Medea is related with that of the sea. The Greek epic Argonautica describes a grand sea voyage. Here in the epic, Jason undertook a grand sea voyage but it did not clarify his past experience in sea. The full part of the epic Argonautica deals with the sea voyage. The Argonants visited many coastal areas. Thus the Greek epic is fully related with sea.

Tamil epic Silappathikaram and sea

The Tamil epic Silappathikaram does not describe any sea voyage as that of Greek Argonautica. The main characters of these epic are related with sea. The wife of Kovalan, was the daughter of the ship captain named Manaikkan.⁷ 'Ma' means big and 'Naikkan' means ship as that of Greek language. The ancestors of Kovalan also took many grand sea voyages. Thus, the Tamil epic deals with the myths of people living in sea. Hence, the epics of the both the languages are related with that of the sea.



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23. மாக வான்நிகர் வண்கை மாநாய்கன் (Big Ship Owner) குலக் கொம்பர்

Mangala Vazhththu,
Pugark Gandam,
Silappathikaram.

Heroism

In many stories, there is a hero, heroin and villain. The hero who is known for his courage, bravery and individual skills is always ranked first. Usually, when there is a sudden attack, the heroine stands by the hero who faces the attack. So occurrences contrary to this such as not facing the challenges and escaping from the situation are nothing but cowardice and the extreme cowardice is if a man is unable to protect himself stands behind a woman. So this type of characters which is just opposite to that of hero is mentioned as non-heroic. Jason, who is the hero in the Greek epic of Argonautica seems to have non-heroic characters. The companions of Jason also have mentioned it openly.

μοῦνος δ' Ἀφάρχιος ἄνθορον Ἴδας,
δαίην' ἐπαλαστήσας μεγάλη ὀπί, φώνησέν τε:
"ὦ πόποι, ἦ ῥα γυναιξίν ὁμόστολοι ἐνθάδ' ἔβημεν,
οἱ Κύπριν καλέουσιν ἐπίρροθον ἄμμι πέλεσθαι,
οὐκέτ' Ἐνυαλίω μέγα σθένος; ἐς δὲ πελείας
καὶ κίρκους λεύσσοντες ἐρητύεσθε ἀέθλων;
ἔρρετε, μηδ' ὕμιν πολεμήια ἔργα μέλοιτο,
παρθενικάς δὲ λιπήσιν ἀνάγκιδας ἠπεροπεύειν."

but all alone leapt up *ApharcianIdas* and
shouted loudly in terrible wrath: "Shame on us,
have we come here fellow voyagers with
women, calling on **Cypris** for help and not on
the mighty strength of **Enyalios**? And do ye
look to doves and hawks to save yourselves
from contests? Away with you, take thought
not for deeds of war, but by supplication to
beguile weakling girls."
3. 556 – 63, Argonautica

The non-heroic nature of the Jason is much argued in the research field. The conclusion is that Jason characterized not as a hero, but as an ordinary man. Any way non-heroic character is one of the peculiar identifications of Jason. This type of non-heroic character of the hero is also seen in the Tamil epic Silappathikaram.

Kovalan of Tamil Silappathikaram

Kovalan is the hero in the Tamil epic Silappathikaram. Kovalan lost all his ancestral wealth by living a joyful aimless life. Then he felt very pity about his own life.⁸ Thus the myth related with Pandion kingdom and sea portrays a non-heroic character of the hero in both the epics of the Greek and Tamil languages.

One in a Pair

A pair of sandals means a set consisting of two items. Argonautica mentions that Jason came with only one sandal for having lost another sandal while crossing a swollen stream.

δηρὸν δ' οὐ μετέπειτα τήν κατὰ βάξιν Ἴησων
χειμερίωιο ῥέεθρα κιών διὰ ποσσίν Ἀναύρου
ἄλλο μὲν ἐξεσάωσεν ὑπ' ἰλύος, ἄλλο δ' ἔνερθεν
κάλλιπεν αὐθιπέδιλον ἐνισχόμενον προχοῆσιν.

And no long time after, in accordance with
that true report, *Jason* crossed the stream of
wintry *Anaurus* on foot, and saved one
sandal from the mire, but the other he left in
the depths held back by the flood.
1. 8 – 11, Argonautica

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(70). குலம் தரு வான் பொருள்-குன்றம் தொலைந்த;
இலம்பாடு நாணுத் (Shame) தரும் எனக்கு' (for me)

Kanath Theram Uraitha Kathai,
Pugark Gandam,
Silappathikaram.

(15). கோவலன் (Kovalan) சென்று, கொள்கையின் இருந்த
கவந்தி ஐயையைக் கைதொழுது ஏத்தி,
'நெறியின் நீங்கியோர் நீர்மையேன் ஆகி,
நறு மலர் மேனி நடுங்கு துயர் எய்த,
அறியாத் தேயத்து ஆர் இடை உழந்து,

(20). சிறுமை (low level) உற்றேன், செய் தவத்தீர்! யான்:

Ur Kan Kathai,
Madhuraik Gandam,
Silappathikaram.

(81). போற்றா ஒழுக்கம் (uncultured) புரிந்தீர்;

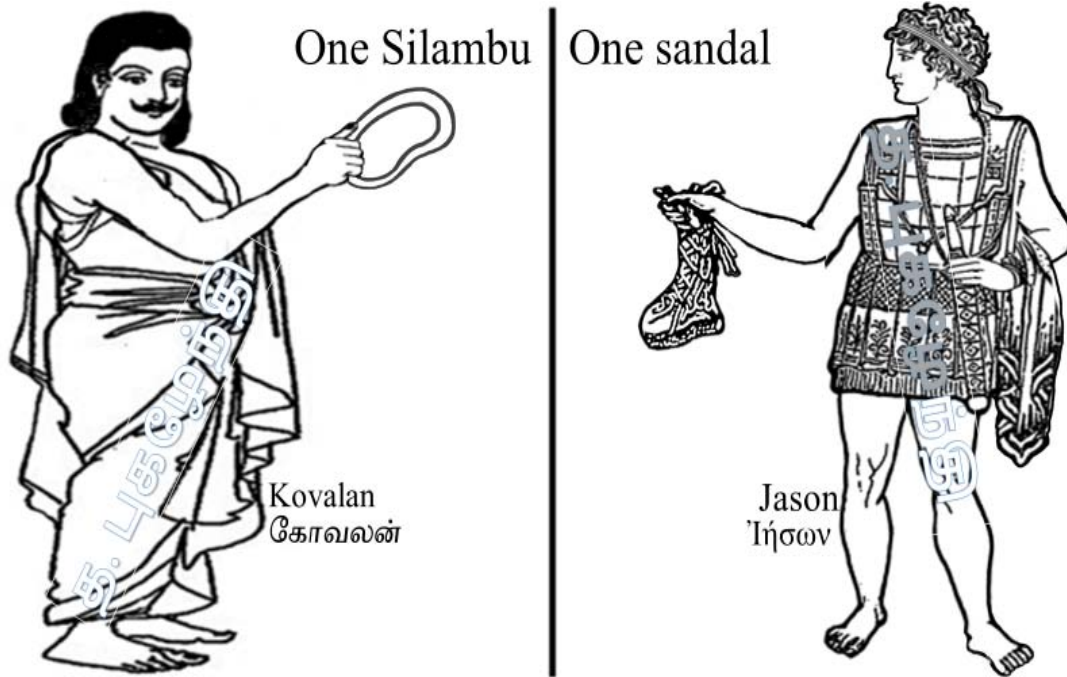
Kolaikalak Kathai,
Madhuraik Gandam,
Silappathikaram.

The incident of Jason coming with one sandal cannot be taken lightly, the reason being the prophecy of Pelias king of Iolcus warned him that his downfall would happen due to a man who comes with only one sandal. Thus it became a peculiar myth related with Jason.

One in a pair in Tamil Silappathikaram

'Silambu' is an ornament worn in pair in the anklets. It is worn by the Tamil women. When Kovalan lost all of his wealth, his wife gave her one silambu from the pair to sell and earn money for using it as a capital to start a new business. So, Kovalan was seen to carry with him one silambu from a pair.⁹

Here Jason came with one sandal in a pair and Kovalan came with one silambu in a pair. Both the sandal and silambu were worn in the lower region of the leg. Thus the myth related with Pandion kingdom and sea, to a non-heroic hero carrying one in a pair which was worn in the lower part of the leg are seen both in the Greek and Tamil literatures.



The myths related with one in a pair

Carrying one item in a pair that was worn in the lower region of the leg is a peculiar myth which is seen only with Greek Jason and Tamil Kovalan. With this one sandal in the pair, Jason crossed the river with the Greek Goddess Hera.

γρηῖ δὲ μ' εἰσαμῆνεν ὀλοφύρατο, καὶ μ' ἀναείρας
αὐτὸς ἑοῖς ὤμοισι διέκ προαλῆς φέρεν ἕδωρ.
τῷ νύ μοι ἄλληκτον περιτίεται:

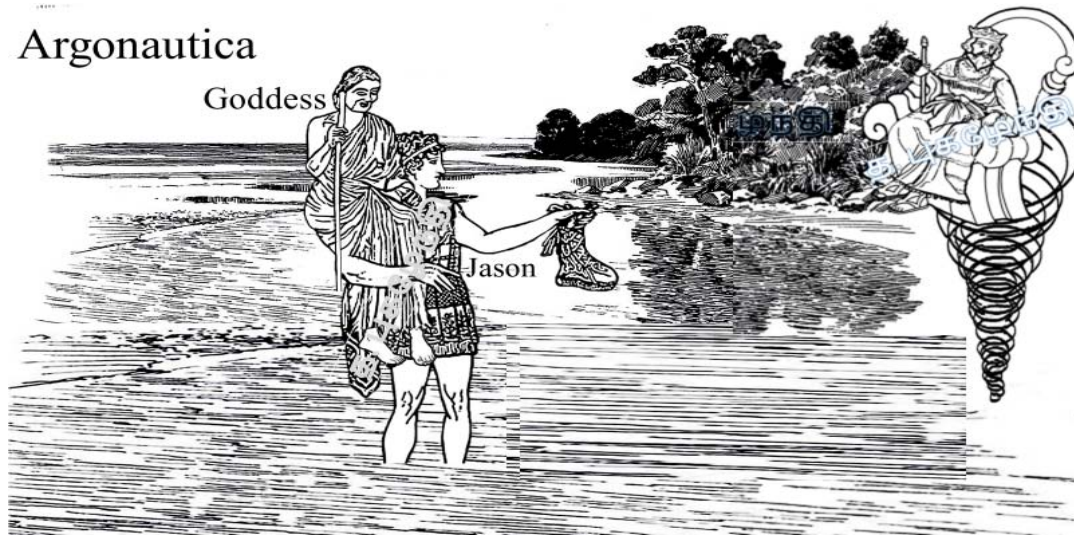
(Hera) ... And he took pity on me in the likeness of
an old crone, and raising me on his shoulders
himself bore me through the headlong tide. So he is
honoured by me unceasingly;
3. 72 – 4, Argonautica Book 3

9

(92). சிறிடிச் சிலம்பின் (anklet = silambu) ஒன்று (one) கொண்டு, யான் போய், மாறி வருவன்; மயங்கா தொழிக்' என-

Kolaikalak Kathai,
Madhuraik Gandam,
Silappathikaram.

Argonautica

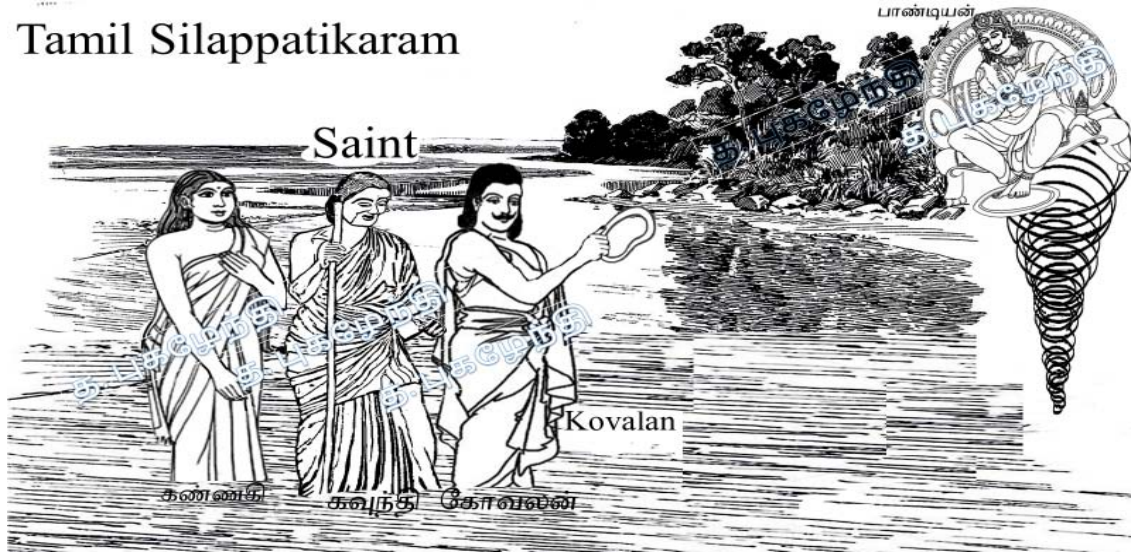


The kingdom would be in danger due to a person who came with one sandal in a pair. Thus the Greek myth dealt with related incidents such as a non-heroic hero with one sandal in a pair, crossing the river with the old Goddess and because of him the kingdom was in danger.

Tamil Silappathikaram

Kovalan came with the one anklet in a pair. An old woman saint who was recognized as having an exceptional degree of holiness or likeness or closeness to God came with Kovalan and crossed the river.¹⁰ The Kingdom of Pandion was in danger.

Tamil Silappatikaram



Thus the myth related with Pandion kingdom and sea having a non-heroic hero carrying one silambu in a pair which was worn in the lower part of the leg, crossing the river accompanied by an old woman Goddess and because of him the kingdom was in danger are seen in both the Greek and Tamil languages.

கார் அணி பூம் பொழில் காவிரிப் பேர் யாற்று (Kaveri River)
(215). நீரணி-மாடத்து நெடுந் துறை போகி,
மாதரும், கணவனும் (Kovalan), மாதவத்து ஆட்டியும் (Saint),
தீது தீர் நியமத் தென் கரை எய்தி,

Nadu Kan Kathai,
Pugark Gandam,
Silappathikaram.

Goddess Hera and the Family of Jason

Goddess Hera wished that Jason loved Medea and personally tried for it to happen. The children of the Jason were also closely related with Goddess Hera. This will be dealt at the appropriate place in this article.

Buddhist Goddess and the Family of Kovalan

The ancestors of Kovalan met with a shipwreck. At that time a Buddhist Goddess saved the ancestors of Kovalan. So, a tradition of naming the offsprings with the Buddhist Goddess names was followed. Above all this Buddhist Goddess has relation with the offsprings of Kovalan, which will be discussed in the appropriate place later.

		Silappathikaram	Argonautica
1	Name	Kovalan	Jason
2	Personality	Unheroic	Unheroic
3	One in a pair	Anklet	Sandal
4	Crossing	River	River
5	With	Woman Saint	Goddess
6	Danger	To the King	To the King
7	Related with Sea	Sea Trader	Sea voyage

Stealing

Taking a thing upright or courageously is a heroic character. Stealing a thing is not considered heroic. In Greek epic, Jason got the golden fleece only by stealing and not by brave deed.

Ἦμος δ' ἄνδρες ὕπνον ἀπὶ ὀφθαλμῶν ἐβάλοντο
ἀγρόται, οἳ τε κύνεσσι πεποιθότες οὔποτε νύκτα
ἄγχαυρον κνώσσουσιν, ἀλευάμενοι φάος ἠοῦς,
μὴ πρὶν ἀμαλδύνη θηρῶν στίβον ἠδὲ καὶ ὄδμῆν
θηρείην λευκῆσιν ἐνισκίμψασα βολῆσιν:
τῆμος ἄρ' Αἰσονίδης κούρη

Now at the hour when men have cast sleep
from their eyes~huntsmen, who, trusting to
their bounds, never slumber away the end of
night, but avoid the light of dawn lest, smiting
with its white beams, it efface the track and
scent of the quarry -- then did Aeson's son
and the maiden.....

4. 109 – 114, Argonautica

These lines of Argonautica shows that Jason stealing the golden fleece during the night time.

Stealing in Tamil Silappathikaram

In the Tamil epic, Kovalan wanted to sell the silambu (anklet) of his wife. That anklet was very expensive and had rich artistic work which was the mark of richness. But Kovalan who carried it seemed very worried and

confused, tired due to a very long journey and all of this added and created a feel that he was very poor. So the guards thought that he might be a thief.¹¹

Thus Jason stealing the golden fleece and Kovalan was mistakenly blamed for stealing are common incidents of stealing that is seen in the epics of Greek and Tamil.



Bull leaping

Taming a furious bull boldly is called bull leaping. It is mentioned in Greek literatures in a super natural way. Bull leaping in the Minos land was exaggerated in one of the Greek myths. In the same way, bull leaping was exaggerated in the Greek epic, Argonautica.

καί ρ' ὄγε δεξιπεροῖο βοῶδς κέρας ἄκρον ἐρύσσας
εἶλκεν ἐπικρατέως παντὶ σθένει, ὄφρα πελάσση
ζεύγλι χαλκείῃ, τὸν δ' ἐν χθονὶ κάββαλεν ὀκλάξ,
ρίμφα ποδὶ κρούσας πόδα χάλκεον. ὥς δὲ καὶ
ἄλλον
σφῆλεν γνύξ ἐπιόντα, μιῆ βεβολημένον ὀρμη.
εὐρύ δ' ἀποπροβαλὼν χαμάδις σάκος, ἔνθα καὶ
ἔνθα
τῆ καὶ τῆ βεβαῶς ἄμφω ἔχε πεπτηῶτας
γούνασιν ἐν προτέροισι, διὰ φλογὸς εἶθαρ
ἔλυσθεις.
θαύμασε δ' Αἰήτης σθένος ἀνέρος.

Then grasping the tip of the horn of the right-hand bull, he dragged it mightily with all his strength to bring it near the yoke of bronze, and forced it down on to its knees, suddenly striking with his foot the foot of bronze. So also he threw the other bull on to its knees as it rushed upon him, and smote it down with one blow. And throwing to the ground his broad shield, he held them both down where they had fallen on their fore-knees, as he strode from side to side, now here, now there, and rushed swiftly through the flame. But Aeetes marvelled at the hero's might
3. 1306 – 14, Argonautica

Thus bull was exaggerated in a super natural way. In Greek myth Theseus and Jason were related with this bull leaping. It is noted that only after the victory in the bull leaping which was considered the most heroic deed, they received love proposal.

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(25).¹¹ அரசு (king) உறை கோயில் (palace) அணி ஆர் நெடுகிழ
கரையாமல் வாங்கிய கள்வனாம் (thief) என்றே.
கரையாமல் வாங்கிய கள்வனாம் (thief) என்றே.
குரை கழல் மாக்கள் கொலை குறித்தனரே!

Thunba Malai,
Madhuraik Gandam,
Silappathikaram.

Bull leaping in Tamil Silappathikaram

Bull leaping is also described in Tamil Silappathikaram. Here it is a custom of the community related with cattle. So the ladies of that community proposed their love only to the brave men who were capable of taming the wild bulls.

- (1). 'காரி கதன் அஞ்சான் பாய்ந்தானைக் காமுறும், இவ்
வேரி மலர்க் கோதையாள்; சுட்டு,
- (2) நெற்றிச் செகிலை அடர்த்தாற்கு உரிய, இப்
பொன் தொடி மாதராள்தோள்.
- (3) மல்லல் மழ விடை ஊர்த்தாற்கு உரியள், இம்
முல்லை அம் பூங் குழல்-தான்.
- (4). நுண் பொறி வெள்ளை அடர்த்தாற்கே ஆகும், இப்
பெண் கொடி மாதர்தன் தோள்.
- (5). பொன் பொறி வெள்ளை அடர்த்தாற்கே ஆகும்: இந்
நன் கொடி மென்முலை-தான்.
- (6). வென்றி மழ விடை ஊர்த்தாற்கு உரியவள், இக்
கொன்றை அம் பூங் குழலாள்.
- (7). தூ நிற வெள்ளை அடர்த்தாற்கு உரியள், இப்
பூவைப் புது மலராள்.
ஆங்கு,
தொழுவிடை ஏறு குறித்து வளர்த்தார்
எழுவர் இளங் கோதையார்,...

The lady will love who control the black bull

This lady is for who will control the fore head of a bull

The lady is for who will control this strong bull

The lady is for who will control the white dotted bull

The lady is for who will control the gold dotted bull

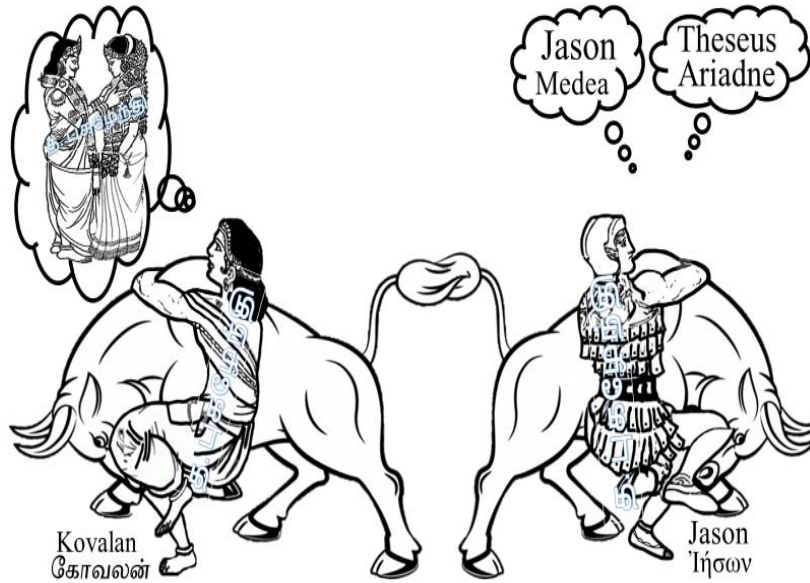
This lady is for who will control the winner bull

This flower like lady is for who will control the pure white bull

Thus these seven ladies were grown for the controller of the bull

Kolu, Aaychiyar Kuravai, Madhuraik Gandam, Silappathikaram.

Thus Tamil Silappathikaram mentions about the relationship between the bull leaping and love proposing. In this Tamil epic, Kovalan who belonged to this particular community was not familiar in his customs.¹² In the Greek myth, the community of Theseus and Jason was not mentioned but they were related with victory in bull leaping and as a mark of bravery, they proposed love.



(100).இமில் ஏறு (bull) எதிர்த்தது, இழுக்கு என அறியான்
தன் குலம் அறியும் தகுதி அன்று ஆதலின்

(lack of knowledge in his own custom)

Kolaikalak Kathai,
Madhuraik Gandam,
Silappathikaram.

Bull leaping and charm of Prometheus

Greek Argonautica mentioned about a charm made with the blood of Prometheus which was used in the bull leaping. It says that a person who anoints all his body with this will be able to overcome all struggles in the bull leaping and wins over it.

ἡ δὲ τέως γλαφυρῆς ἐξείλετο φωριαμοῖο
φάρμακον, ὃ ῥά τέ φασι **Προμηθεῖον** καλέεσθαι.
τῷ εἴ κ' ἐννυχίοισιν ἀρεσσάμενος θυέεσσιν
Κούρην μουνογένειαν ἐδὸν δέμας ἰκαίνοιτο,
ἦ τ' ἂν ὄψ' οὔτε ῥηκτὸς εἶο χαλκοῖο τυπῆσιν,
οὔτε κεν αἰθομένῳ πυρὶ εἰκάθοι: ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀλκῆ
λῳίτερος κείν' ἦμαρ ὁμῶς κάρτει τε πέλοιτο.
πρωτοφυῆς τόγ' ἀνέσχε καταστάξαντος ἔραζε
αἰετοῦ ὠμηστῆω κνημοῖς ἐνὶ Καυκασίοισιν
αἱματόεντ' ἰχώρα **Προμηθῆος** μογεροῖο.
τοῦ δ' ἦτοι ἄνθος μὲν ὅσον πῆχυιον ὑπερθεῖν
χροιῆ Κωρυκίω ἴκελον κρόκω ἐξεφάνθη,
καυλοῖσιν διδύμοισιν ἐπήρορον: ἡ δ' ἐνὶ γαίῃ
σαρκὶ νεομήτῳ ἐναλιγκίῃ ἔπλετο ρίζα.
τῆς οἴην τ' ἐν ὄρεσσι κελαϊνῆν ἰκμάδα φηγοῦ
Κασπίῃ ἐν κόχλω ἀμήσατο φαρμάσσεσθαι,

ἦρι δὲ μυθήνας τόδε φάρμακον, ἡτύ' ἀλοιφῆ
γυμνωθεὶς φαῖδρυνε τεδὸν δέμας: ἐν δὲ οἱ ἀλκῆ
ἔσσει' ἀπειρεσίῃ μέγα τε σθένος, οὐδέ κε φαίης
ἀνδράσιν, ἀλλὰ θεοῖσιν ἰσαζέμεν ἀθανάτοισιν.
πρὸς δὲ καὶ αὐτῷ δουρὶ σάκος πεπαλαγμένον ἔστω
καὶ ζῆφος. ἐνθ' οὐκ ἂν σε διατμήξειαν ἀκῶκαὶ
γηνγενῶν ἀνδρῶν, οὐδ' ἄσχετος αἰσσοῦσα
φλόξ ὀλοῶν ταύρων. τοῖός γε μὲν οὐκ ἐπὶ δηρὸν
ἔσσειαι, ἀλλ' αὐτῆμαρ: ὁμῶς σύγε μὴ ποτ' ἀέθλου
χάζεο.

and Medea mean while took from the hollow casket a charm which men say is called the charm of **Prometheus**. If a man should anoint his body there withal, having first appeased the Maiden, the only-begotten, with sacrifice by night, surely that man could not be wounded by the stroke of bronze nor would he flinch from blazing fire; but for that day he would prove superior both in prowess and in might. It shot up first-born when the ravaging eagle on the rugged flanks of Caucasus let drip to the earth the blood-like ichor of tortured **Prometheus**. And its flower appeared a cubit above ground in colour like the Corycian crocus, rising on twin stalks; but in the earth the root was like newly-cut flesh. The dark juice of it, like the sap of a mountain-oak, she had gathered in a Caspian shell to make the charm withal,
3.844 – 859, Argonautica

And at dawn steep this charm in water, strip, and anoint thy body therewith as with oil; and in it there will be boundless prowess and mighty strength, and thou wilt deem thyself a match not for men but for the immortal gods. And besides, let thy spear and shield and sword be sprinkled. There upon the spear-heads of the earthborn men shall not pierce thee, nor the flame of the deadly bulls as it rushes forth resistless. But such thou shalt be not for long, but for that one day; still never flinch from the contest.
3.1042 – 1051, Argonautica

So there is a need to research about the myth of Prometheus in Tamil Silappathikaram.

Sembean in Tamil Silappathikaram

Kovalan was related with a myth called Sembean. The other form of this word is Sibi or Sivi . In Greek it is mentioned as Sibae. He has resemblance with Prometheus¹³. Jason who was related with bull leaping and blood of Prometheus has resemblance with the community from which Kovalan hailed, bull leaping and the descendents of Sembean or Sibi or Sivi or Sibae .

S.No.	Myths	Greek	Tamil
1.	Bull leaping	Jason	Kovalan community
2.	Type of the bull	Super natural	Uncontroled bulls
3.	Bull leaping and Love	1. Ariadne loves Theseus 2. Medea loves Jason These are mentioned as incidents	Bull leaping is a custom in Tamil Nadu to select a brave bridegroom in the community related with bull.
4.	Bull leapers related with	Prometheus	Sembean or Sibi or Sivi or Sibae

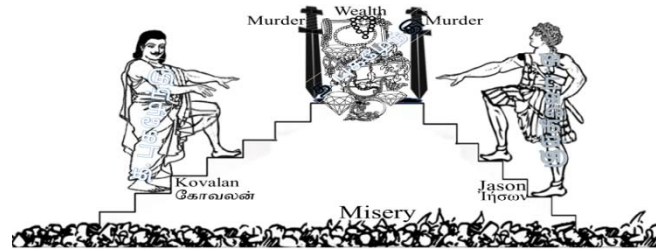
¹³ D Pugazhendhi (2021) Greek, Tamil and Sanskrit: Comparison between the Myths of Prometheus, Sembian and Sibi. Athens Journal of Philology.

S.No.	Myths	Prometheus	Sembean or Sibi or Sivi or Sibae
1.	Donating mentality	Punished by God	Tested by God
2.	Fire	Steal the Fire	Hide the Fire God as in the form of pigeon
3.	Flesh	Eagle eat the liver for the theft of fire	Hawk demanded the flesh for the fire God
4.	Thigh	Cheating thigh-bones for the part of Zeus	Thigh flesh was demanded
5.	Race	Belongs to the oceanus race	Belongs to the oceanus race In some myth he belongs to nara (Sibinara, Usinara) family. Nara means water ¹⁴ or sea as in Nereus in Greek. ¹⁵

Failure in earning wealth and the unlawful death

Jason wished to marry the daughter of Creon for the wealth. But this wish was not fulfilled because the daughter of Creon had been murdered. Besides, the children born to Jason and Medea were also murdered.

Kovalan wished to earn money to start a new business by selling his wife's anklet. The soldiers mistakenly thought that Kovalan had stolen the anklet of the queen and killed him. Thus resemblances are seen between these two heroes who were murdered when they wished to earn wealth.



Personality of the Lover

Jason who was related with sea had one sandal in a pair, non-heroic personality, crossed the river with Goddess and had a lover named Medea. He was portrayed as a personality with feminist thought.

πάντων δ' ὄσ' ἔστ' ἔμψυχα καὶ γνῶμην ἔχει
 γυναῖκες ἔσμεν ἀθλιώτατον φυτόν:
 ἄς πρῶτα μὲν δεῖ χρημάτων ὑπερβολῇ
 πόσιν πρίασθαι, δεσπότην τε σώματος
 [λαβεῖν: κακοῦ γὰρ τοῦτ' ἔτ' ἄλγιον κακόν].
 κὰν τῷδ' ἀγών μέγιστος, ἢ κακὸν λαβεῖν
 ἢ χρηστόν: οὐ γὰρ εὐκλεεῖς ἀπαλλαγαι
 γυναιξίν οὐδ' οἶόν τ' ἀνήνασθαι πόσιν.
 ἐς καινὰ δ' ἦθη καὶ νόμους ἀφιγμένην
 δεῖ μάντιν εἶναι, μὴ μαθοῦσαν οἴκοθεν,
 ὅπως ἄριστα χρήσεται ξυνευέτη.
 κὰν μὲν τάδ' ἡμῖν ἐκπονουμέναισιν εὖ
 πόσις ξυνοικῆ μὴ βία φέρων ζυγόν,
 ζηλωτὸς αἰών: εἰ δὲ μὴ, θανεῖν χρεών.
 ἀνὴρ δ', ὅταν τοῖς ἐνδον ἀχθηται ξυνών,
 ἔξω μολῶν ἔπαυσε καρδίαν ἄσης
 [ἢ πρὸς φίλον τιν' ἢ πρὸς ἡλικα τραπεῖς]:
 ἡμῖν δ' ἀνάγκη πρὸς μίαν ψυχὴν βλέπειν.
 λέγουσι δ' ἡμᾶς ὡς ἀκίνδυνον βίον
 ζῶμεν κατ' οἴκους, οἱ δὲ μάρνανται δορί,
 κακῶς φρονούντες: ὡς τρίς ἂν παρ' ἀσπίδα
 στήναι θέλοιμ' ἂν μᾶλλον ἢ τεκεῖν ἄπαξ.

Of all creatures that have breath and sensation, we women are the most unfortunate. First at an exorbitant price we must buy a husband and master of our bodies. [This misfortune is more painful than misfortune.] And the outcome of our life's striving hangs on this, whether we take a bad or a good husband. For divorce is discreditable for women and it is not possible to refuse wedlock. And when a woman comes into the new customs and practices of her husband's house, she must somehow divine, since she has not learned it at home, how she shall best deal with her husband. If after we have spent great efforts on these tasks our husbands live with us without resenting the marriage-yoke, our life is enviable. Otherwise, death is preferable. A man, whenever he is annoyed with the company of those in the house, goes elsewhere and thus rids his soul of its boredom [turning to some male friend or age-mate]. But we must fix our gaze on one person only. Men say that we live a life free from

¹⁴ "In ancient times I called the waters by the name of Nara 3 & 4, Chapter 187, Book 3, The Mahabharata

¹⁵ "But to them appeared Glaucus from the depths of the sea, the wise interpreter of divine Nereus [Νηρηῖος]," 1. 1311, Argonautica

danger at home while they fight with the spear.
How wrong they are! I would rather stand three
times with a shield in battle than give birth once.
230 – 251, Medea,
Euripides, 480 BC

She was good at singing and had magical talents.

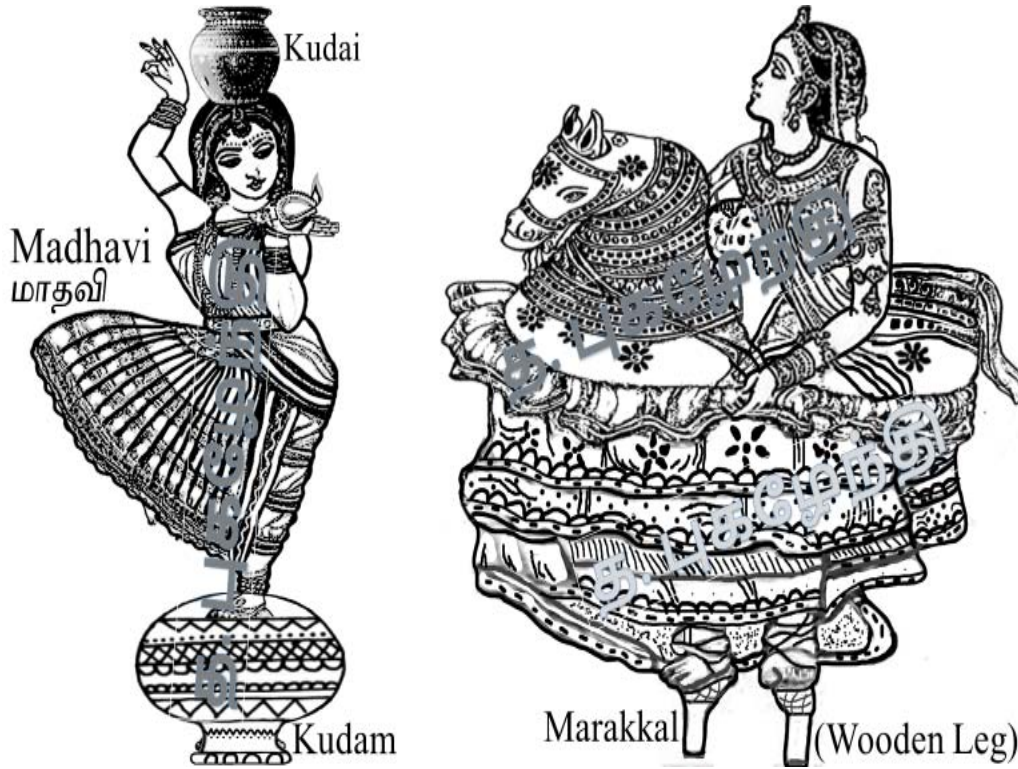
τῆ δὲ καὶ αὐτόματοι θυρέων ἰπτοίειξαν ὀχῆρες,
ὤκειαις ἄσποροι ἀναθρώσκοντες ἄοιδαίς.

But to her the bolts of the doors gave way self-
moved, leaping backwards at the swift strains of
her **magic song**.
4. 41 – 2 , Argonautica

This magical song made the snake to sleep. Also she had a sound knowledge on medicinal herbs.

Madhavi

Kovalan who was related with sea, had one silambu in a pair, non-heroic personality and had a lover named Madhavi. She was very true and loyal to her lover. Her lover left her when she expressed her feminist thought. She was also well versed in music and dance.¹⁶



இரு வகைக் கூத்தின் (two ways of dances) இலக்கணம் அறிந்து,
பல வகைக் கூத்தும் (many more dances) விலக்கினில் புணர்த்து,
பதினோர் ஆடலும் (eleven) types of dances), பாட்டும், கொட்டும்,
(15). விதி மாண் கொள்கையின் விளங்க அறிந்து - ஆங்கு,
ஆடலும், பாடலும் (songs), பாணியும், தூக்கும்,
சூடிய நெறியின் கொளுத்தும் காலை -
பிண்டியும், பிணையலும், எழில் கையும், தொழில் கையும்,
கொண்ட வகை அறிந்து, கூத்து வரு காலை -
(20). கூடை செய்த கை வாரத்துக் களைதலும்,
வாரம் செய்த கை கூடையில் களைதலும்,
பிண்டி செய்த கை ஆடலில் களைதலும்,
ஆடல் செய்த கை பிண்டியில் களைதலும்,
குரவையும் வரியும் விரவல செலுத்தி,

Actions during
the dances

Aragkerttruk Kathai,
Pugark Gandam,
Silappathikaram.

Thus the lovers of Greek Jason and Tamil Kovalan were well versed in music. The knowledge of Medea was related with magic powers which were quite difficult to obtain whereas Madhavi was good at dancing which is a skill and anyone who practises can acquire it.



This skill of Madhavi and the magical powers of Medea played an important role in their lives.

Jason and Love of Medea

Hera thought that the daughter of the Colchian king, Medea might be very helpful to Jason in capturing the golden fleece and so made Medea to fall in love with Jason. Jason solemnly pledged to marry her and so she decided to help him by putting the snake to sleep with a magical music spell which made Jason to take the fleece that was guarded by snake. Thus the golden fleece and the proficiency of Medea in the music played an important role in the love of Medea and Jason.

Ἥ, καὶ ἐπ' οὐδέος αἶγε ποδῶν πάρος ὄμματ'
ἔπηξαν,
ἄνδιχα πορφύρουσαι ἐνὶ σφίσι· αὐτίκα δ' Ἥρη
τοῖον μητιόωσα παροϊτέρη ἔκφατο μῦθον:
"Δεῦρ' ἴομεν μετὰ Κύπριν· ἐπιπλόμεναι δέ μιν ἄμφω
παιδί ἐὼ εἰπεῖν ὄτρύνομεν, αἶ κε πίθηται
κούρην Αἰήτεω πολυφάρμακον οἷσι βέλεσσιν
θέλξαι οἰστεύσας ἐπ' Ἰήσονι. τὸν δ' ἂν οἴω
κείνης ἐννεσίησιν ἐς Ἑλλάδα κῶας ἀνάξειν."

She ended, and the goddesses fixed their eyes on the ground at their feet, brooding apart; and straightway Hera was the first to speak her thought: "Come, let us go to Cypris; let both of us accost her and urge her to bid her son (Eros) (if only he will obey) speed his shaft at the daughter of Aetes, the enchantress, and charm her with love for Jason. And I deem that by her device he will bring back the fleece to Hellas."
3.22-29, Argonautica

In making them to fall in love with each other, Eros played an important role.

Love of Kovalan

In Tamil Silappathikaram, Madhavi exhibited her astonishing skills in music and dance. So, Kovalan was very much attracted by Madhavi through these skills. So he met the relatives of the Madhavi and gave 1008 gold to acquire Madhavi.¹⁷

Thus in Greek, golden fleece and the music proficiency of Medea were the reasons for Jason to fall in love with Medea and in Tamil music and dance art form attracted Kovalan towards Madhavi and for that he gave 1008 gold and made her as his love. Here the place of Eros plays an important role which can be seen now.

Eros and Love

In Greek myth, Eros is the love God who is seen to create situations for love to evolve. Eros conquered the success of love by using his bow and arrow. This is also seen in Tamil epic. Tamil Eros also had bow and arrow for love to happen which would lead to marriage. Here the Tamil Eros's bow is made up of sugarcane and arrow is made up of flowers¹⁸. In Tamil, he was called as Gamon. In Greek γάμος (Gamos) means marriage. Thus resemblances are seen between the myths of Greek and Tamil that are related with Eros or Gamon.

‘அதுவே

நூறு பத்து அடுக்கி எட்டுக் (1008) கடை நிறுத்த,

(165). வீறு உயர் பசும் பொன் (pure gold) பெறுவது; இம் மாலை,

மாலை வாங்குநர் சாலும் நம் கொடிக்கு’ (for Madhavi) என,

மான் அமர் நோக்கி ஓர் கூனி கைக் கொடுத்து,

நகர நம்பியர் திரிதரு மறுகில்,

பகர்வனர் போல்வதோர் பான்மையின் நிறுத்த -

(170). மா மலர் நெடுங் கண் மாதவி (Madhavi) மாலை

கோவலன் (Kovalan) வாங்கி, கூனி - தன்னொடு

மணமனை புக்கு, மாதவி - தன்னோடு

அணைவுறு வைகலின் அயர்ந்தனன் மயங்கி -

விடுதல் - அறியா விருப்பினன் ஆயினன் -

(175). வடு நீங்கு சிறப்பின் தன் மனை, அகம் மறந்து - என்.

Aragkerttruk Kathai,
Pugark Gandam,
Silappathikaram.

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1. வெள்ளி மால் வரை, வியன் பெரும் சேடி,

கள் அவிழ் பூம் பொழில் காமக் கடவுட்கு (Gamon God),

கருங் கயல் நெடுங் கண் காதலி-தன்னொடு

விருந் தாட்டு அயரும் ஓர் விஞ்சைவீரன்-

Kadal Aadu Kathai,
Pugark Gandam,
Silappathikaram.

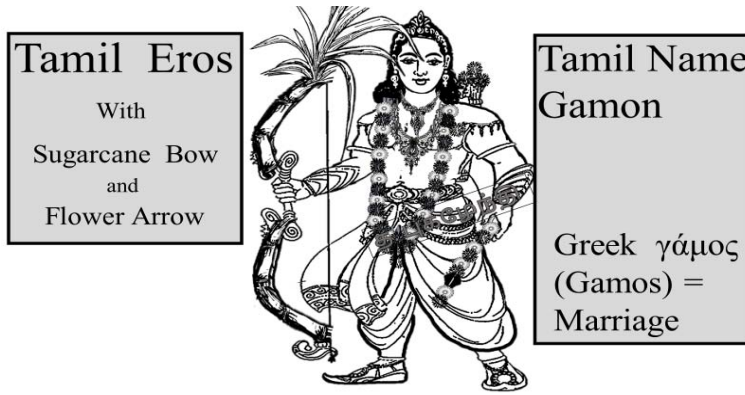
(81).விரை மலர் வாளியொடு (Flower Arrow) கருப்பு வில் (Sugarcane Bow) ஏந்தி

Anthi Malai Serapphu sei Kathai,
Pugark Gandam,
Silappathikaram.

உருவிலாளன் ஒரு பெரும் கருப்பு வில் (Sugarcane Bow)

45. இரு கரும் புருவம் ஆக ஈக்க

Manai Aram Padutha Kathai,
Pugark Gandam,
Silappathikaram.



In Greek Eros was related with the love of Jason and Medea. In Tamil, Madhavi performed a dance like this Gamon.¹⁹

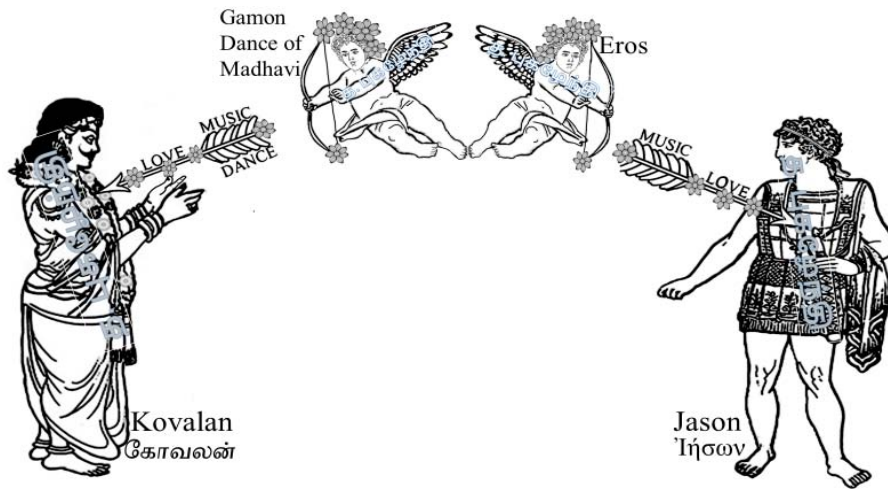


The proficiency of Madhavi in these types of dances plays an important role in the love of Madhavi and Kovalan. Thus in Greek Eros played an important place in the love of Medea and Jason and in Tamil the Eros (Gamon) dance played an important place in the love of Madhavi and Kovalan.

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(55). நீள் நிலம் அளந்தோன் ஆடிய குடமும்;
ஆண்மை திரிந்த பெண்மைக் கோலத்துக்
காமன் (Gamon Dance) ஆடிய பேடி ஆடலும்;

Kadal Adu Kathai,
Pugark Gandam,
Silappathikaram.



Thus the epics Greek Argonautica and Tamil Silappathikaram built the plot in the kingdom of Pandion and both the heroes possessed non-heroic personality. They had resemblances in situations related to falling in love.

S. No.	Myths	Greek	Tamil
1.	Lover	Medea	Madhavi
2.	Type of the Love	Guest love	Guest love
3.	Maker of the Love	Eros	Greek Eros is equal to Tamil Gamon. Gamon dance is also one of the reason for the love.
4.	Reason for the Love	Golden Fleece	1008 Gold
5.	Personality of the Lover	Proficiency in Music, Herbs and Magic	Proficiency in Music and Dance
5.	Continuity of the Love	Jason leaves Medea after had the children	Kovalan leaves Medea after had the child

Myth related with Talos

Talos is the monster of bronze mentioned in the Greek Argonautica. Though he is portrayed to be very strong, he had a weak point in the part of his ankle.

1638 Τους δὲ Τάλως χάλκειος,
.....
1641 τὸν μὲν χαλκείης μελιγενέων ἀνθρώπων
ρίξης λοιπὸν ἔοντα μετ' ἀνδράσιν ἡμιθέοισιν
Εὐρώπῃ Κρονίδης νήσου πόρεν ἔμμεναι σύρον,
τρὶς περὶ χαλκείοις Κρήτην ποσὶ δινεύοντα.
ἀλλ' ἦτοί τὸ μὲν ἄλλο δέμας καὶ γυῖα τέτυκτο
χάλκεος ἢ δ' ἄρρηκτος: ὑπαὶ δὲ οἱ ἔσκε τένοντος
σύριγξ αἰματόεσσα κατὰ σφυρόν: αὐτὰρ ὃ τ' ἦγγε
λεπτὸς ὑμῖν ζωῆς ἔχε πείρατα καὶ θανάτοιο.....

"Κέκλυτέ μευ. μούνη γὰρ οἴομαι ὑμμι δαμάσσειν
ἄνδρα τόν, ὅστις ὄδ' ἐστί, καὶ εἰ παγχάλκεον ἴσχει
ὄν δέμας, ὅπποτε μὴ οἱ ἐπ' ἀκάματος πέλοι αἰών.
ἀλλ' ἔχειτ' αὐτοῦ νῆα θελήμονες ἐκτὸς ἔρωγης
πετραίων, εἰως κεν ἐμοὶ εἴξειε δαμῆναι."

And Talos, the man of bronze,..... He was of the stock of bronze, of the men sprung from ash-trees, the last left among the sons of the gods; and the son of Cronos gave him to Europa to be the warder of Crete and to stride round the island thrice a day with his feet of bronze. Now in all the rest of his body and limbs was he fashioned of bronze and invulnerable; but beneath the sinew by his ankle was a blood-red vein; and this, with its issues of life and death, was covered by a thin skin....

4.1638- 48, Argonautica

(Medea) "Hearken to me. For I deem that I alone can subdue for you that man, whoever he be, even though his frame be of bronze throughout, unless his life too is everlasting. But be ready to keep your ship here beyond the cast of his stones, till he yield the victory to me."

4.1654-58, Argonautica

In this epic, Medea says that she could subdue that monster without the help of the hero.

ὣς ὄγε χάλκειός περ ἔων ὑπόειξε δαμῆναι
Μηδεῖης βρίμη πολυφαρμάκου. ἂν δὲ βαρείας
ὀχλίζων λάιγγας, ἐρυκέμεν ὄρμον ἰκέσθαι.
πετραίῳ στόνουχι χρίμψε σφυρόν: ἐκ δὲ οἱ ἰχώρ
τηκομένῳ ἴκελος μολίβῳ ῥέεν: οὐδ' ἔτι δηρὸν

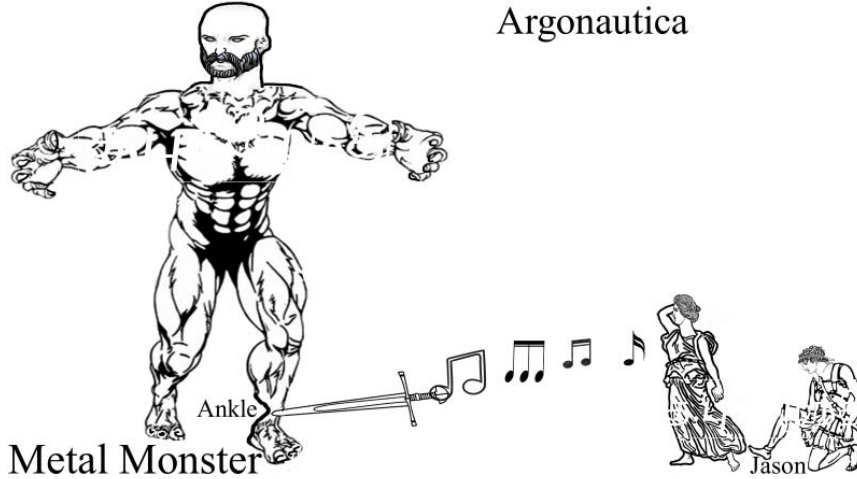
So Talos, for all his frame of bronze, yielded the victory to the might of Medea the sorceress. And as he was heaving massy rocks to stay them from reaching the haven, he grazed his ankle on a pointed crag; and the ichor gushed

είσθῆκει προβλήτος ἐπεμβεβαῶς σκοπέλοιο.
ἀλλ' ὡς τίς τ' ἐν ὄρεσσι πελωρή ὑψόθι πεύκη,
τήν τε θοοῖς πελέκεσσιν ἔθ' ἡμιπλήγα λιπόντες
ὑλοτόμοι δρυμοῖο κατήλυθον: ἢ δ' ὑπὸ νυκτὶ
ῥιπήσιν μὲν πρῶτα τινάσσεται, ὕστερον αὖτε
πρυμνόθεν ἐξαγεῖσα κατήριπεν: ὡς ὄγε ποσσὶν
ἀκαμάτοις τείως μὲν ἐπισταδὸν ῥῆρεῖτο,
ὕστερον αὖτ' ἀμενηνὸς ἀπείρωνι κάππεσε δούπῳ.

forth like melted lead; and not long there after
did he stand towering on the jutting cliff. But
even as some huge pine, high up on the
mountains, which wood men have left half hewn
through by their sharp axes when they returned
from the forest -- at first it shivers in the wind by
night, then at last snaps at the stump and
crashes down; so Talos for a while stood on his
tireless feet, swaying to and fro, when at last, all
strengthless, fell with a mighty thud.

4. 1676 - 88, Argonautica

Thus, a monster of metal alloy was killed by the woman without the help of the man in his presence.



Metal Monster and Tamil Silappathikaram

Kovalan wanted to sell his wife's anklet. One of the leading metal smiths who headed 100 smiths²⁰ cheated Kovalan. As per his plan, Kovalan was killed thinking that the anklet belonged to the queen of the country was stolen and Kovalan wanted to make money out of the stolen anklet. Hearing this incident, the wife of Kovalan furiously approached the king and proved that Kovalan was innocent, by breaking open the anklet which her husband had, that contained precious stones called 'Manikkam', where as the anklet of the queen had pearls inside it. Then the revolt broke out in which the leading metal smith and his 100 followers were killed by Kovalan's wife for their mischief. More than that, the king of the country died for his wrong judgement given against the wife of Kovalan who was known for her chastity and divine power offered a human sacrifice of one thousand gold smiths in a day. Thus in

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(106).கண்ணுள் வினைஞர், கைவினை முற்றிய (skilled)

நுண்வினைக் கொல்லர் (Smith), நாற்றுவர் பின் வர (with 100 persons),

மெய்ப்பை புக்கு, விலங்கு நடைச் செலவின்

கைக் கோல் கொல்லனைக் கண்டனாகி,

(110). 'தென்னவன் பெயரொடு சிறப்புப் பெற்ற

பொன் வினைக் கொல்லன் இவன்' எனப் பொருந்தி,

'காவலன் தேவிக்கு ஆவதோர் காற்கு அணி (anklet=silambu)

நீ விலையிடுதற்கு (to value) ஆதியோ?' என-

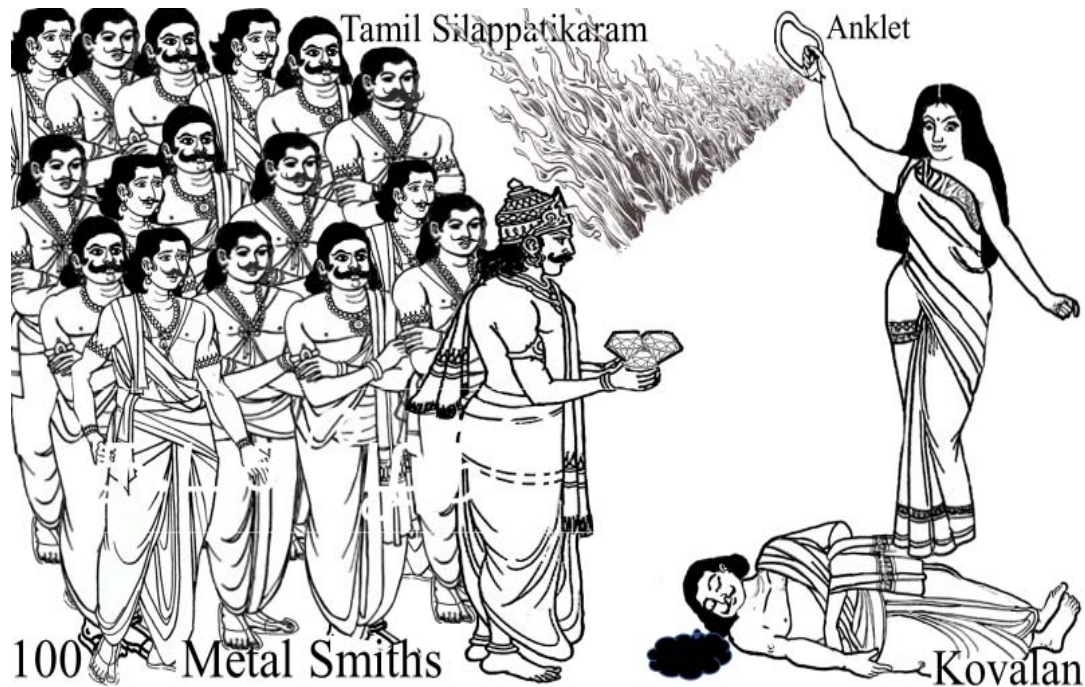
'அடியேன் அறியேன் ஆயினும், வேந்தர்

முடி முதல் கலன்கள் சமைப்பேன் யான்' (smith for kings) என,

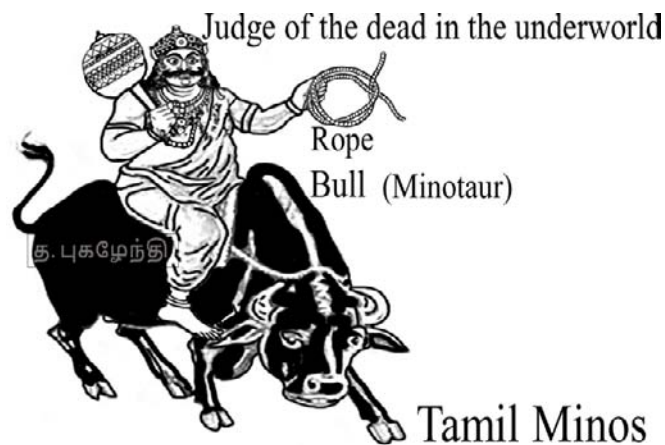
(115). கூற்றத் தூதன் (messenger from Minos) கைதொழுது ஏத்த-

Kolaikalak Kathai,
Madhuraik Gandam,
Silappathikaram.

Tamil Silappathikaram, the anklet became the cause of the death of 100 + 1000 metal smiths which was performed by the ferocious wife of Kovalan fighting against injustice.



Thus in both the languages the person who was related with that of metal was killed by the women, though men being present in that situation, were silent. Here, Anklet had an important place in the incident that is related to killing. In Tamil it was mentioned that 100 + 1000 smiths were killed whereas in Greek, a huge bronze monster was killed. Here it should be noted that the big in number can be compared with that of size. More than that, in Greek the monster was related with Minos whereas in Tamil the metal smiths were described as the messenger of death God sent to kill Kovalan. In the Tamil myths, the God of the death and judge of the underworld was nothing but Greek Minos.²¹



Thus the killing of bronze monster of the Greek had resemblance with the killing of 1100 metal smiths in Tamil. Further in Greek, ankle was the weak point and in Tamil anklet was the weak point.

		Silappathikaram	Argonautica
1	Name	Thalai (Head of Person)	Talos
2	Related with Metal	Metal Smith	Bronze made
3	Size	Coming with 100 persons	Giant Monster
4	Messenger	of Tamil Minos	of Crete Minos
5	Weakness	Anklet	Ankle
6	Killed by	Woman	Woman
7	Action of the man	Silent	Silent

Transfer of Children

Medea and Jason had children. In one situation, Jason wanted to marry another lady leaving Medea. At that time, Medea decided to send her children to Jason who was living with another wife considering the safety and future of the children.²²

In Tamil epic, Madhavi and Kovalan had a child.²³ After Kovalan left, Madhavi, the child, faced many problems. The society attached the same stigma as that of Madhavi to the child. In this situation, to protect her child from the society, Madhavi said that the child was not hers but that of Kovalan and another wife of him.

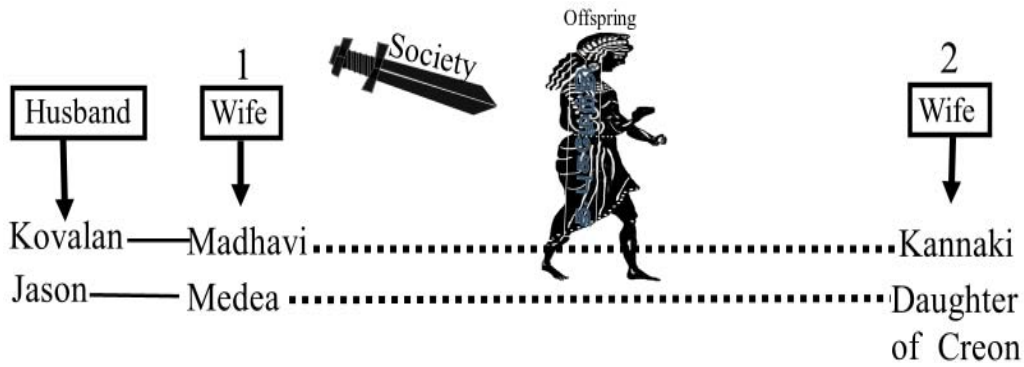
Thus, in both these myths the child faced problems from the society when their father left. For the sake of protecting the children, the mother who gave birth to the child herself sent them to their father who lived with another mother.

²² Contrary to this, Medea herself killed her children

²³

காவலன் பேர்ஊர் கனைளி ஊட்டிய
55. மாபெரும் பத்தினி மகள் மணிமேகலை
(child of other woman)

Ur Alar Uraitha Kathai,
Manimekalai.



Killing of Children

Medea killing her own children is one of the main incidents in this myth. So, Medea was portrayed as a cruel mother. The motive of this killing was to give pain to Jason.

Ἰάσων
κᾶπειτ' ἔκανες;
Μήδεια
σέ γε πημαίνουσ

Jason
And so you killed them?
Medea
Yes, to cause you grief.
1398 – 99,
Medea, Euripides

This was to punish Jason who did not keep his promise and left Medea.



Tamil Silappathikaram

After Kovalan left Madhavi, he was killed by the soldiers mistakenly. The author of the epic mentioned that it was his fate. Thus in both of the myths the hero who left his lover was punished.

In Greek myth, Medea was looked upon as a cruel mother. In Tamil myth, Madhavi is also viewed in the same way. Here, Madhavi made her child to become a saint by sacrificing her worldly happiness. So the society blamed Madhavi as a cruel mother.²⁴

²⁴

மணிமேகலை தனை வந்துபுறம் சுற்றி,
அணியமை தோற்றத்து அருந்தவப் படுத்திய
150 தாயோ கொடியள் (cruel mother) தகவுஇலள்

Malar Vanam Phukka Kathai,
Manimeakalai.

Thus in both of the myths, the wives showed their cruelty to their children to penalise their husband who cheated them. The main difference in the myth was the mother killing their own children. In some of the Greek myths, it was said that the children were killed by the people.

καὶ ὀλίγον ἀπωτέρω κρήνη καλουμένη
Γλαύκης: ἐς γάρταυτήν ἔρριπεν αὐτήν, ὡς
λέγουσι, τῶν **Μηδείας** ἔσσεσθαι φαρμάκων
τὸ ὕδωρ νομίζουσαίμα. ὑπὲρ ταύτην
πεποιήται τὴν κρήνην καὶ τὸ καλούμενον
Ὠιδεῖον, π ἀρὰ δὲ αὐτόμνημά ἐστι τοῖς
Μηδείας παισίν: ὧν ὀνόματα μὲν σφισι
Μέρμερος καὶ **Φέρης**, καταλιθωθῆναι δὲ
ὑπὸ **Κορινθίων** λέγονται τῶν δῶρων ἕνεκα
ἧν τῇ Γλαύκη κομίσαιφασιν αὐτούς:

on a well called the Well of **Glauce**. Into this they say she threw herself in the belief that the water would be a cure for the drugs of **Medea**. Above this well has been built what is called the **Odeum** [Music Hall], beside which is the tomb of **Medea's children**. Their names were **Mermerus** and **Pheres**, and they are said to have been stoned to death by the **Corinthians** owing to the gifts which legend says they brought to Glauce.
Paus. 2.3.6

So these variations led to consider the possibility that in this myth the children were not killed by their own mother. The another difference in these myths is that in Greek, Medea had two male children, but in Tamil, Madhavi had one daughter.

Daughter of Jason

One of the Greek myths mentioned that Jason had a daughter.

Κιναίθων δὲ ὁ **Λακεδαιμόνιος** ἐγενεαλόγησε γὰρ καὶ οὗτος ἔπεισι **Μηδεῖον** καὶ θυγατέρα **Ἐριώπιν** **Ἰάσονι** εἶπεν ἐκ **Μηδείας** γενέσθαι:

But **Cinaethon** of **Lacedaemon**, another writer of pedigrees in verse, said that **Jason's** children by **Medea** were a son **Medeus** and a daughter **Eriopis**; Paus. 2.3.9

According to this Greek myth, Medea and Madhavi both had daughters. The another important thing is that Medea took her children to the Goddess Hera.

Children of Jason and Goddess Hera

The Greek epic mentions that at the end, the children (body) of Medea were taken to the Goddess Hera.

Ἰάσων
θάψαι νεκρούς μοι τούσδε καὶ κλαῦσαι
πάρες.

Jason
Allow me to bury these dead children and to mourn them.

Μήδεια
οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεὶ σφας τῆδ' ἐγὼ θάψω χερί,
φέρουσ' ἐς **Ἥρας** **τέμενος** **Ἀκραιάς**
θεοῦ,
ὡς μή τις αὐτοῦς πολεμίων καθυβρίση
τύμβους ἀνασπῶν: γῆ δὲ τῆδε Σισύφου
σεμνήν ἐορτήν καὶ τέλη προσάψομεν
τὸ λοιπὸν ἀντὶ τοῦδε δυσσεβοῦς φόνου.

Medea
Certainly not. I shall bury them with my own hand, **taking them to the sanctuary of Hera Akraia**, so that none of my enemies may outrage them by tearing up their graves. And I shall enjoin on this land of Sisyphus a solemn festival and holy rites for all time to come in payment for this unholy murder.
1377 – 83, Medea, Euripides

The reason behind Hera taking her children to the sanctuary of Hera was not clearly mentioned in the Greek epic. But the Greek Historian Pausanias says that Hera believed that children would be immortal if she did so.

βασιλεύειν μὲν δὴ δι' αὐτήν **Ἰάσωνα** ἐν **Κορινθῶ**, **Μηδεία** δὲ παῖδας μὲν γίνεσθαι, τὸδὲ αἰεὶ τικτόμενον κατακρύπτειν αὐτὸ ἐς τὸ ἱερὸν φέρουσαν τῆς **Ἥρας**, κατακρύπτειν δὲ ἀθανάτους ἔσσεσθαι νομίζουσαν:

Through her **Jason** was king in **Corinth**, and **Medea**, as her children were born, carried each to the sanctuary of **Hera** and concealed them, doing so in the belief that so they would be immortal.
Paus. 2.3.11

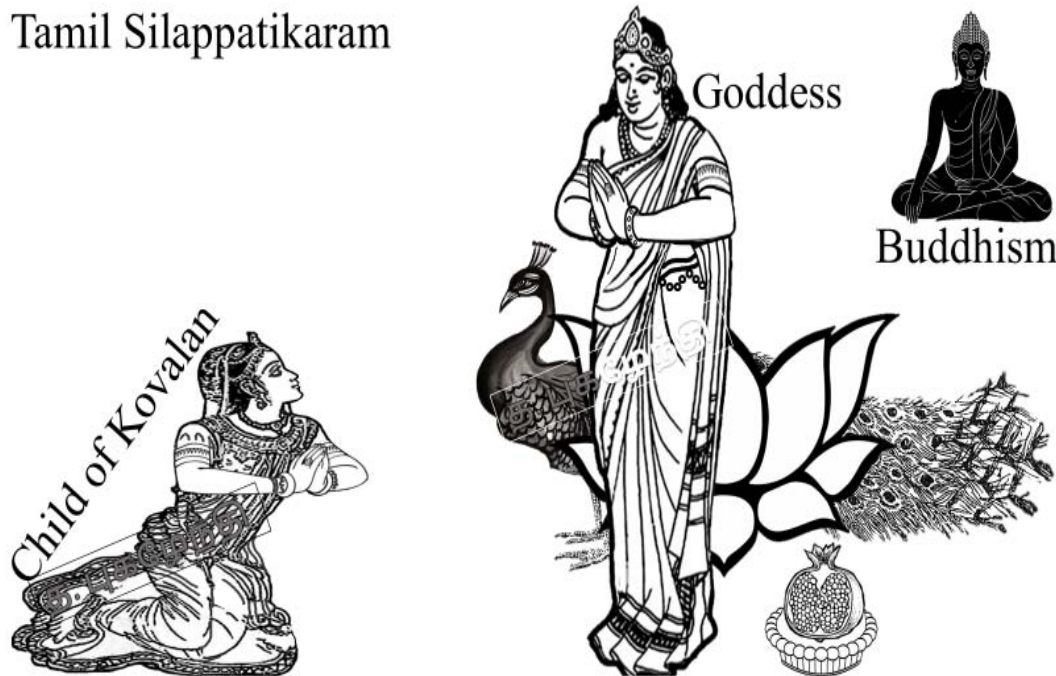
From these myths, it is understood that there was a possibility that Jason had a daughter and she might have been killed or might not have been killed but taken to the sanctuary of Hera thinking that she would get the immortal power.



Tamil Myth

After leaving Kovalan, Madhavi was not interested in the worldly pleasures. But the society compelled her to be a dancer. When Madhavi refused, then the society forced her daughter to be a dancer. So Madhavi made her daughter to profess Buddhism and made her a saint, to protect her from the societal compulsions. The society reprimanded Madhavi for her decision as it was against child rights and said it was an act of cruelty. The society continually troubled her daughter. A Buddhist Goddess who safeguarded the ancestors of Kovalan from the shipwreck came and safeguard her daughter from the troubles given by the society and showed the way to be a Buddhist Monk.

Tamil Silappatikaram



Thus, both the Greek and Tamil myths have some resemblances with regard to the children. Some of the Greek myths mentioned that Jason also had a daughter. In Tamil myth, Kovalan had a daughter. In the Greek myth, children were taken to the sanctuary of Hera and were hidden. In the Tamil myth, the daughter of Kovalan was taken to the Buddhist temple to get hidden. The Greek myth says the children were taken to the sanctuary of Hera believing that it would give the power to attain immortality. In the Tamil myth, the daughter became immortal after becoming a saint. In this way, both the myths are related. In the Greek myth the Medea was yelled at for her act of

cruelty by taking the children to the sanctuary of Hera and in the Tamil myth Madhavi was considered to be very unkind towards her child for making her a Buddhist monk which was her forced act that killed the pleasures of the child. In the Greek myth, children were taken to the God Hera and in the Tamil myth, it was the Buddhist Goddess to whom the daughter of Madhavi surrendered. So there is need to research between Buddhist Goddess and the Greek Goddess. As per the statement of the Greek historian Arrian, Theban Hercules was worshipped in the place called 'Μέθορά' (Madhurai) of Pandion Kingdom of Tamil Nadu. The Greek Theban Hercules was worshipped by the people of Madhurai which is in Tamilnadu. In Greek, Hercules married the daughter of Hera. So there is a possibility that Hera might also be worshipped by Tamil people. This needs to be researched.

Greek Goddess Hera

There are many myths related with Hera in the Greek. Among these the description of Greek Historian Pausanias is taken here.

τὸ δὲ ἄγαλμα τῆς Ἥρας ἐπὶ θρόνου κάθηται
μεγέθει μέγα, χρυσοῦ μὲν καὶ ἐλέφαντος,
Πολυκλείτου δὲ ἔργον: ἔπεισι δὲ οἱ στέφανος
Χάριτας ἔχων καὶ Ὠρας ἐπειργασμένας, καὶ τῶν
χειρῶν τῇ μὲν καρπὸν φέρει ροιᾶς, τῇ δὲ
σκῆπτρον.

The statue of Hera is seated on a throne; it is huge, made of gold and ivory, and is a work of Polycleitus. She is wearing a crown with Graces and Seasons worked upon it, and in one hand she carries a pomegranate and in the other a sceptre.
Paus. 2.17.4

οὗτος μὲν ἀργύρου, χρυσοῦ δὲ καὶ λίθων
λαμπόντων Ἀδριανὸς βασιλεὺς ταῶν ἀνέθηκεν:
ἀνέθηκε δὲ, ὅτι τὴν ὄρνιθα ἱερὰν τῆς Ἥρας
νομίζουσι. Paus.

This is of silver, but the peacock dedicated by the Emperor Hadrian is of gold and gleaming stones. He dedicated it because they hold the bird to be sacred to Hera.
Paus. 2.17.6

Thus, these descriptions which depicted the Goddess Hera with a crown, a royal, pomegranate, lotus-tipped sceptre and peacock. Here the more attention shall be given to peacock and it is discussed here.

Greek Peacock and Tamil

Peacock is not a native bird of Greek land. It was imported from the foreign land.

'Peacocks seem to have been first brought to Mediterranean lands by the merchants from India.'²⁵

καὶ ταῶς ἐξ Ἰνδίας

the bird was a native of India

Luc. Nav. 23²⁶

More over the Greek word 'ταῶς' means peacock, which is a Tamil word with meaning 'Thogai' that is 'hanging tail'.²⁷ Similarly, this ensures there are some myths related with the Greek Goddess Hera that have been associated with Tamil land.

Buddhist Goddess Kujaku Myoo

In Buddhism, there is a Goddess related with peacock called as Kujaku Myoo or Mahamayuri.²⁸ This Goddess has peacock, pomegranate, lotus and crown as that of Greek Goddess Hera.

'Her lotus throne is white or blue, but when she is represented in the Tai-zo kai mandala, it is red. She has four arms of which the two at the right hold a full blown lotus flower and a fruit called bijapuraka; the two at the left carry at the breast a pomegranate and the upper arm a peacock feather.'²⁹

Thus the Buddhist Goddess with pomegranate, peacock and lotus has resemblance with the Greek Goddess Hera.

²⁵ P. 186, Pausanias's Description Of Greece - Translated With A Commentary, J. G. Frazer, London, Macmillan And Co., Limited, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1898

²⁶ Lucian, Navigium, Karl Jacobitz, Ed.,

²⁷ 'There can be no doubt that the Hebrew word is of foreign origin. Gesenius [Thes. P. 1502] cites many authorities to prove that the tucci is to be traced to the Tamul or Malabaric togei, 'peacock' which opinion has been recently confirmed by Sir E. Tennent [Ceylon, ii, p. 102, and i.p.xx, 3rded.], who says 'it is very remarkable that the terms by which these articles [ivory, apes, and peacocks] are designated in the Hebrew scriptures are identical with the Tamil names by which some of them are called in Ceylon to the present day – tukeyim may be recognized in tokei, the modern name for these birds.'

- Dictionary of the Bible, William Smith, Oxford University, London, (1863), pp. 763 - 64.

²⁸ P. The Gods of Northern Buddhism, Alice Getty, Dover Publications, New York, 1988,

²⁹ P. 188,

**Greek Goddess
Hera**



**Buddhist Goddess
Kujaku Myoo**



This clearly shows that Tamilians worshipped the Goddess Hera along with Hercules, who married the daughter of Hera. Thus the myths connected with children of Medea and Madhavi have resemblances in the both the languages.

S. No.	Myths	Greek	Tamil
1.	Daughter	As per Pausanias Jason has a daughter	Kovalan has a daughter
2.	Killing	1. Medea killed her children 2. As per Pausanias, Corinthians killed the children of Medea (which means Medea did not kill her children)	Madhavi killed the beauty and the joyful life of her daughter by forcing her to become a Buddhist Monk at her younger age.
3.	Related with Goddess	Children of Jason were taken to the sanctuary of Hera	Child of Kovalan worshipped the Buddhist Goddess
4.	Goddess	Greek Goddess Hera had pomegranate, peacock and lotus. Here peacock was imported from Tamil Nadu and the Greek word for peacock is a Tamil word.	Buddhist Goddess had pomegranate, peacock and lotus.
5	Immortal	As per Pausanias Medea's children were carried each to the sanctuary of Hera and hid them, with the belief that so they would be immortal	Child of Madhavi was forced into Buddhism and became immortal

Golden Fleece and its Guardian Serpent

The search of golden fleece is the main plot of the Greek epic. The meaning of golden fleece is much argued in the research world. There is no conclusion which relates to the snake and golden fleece. In the Tamil literature, there is a picturisation of a myth which relates snake and precious stones.

Snake Stone

Tamil literatures mentioned about a particular type of snake. That particular type of snake is very poisonous. If that snake did not bite anyone in its lifetime, it is believed that the poison of that snake would become a precious stone. At the end of its old age, it would spit out the stone and with the bright light of that stone it would move.

‘அரவு உமிழ் மணி’

– 294, புறம்
பெருந்தலைச்
சாத்தனார்

Like they were afraid to touch a gem spit by a snake, nobody dared to go near your husband who was wearing stacks of garlands.
Puranānūru³⁰ 294, Poet: Perunthalai Sāthanār,

‘.....மால் வரை

மைபடு விடரகம் துழைஇ ஓய்யென

அருவி தந்த அரவு உமிழ் திருமணி

பெருவரைச் சிறுகுடி மறுகு விளக்கு உறுத்தலின்

இரவும் இழந்தனள்.....’

In the dark place on the top of a mountain, a snake came by river emits a precious stone which gives out light to the settlers. So she lost the night.

- 192, அகம்,

பொதும்பில் கிழான்

வெண் கண்ணனார்

This thought was used as a metaphor in the epic Silappathikaram. When Kovalan and his wife left their parents, they felt like a snake which lost its stone.

இரு நிதிக் கிழவனும் பெரு மனைக் கிழத்தியும்

(57). அரு மணி இழந்த நாகம் போன்றதும்;

(like a snake who lost its stone)

இன் உயிர் இழந்த யாக்கை என்ன,

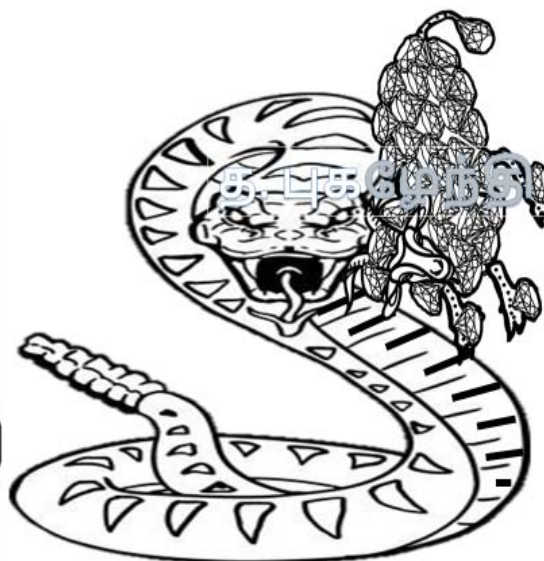
Puran Cherry Iruttha Kathai,
Madhuraik Gandam,
Silappathikaram.

This Tamil myth which relate snake and the precious stone has a resemblance with the myth of golden fleece and its guardian serpent in the Greek myth.

³⁰ Translations available at: <https://sangamtranslationsbyvaidehi.com/ettuthokai-purananuru-201-400/>



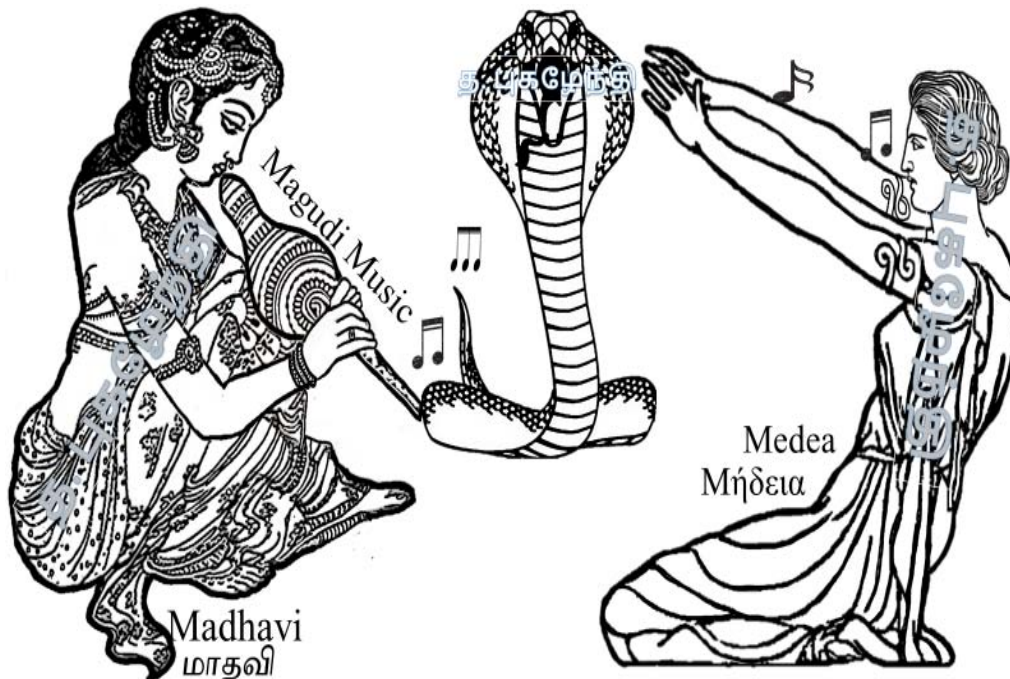
Snake Stone
Silappathikaram



Golden Fleece
Argonautica

Snake and the Music

In the epic Argonautica, Medea put the snake which guarded the golden fleece to sleep. For this Medea used her power of music. It is expressed as a magical power of Medea whereas in Tamil Silappathikaram it talks about the musical talent of Madhavi. In Tamil Nadu, one of the musical instruments, Magudi can be called as snake flute. Even today it is used to mesmerise snakes in Tamil Nadu.



Thus in the Greek epics the music related with the snake is only attributed to Medea but in the Tamil epic music is a trait that is acquired through tradition.

Philosophy of Fate

Tamil Silappathikaram talks about the philosophy of fate.³¹ This philosophy is related with the theory of cause and effect. The main philosophy of the fate is that good deeds guard life and assure bright future. Outraging the modesty of a chaste woman will lead to catastrophic fate³². Thus the philosophy of fate in the Tamil Silappathikaram is mainly related with chastity.³³ The Greek epics also reveal some situations related with fate.

νοστήσειν Κήρινθον ὑπότροπος. αἰσα γὰρ ἦεν
αὐτὸν ὁμῶς Μόψον τε δαήμονα μαντοσυνάων
πλαγχθέντας Λιβύης ἐνὶ πείρασι δηωθῆναι,

return to Cerinthus. For fate had ordained
that he and Mopsus, skilled in the seer's art,
should wander and perish in the furthest
ends of Libya.

1. 79 – 81, Argonautica

οὐδ' ὄγε δῖος ἑρμῆος ὑπὲρ μόρον αὐτίς ἔμελλεν
οἴκαδε νυμφιδίους θαλάμους καὶ λέκτρον
ἰκέσθαι.

Nor was the king to escape his fate and
return home from battle to his bridal
chamber and bed.

1. 1030 – 1, Argonautica

τὴν γὰρ θέμις οὕποτ' ἀλύξαι
θνητοῖσιν: πάντη δὲ περὶ μέγα πέπταται ἔρκος.

he rolled forward in the sand and filled up the
measure of his fate.

1. 1035 – 6, Argonautica

In these passages, the situations related with that of fate are mentioned, but it is not dealt in the way of cause and effect. The another important argument in this theory is about overcoming the effects of fate. The Greek epic clearly defined that even the soothsayers cannot escape from the fate.

"Ἐνθα δ' Ἀβαντιάδην πεπρωμένη ἦλασε μοῖρα
Ἴδμονα, μαντοσύνησι κεκασμένον. ἀλλὰ μιν οὐτί
μαντοσύναι ἐσάσασαν, ἐπει χρεῶ ἦγε δαμῆναι:

And here his destined fate smote **Idmon**, son
of **Abas**, skilled in soothsaying; but not at all
did his soothsaying save him, for necessity
drew him on to death.

1. 815 – 7, Argonautica

"Ὀλόμεθ' αἰνότατον δῆθεν μόρον, οὐδ' ὑπάλυξίς
ἔστ' ἄτης:

"Verily we are undone by a terrible doom;
there is no escape from ruin;

4. 1261 – 2, Argonautica

(170). ஒழிக என ஒழியாது ஊட்டும் வல் வினை (fate won't go)

இட்ட வித்தின் எதிர்த்துவந்து எய்தி (it must be payback),

ஒட்டும்காலை ஒழிக்கவும் ஒண்ணா;

Nadu Kan Kathai,
Pugark Gandam,
Silappathikaram.

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152. முந்தைப் பிறப்பில் (formar birth), பைந்தொடி! கணவன் (Kovalan)

.....

158. (killed) கொலைக்களப் பட்ட (Sangaman) சங்கமன் மனைவி,
நிலைக்களம் காணாள், நீலி (chastity wife Neeli) என்போள்,

.....

167. “எம் உறு துயரம் செய்தோர் யாவதும்

(the same will happen to you)

தம் உறு துயரம் இற்று ஆகு” என்றே

விழுவோள் இட்ட வழ இல் சாபம் (hard words)

(170). பட்டளிர் ஆதலின், கட்டுரை கேள் நீ:

Katturai Kathai,
Madhuraik Gandam,
Silappathikaram.

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136. உரைசால் மதுரையோடு அரைசு கேடுறும்” எனும்

உரையும் உண்டே,

(The Fate of the Madhurai City)

Katturai Kathai,
Madhuraik Gandam,
Silappathikaram.

Thus Argonautica emphasised the power of fate. The incident mentioned in the epic related with Cyzicus is more important in the philosophy of fate.

The Argonauts travelling through the Hellespont, they reach an island/peninsula that is home to savage Earth-born men (Γηγενέες) with six arms each. Their neighbours are the Doliones, a civilized people descended from Poseidon. The savages are hostile but the Argonauts receive a friendly welcome from Cyzicus, the newly wed king of the Doliones, about Jason's age. After departure from that place mistakenly again they came in the same place at night. Without knowing each other, the Argonauts and Doliones start fighting in the dark, mistaking one another for enemies. Cyzicus is killed by Jason. His widow Cleite hangs herself in despair. Shared grief and a magnificent funeral reconcile the two sides'.

Thus the Greek epic does not mention the cause of the fate instead it focuses only on the dominance of fate. In the human life stream, Tamil Silappathikaram gives important to the natural phenomena that occur throughout their life along with the fate. In addition to this, the Greek Argonautica gives importance to God .

εὐρομεν. ἀλλ' οἴγ' ἄνδρες ἀπήλασαν, ἔξαποβάντες
νηὸς ἔης προτέρω ἐνὶ ἡμάτι: καὶ σφ' ἀπέρυκεν
ἡμέας οἰκτεῖρων Ζηνὸς νόος, ἥε τις αἴσα,
αὐτίκ' ἐπεὶ καὶ βρώσιν ἄλις καὶ εἶματ' ἔδωκαν,

But these men had driven them off, having
landed from their ship on the day before;
and the will of Zeus taking pity on us, or
some fate, detained them there,
3. 326 – 329, Argonautica

An incident from the Greek epic shows the sequence of events that are designed by the God, Hera is shown to show the difference from that of the Tamil epic.

Ἵως φάτο: τῆ δ' ἔντοσθε κατειβετο θυμὸς
ἀκουῆ, ἔμπης δ' ἔργ' αἰδηλα κατερρίγησεν
ιδέσθαι. σχετλίη: οὐ μὲν δηρὸν ἀπαρνήσεσθαι
ἔμελλεν Ἑλλάδα ναιετάειν. ὥς γὰρ τότε μῆδετο
Ἥρη, ὄφρα κακὸν Πελοπὶ ἱερὴν ἐς Ἴωλκὸν ἴκοιτο
Αἰαίη Μῆδεια, λιποῦσ' ἄπο πατρίδα γαῖαν.

Thus he spoke; and her soul melted within her to
hear his words; nevertheless she shuddered to
behold the deeds of destruction to come. Poor
wretch! Not long was she destined to refuse a
home in Hellas. **For thus Hera devised it,** that
Aeaeon Medea might come to Ioleus for a bane to
Pelias, forsaking her native land.
3.1131-1136, Argonautica

Thus Greek epic compromises between God and fate. This was also seen in the love of Jason and Medea. In one place the epic said that it was the action of the Goddess Hera and the Eros and in the other place it mentioned that it was due to the fate.

εὖτ' ἂν ἐς Ἠλύσιον πεδίον τεὸς υἱὸς ἴκηται,
ὄν δὴ νῦν Χείρωνος ἐν ἤθεσι Κενταύροιο
νηιάδες κομέουσι τεοῦ λίπτοντα γάλακτος,
χρειῶ μιν κούρης πόσιν ἔμμεναι Αἰήταο
Μηδείης:

When thy son shall come to the Elysian plain, he whom
now in the home of Cheiron the Centaur water-nymphs
are tending, though he still craves thy mother milk, it is
fated that he be the husband of Medea, Aetes'
daughter;
4. 811 – 15, Argonautica

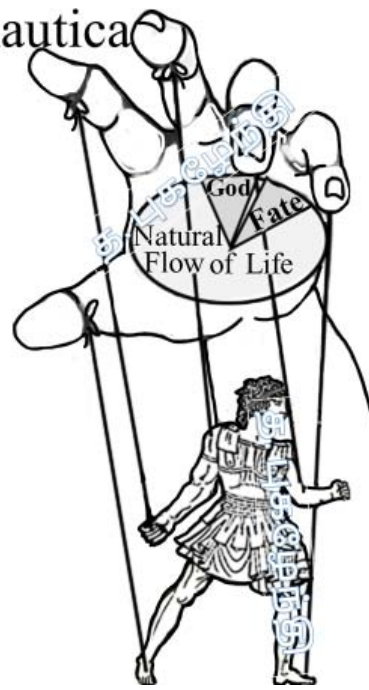
Finally the Greek myth gave important to God for the mystery behind sorrow.

Χορός
πολλῶν ταμίας Ζεὺς ἐν Ὀλύμπῳ,
πολλὰ δ' ἀέλπτως κραίνουσι θεοί:
καὶ τὰ δοκηθέντ' οὐκ ἐτελέσθη,
τῶν δ' ἀδοκῆτων πόρον ἤϊρε θεός.
τοιόνδ' ἀπέβη τότε πρᾶγμα.

Chorus-Leader
Zeus on Olympus has many things in his
treasure-house, and many are the things the
gods accomplish against our expectation. What
men expect is not brought to pass, but a god
finds a way to achieve the unexpected. Such is
the outcome of this story
1415 – 19, Medea, Euripides

Thus Tamil epic gave important only to fate, whereas the Greek epics gave important to both the fate and the God. In every human being's flow of life, the dominance of fate and God can be picturised as given in the figure.

Silappatikaram Argonautica



In one place the Greek epic talks about the cause and effect of the fate, saying that fate might be related with chastity. So there is a need to clarify the thought related with chastity.

Chastity and Feminism

The Greek epics Argonautica and Medea gives much important to the concept of chastity dealt in the form of story and through explanations. Further, it also describe about the respect given for chastity.

δή ποτε καὶ Θησῆα κακῶν ὑπελύσατ' ἀέθλων παρθενικῆ
Μινωῖς εὐφρονέουσ' Ἀριάδνη, ἦν ῥά τε Πασιφάη κούρη
τέκεν Ἥελίοιο. ἀλλ' ἡ μὲν καὶ νηός, ἐπεὶ χόλον εὐνάσε
Μίνως, σὺν τῷ ἐφεζομένη πάτρην λίπε: τὴν δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ
ἀθάνατοι φίλαντο, μέσω δὲ οἱ αἰθέρι τέκμαρ ἀστερόεις
στέφανος, τόν τε κλείουσ' Ἀριάδνης, πάννυχος
οὐρανίοισιν ἐλίσσειται εἰδώλοισιν.

In the past, the maiden Ariadne, daughter of Minos, was, with kindly intent, rescued Theseus from grim contests -- the maiden whom Pasiphae daughter of Helios bare. But she, when Minos had lulled his wrath to rest, went aboard the ship with him and left her fatherland; and her even the immortal gods loved, and, as a sign in mid-sky, a crown of stars, which men call Ariadne's crown, rolls along all night among the heavenly constellations.

3.997-1004, Argonautica

Here it is mentioned about Ariadne who is a remarkable symbol of chastity. She is honoured by giving the place in the constellations.



Thus in the Greek myth the symbol of chastity is given place in the constellations. This is also seen in the Tamil myth.

Tamil myth mentions about a woman called Arundathi. She is a symbol of chastity and it is given place in the constellations.³⁴

The mother of my son,
wearing jewels of sapphire
the size of tiny coconuts,
her chastity like that of
Arundathi in the celestial
world above the dark sky,
will receive guests very gladly,
if the enraged king's difficult
battle business ends.

Ainkurunūru 442, Pēyanār, Sanga Ilakkiam.

Thus both the languages give important to chastity at the very highest level. It can be observed that the names Ariadne and Arundathi also have some phonetic similarity. Here it is noted that Theseus who is the husband of Greek Ariadne is related with Pandion and the Tamil Arundathi is also related with that of the Tamil literature of Pandion.

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61. 'காதலற் பிரியாமல், கவவுக் கை றெுகிழாமல்,
தீது அறுக!' என ஏத்தி, சில் மலர் கொடு தூவி,
அம் கண் உலகின் அருந்ததி (Arundhati) அன்னாளை
64. மங்கல நல் அமளி ஏற்றினார்

Mangala Vazhththu,
Pugark Gandam,
Silappathikaram.

Chastity and men in Argonautica

There are two forms in the chastity, viz chastity of unmarried and chastity of married persons. If unmarried even the mind of the person should not think of the opposite sex while in the case of married, one should not even think of opposite sex except their life partner. This is applicable both for men and women. Based on this philosophy, the epic Argonautica expresses its view about the men who were non-chaste.

“Ἐνθ’ ἄμυδις πᾶς δῆμος ὑπερβασίησι
γυναικῶν νηλειῶς δέδμητο παροιχομένω
λυκάβαντι. δῆ γὰρ κουριδίας μὲν
ἀπηνήναντο γυναίκας ἄνδρες ἐχθήραντες,
ἔχον δ’ ἐπὶ ληιάδεσσιν τρηχὺν ἔρον, ἃς
αὐτοὶ ἀγίνεον ἀντιπέρηθεν Ἰθρηκίην
δηοῦντες; ἐπεὶ χόλος αἰνὸς ὄπαζεν
Κύπιδος, οὐνεκά μιν γεράων ἐπὶ δηρὸν
ἄπισσαν. ὦ μέλεια, ζήλοιο τ’ ἐπισμυγεῶς
ἀκόρητοι. οὐκ οἶον σὺν τῆσιν ἐοῦς
ἔρραισαν ἀκοίτας ἀμφ’ εὐνή, πᾶν δ’ ἄρσεν
ὁμοῦ γένος, ὥς κεν ὀπίσσω μήτινα
λευγαλέοιο φόνου τίσειαν ἀμοιβήν.

Here the whole of the men of the people together had been ruthlessly slain through the transgressions of the women in the year gone by. For the men had rejected their lawful wives, loathing them, and had conceived a fierce passion for captive maids whom they themselves brought across the sea from their forays in Thrace; for the terrible wrath of Cypris came upon them, because for a long time they had grudged her the honours due. O hapless women, and insatiate in jealousy to their own ruin! Not their husbands alone with the captives did they slay on account of the marriage-bed, but all the males at the same time, that they might thereafter pay no retribution for the grim murder.

1. 609 – 19, Argonautica

The Tamil Silappathikaram portrayed the chastity of the women. At the same time it also condemns men who deviate from their chastity. Kovalan was killed in the epic because he violated from chastity and this has given misery to the chaste women.

Chastity and Fate

The chastity makes impact in the fate. Giving sorrow to the chaste woman will lead to catastrophic fate. The curse of the chaste is very powerful.

TAMIL, GREEK AND SANSKRIT



Though this philosophy was not directly mentioned in the Greek epic, one description has resemblance with this philosophy.

ἀλλ’ ὄγε πατρὸς ἐοῖο κακὴν τίνεσκεν
ἀμοιβὴν ἀμπλακίης. ὁ γὰρ οἶος ἐν οὔρεσι
δένδρεα τέμνων δὴ ποθ’ ἀμαδρυάδος
νύμφης ἀθέριξε λιτάων, ἢ μιν ὄδυρομένη
ἀδινῶ μιλίσσετο μύθῳ, μὴ ταμέειν
πρέμνον δρυὸς ἡλικος, ἧ ἔπι πουλὺν αἰῶνα

But he was paying the sad penalty of his father's sin. For he when alone on the mountains, felling trees, once slighted the prayers of a Hamadryad, who wept and sought to soften him with plaintive words, not to cut down the stump of an oak tree coeval with herself, wherein for a long time she

τρίβεσκε διηνεκές; αὐτὰρ ὁ τήνγε
ἀφραδέως ἔτμηξεν ἀγνηρορή γεότητος. τῷ
δ' ἄρα νηκερδῆ νύμφη πόρεν οἶτον ὀπίσω
αὐτῷ καὶ τεκέεσσιν.

had lived continually; but he in the arrogance of
youth recklessly cut it down. So to him the nymph
thereafter made her death a curse, to him and to
his children.

2. 475 – 483, Argonautica

Here the curse of the bird is continually affects the family. The power of the curse of all the living things is not defined in the epic. According to the Tamil philosophy of fate and chastity the curse of the any living thing becomes true.

Chastity and the Power

The Greek epic Argonautica indirectly describes the power of chastity. In the epic the Greek God and Goddess directly helps Jason in all situations except in a situation that is connected with Medea. The reason for this being that Medea is very chastic and whenever Jason was with Medea who has the chaste power, the God himself is unable to impose its power to help or protect Jason.

ἀλλ' Ἥρη σκοπέλοιο καθ' Ἐρκυνίου ἰάχησεν
οὐρανόθεν προθοροῦσα: φόβῳ δ' ἔτίναχθεν αὐτῆς
πάντες ὁμῶς: δεινὸν γὰρ ἐπὶ μέγας ἔβραχεν αἰθήρ.
ἄψ δὲ παλιντροπῶντο θεᾶς ὕπο, καὶ ῥ' ἐνόησαν
τὴν οἶμον, τῆπέρ τε καὶ ἔπλετο νόστος ἰοῦσιν.
δηναῖοι δ' ἀκτὰς ἀλιμυρέας εἰσαφίκοντο Ἥρης
ἐννεσίησι, δι' ἔθνεα μυρία Κελτῶν καὶ Λιγῶν
περόωντες ἀδήιοι. ἀμφὶ γὰρ αἰνήν ἡέρα χεῦε θεὰ
πάντ' ἤματα νισσομένοισιν.

But Hera leaping forth from heaven pealed her
cry from the Hercynian rock; and all together
were shaken with fear of her cry; for terribly
crashed the mighty firmament. And backward
they turned by reason of the goddess, and
noted the path by which their return was
ordained. And after a long while they came to
the beach of the surging sea by the devising of
Hera, passing unharmed through countless
tribes of the Celts and Ligyans. For round them
the goddess poured a dread mist day by day as
they fared on.

4.639 -649 , Argonautica

This can be seen in the situation when the Greek Goddess Hera helped the Jason only through Medea and also in the incident related with that of golden fleece. The full epic of Argonautica is around the capturing of the golden fleece. For this achievement, Jason accepts the love proposed by Medea.

Εἰ δ' ἄγε νῦν, Ἐρατώ, παρά θ' ἴστασο, καί μοι ἔνισπε,
ἐνθεν ὅπως ἐς Ἴωλκὸν ἀνήγαγε κῶας Ἴησων
Μηδείης ὑπ' ἔρωτι. σὺ γὰρ καὶ Κύπριδος αἴσαν
ἔμμορες, ἀδηήτας δὲ τεοῖς μελεδήμασι θέλγεις
παρθενικάς: τῷ καὶ τοι ἐπήρατον οὖνομ' ἀνήπται.

Come now, Erato, stand by my side, and say
next how Jason brought back the fleece to
Iolcus aided by the love of Medea. For thou
sharest the power of Cypris, and by thy love-
cares dost charm unwedded maidens;
wherefore to thee too is attached a name that
tells of love.

3.1-5, Argonautica

The Greek Goddess mentioned that only with the help of Medea, Jason can succeed in his aim.

Ἥ, καὶ ἐπ' οὐδέος αἴγε ποδῶν πάρος ὄμματ' ἔπηξαν,
ἀνδιχα πορφύρουσαι ἐνὶ σφίσι: αὐτίκα δ' Ἥρη
τοῖον μητιόωσα παροϊτέρη ἔκφατο μῦθον: "Δεῦρ'
ἴομεν μετὰ Κύπριν: ἐπιπλόμεναι δέ μιν ἄμφω παιδὶ
ἐῷ εἰπεῖν ὄτρύνομεν, αἶ κε πίθηται κούρην Αἰήτεω
πολυφάρμακον οἴσι βέλεσσιν θέλξει οἰστεύσας ἐπ'
Ἴησωνι. τὸν δ' ἂν οἴω κείνης ἐννεσίησιν ἐς Ἑλλάδα
κῶας ἀνάξειν."

She ended, and the goddesses fixed their
eyes on the ground at their feet, brooding
apart; and straightway Hera was the first to
speak her thought: "Come, let us go to Cypris;
let both of us accost her and urge her to bid
her son (if only he will obey) speed his shaft at
the daughter of Aetes, the enchantress, and
charm her with love for Jason. And I deem that
by her device he will bring back the fleece to
Hellas."

3.22-29, Argonautica

Here the Greek Goddess was not able to help Jason directly hence sought the help of Medea, for which the companions felt ashamed of being with Jason.

"ὦ πόποι, ἦ ῥα γυναξίν ὁμόστολοι ἐνθάδ' ἔβημεν,
οἱ Κύπριν καλέουσιν ἐπίρροθον ἄμμι πέλεσθαι,
οὐκέτ' Ἐνυαλίω μέγα σθένος; ἐς δὲ πελείας καὶ
κίρκους λεύσσοντες ἐρητύεσθε ἀέθλων; ἔρρετε,
μηδ' ὕμιν πολεμήια ἔργα μέλοιο, παρθενικάς
δὲ λιτήσιν ἀνάλκιδας ἡτεροπεύειν."

"Shame on us, have we come here fellow
voyagers with women, calling on Cypris for
help and not on the mighty strength of
Enyalios? And do ye look to doves and hawks
to save yourselves from contests? Away with
you, take thought not for deeds of war, but by
supplication to beguile weakling girls." 3.558-
63, Argonautica

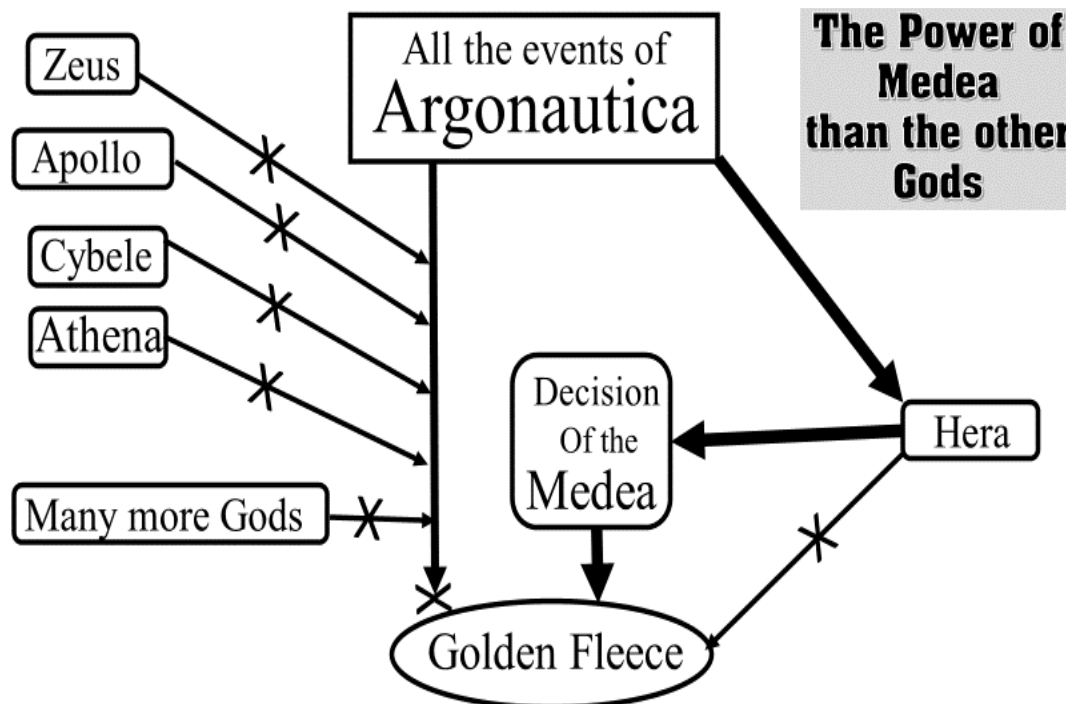
Thus this passage talks about the bravery of the men and it is considered disgrace or shame to get the help from the woman. So, the reason behind the magic of Medea which over shadows the power of the Greek Goddess needs to be researched. According to the philosophy of chastity, the chaste woman has more power than any men and also than that of God. Medea is a chaste woman. Her chastity guards the place where she lived. For this reason Greek Goddess cannot directly help Jason, the chaste Medea was the only way to help Jason. The only way is to use the chastity power of the Medea. Even though love is a basic instinct it is not so easy to break the chaste mind of the Medea towards love. To make Medea to fall a prey to the basic instinct was not that very easy. So, to succeed in this attempt the God himself got the help from many other God and Goddess. There is no other way the Goddess can help Jason except to make Medea fall in love with Jason and only through her power Jason can fulfil his aim. So, after Medea fell in love with Jason, the chaste characteristic falls under the philosophy of married. To make this happen, the Goddess Hera continually disturbs the mind of Medea towards love because the weak point to break chastity is only love.

ἀλλά οἱ ἄφνω δεῖμ' ὄλοον στυγεροῖο κατὰ φρένας
ἦλθ' Αἴδαιο. ἔσχετο δ' ἄμφασίη δερὸν χρόνον, ἀμφὶ
δὲ πᾶσαι θυμηδεῖς βιότοιο μεληδόνες ἰνδάλλοντο.
μνήσατο μὲν τερπνῶν, ὅσ' ἐνὶ ζωσῖσι πέλονται,
μνήσαθ' ὀμηλικῆς περιγηθέος, οἷά τε κούρη· καί τε
οἱ ἥελιος γλυκίων γένετ' εἰσοράσθαι, ἢ πάρος, εἰ
ἔτεόν γε νόω ἐπεμαίεθ' ἕκαστα. καὶ τὴν μὲν ῥα
πάλιν σφετέρων ἀποκάθητο γούνων, Ἥρης
ἐννεσίησι μετάρροπος, οὐδ' ἔτι βουλάς ἄλλη
δοιάζεσκεν:

But suddenly a deadly fear of hateful Hades came upon her heart. And long she held back in speechless horror, and all around her thronged visions of the pleasing cares of life. She thought of all the delightful things that are among the living, she thought of her joyous playmates, as a maiden will; and the sun grew sweeter than ever to behold, seeing that in truth her soul yearned for all. And she put the casket again from off her knees, all changed by the prompting of Hera, and no more did she waver in purpose;

3. 809 – 19, Argonautica

Thus in the epic Argonautica, even though many Gods appeared, no one was able to directly play a role in the achieving of the golden fleece around which all the events of the epic were centred. The Tamil philosophy of fate and chastity only gives the reason for the silence of the Gods in this regard.



Medea and the Power of Chastity

In Greek mythology Medea has certain powers.

“Υπνον ἄσσητήρα, θεῶν ὑπατον, καλέουσα

the maiden came before his eyes, with sweet voice calling to her aid sleep, 3 146, Argonautica

It is said that Medea as a priestess of the Goddess Hecate can gain some power.

κούρη τις μεγάροισιν ἐνιτρήφειτ' **Αἰήταο**, τὴν
Ἐκάτη περιάλλα θεὰ δάε τεχνήσασθαι
φάρμαχ', ὅσ' ἤπειρός τε φύει καὶ νήχυτον
ὔδωρ, τοῖσι καὶ ἀκαμάτοιο πρὸς μείλισσετ'
ἀυτμή, καὶ ποταμούς ἴσησιν ἄφαρ κελαδεῖνὰ
ῥέοντας, ἄστρα τε καὶ μήνης ἱέρης ἐπέδησε
κελεύθους.

There is a maiden, nurtured in the halls of
Aeetes, whom the goddess *Hecate* taught to
handle magic herbs with exceeding skill all
that the land and flowing waters produce.
With them is quenched the blast of
unwearied flame, and at once she stays the
course of rivers as they rush roaring on, and
checks the stars and the paths of the sacred
moon. 3. 528 – 33, Argonautica

Here it is mentioned that Medea has learned from the Goddess Hecate to control the nature. According to the Tamil philosophy of chastity, any chaste woman automatically can get this power without the interference of God.

Chastity and the Fight of Medea

Medea is a chaste woman. She also expects the same character from her lover Jason. At first Jason agree with Medea point of view. Knowing the difficulties in keeping up his word, several times she warned Jason in this regard.

"Ἐλλάδι που τάδε καλά, συνημοσύνας ἀλεγύνειν.
Αἰήτης δ' οὐ τοῖος ἐν ἀνδράσιν, οἷον ἔειπας
Μίνω Πασιφάης πόσιν ἔμμεναι: οὐδ' **Ἀριάδνη**
ἰσοῦμαι: τῷ μῆτι φιλοξενίην ἀγόρευε.

"In Hellas, I ween, this is fair to pay heed to covenants;
but Aeetes is not such a man among men as thou
sayest was Pasiphae's husband, Minos; **nor can I liken
myself to Ariadne,**³⁵ **wherefore speak not of guest-love.**
3. 1105 – 8, Argonautica

ἀλλ' οἷον τύνη μὲν ἐμεῦ, ὅτ' Ἴωλκὸν ἴκηαι, μνώεο:
σεῖο δ' ἐγὼ καὶ ἐμῶν ἀέκητι τοκήων μνήσομαι. ἔλθοι
δ' ἡμῖν ἀπόπροθεν ἡέ τις ὄσσα, ἡέ τις ἄγγελος ὄρνις,
ὅτ' ἐκλελάθοιο ἐμεῖο: ἢ αὐτήν με ταχεῖαι ὑπὲρ πόντοιο
φέροιεν ἐνθὲνδ' εἰς Ἴωλκὸν ἀναρπάξασαι ἄελλαι,
ὄφρα σ', ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἐλεγχείας προφέρουσα,
μνήσω ἐμῆ ἰότητι πεφυγμένον. αἶθε γὰρ εἴην
ἀπροφάτως τότε σοῖσιν ἐφέστιος ἐν μεγάροισιν."

But only do thou, when thou hast reached
Iolcus, remember me, and thee even in my
parents' despite, will I remember. And from
far off may a rumour come to me or some
messenger-bird, when thou forgettest me;
or me, even me, may swift blasts catch up
and bear over the sea hence to Iolcus, that
so I may cast reproaches in thy face and
remind thee that it was by my good will
thou didst escape. May I then be seated in
thy halls, an unexpected guest!"
3. 1109 – 17, Argonautica

Even though the chaste Medea warned about the chastity, Jason failed to keep up his word and married another. According to the Tamil philosophy of chastity, this act should be punished. In Greek, he has punished by the chaste woman Medea and in Tamil he was punished by his own fate. Thus the Tamil philosophy of chastity has given many answers for which there were no answers in the Greek myth. According to the Tamil philosophy of chastity, a chaste woman is a human being who is considered divine. In this way, Medea is also portrayed as **θεὸν** according the philosophy of chastity.

Ἦς ἄρ' ἔφη, ἔλεινὰ καταπροχέουσα παρειῶν
δάκρυα: τὴν δ' ὄγε δῆθεν ὑποβλήδην προσέειπεν:
"Δαιμονίη, κενεὰς μὲν ἔα πλάζεσθαι ἀέλλας, ὥς δὲ
καὶ ἄγγελον ὄρνιν, ἐπεὶ μεταμῶνια βάζεις. εἰ δὲ κεν
ἦθεα κείνα καὶ Ἐλλάδα γαῖαν ἴκηαι, τιμῆσσε
γυναίξιν καὶ ἀνδράσιν αἰδοίη τε ἔσσεαι: οἱ δὲ σε
πάγχυ **θεὸν** ὥς πορσανέουσιν, οὕνεκα τῶν μὲν
παῖδες ὑπότροποι οἴκαδ' ἴκοντο σῆ βουλή, τῶν δ'
αὐτε κασίγνητοι τε ἔται τε καὶ θαλεροὶ κακόητος
ἄδην ἐσάωθεν ἀκοῖται. ἡμέτερον δὲ λέχος
θαλάμοις ἐνὶ κουριδοῖσιν πορσυνέεις: οὐδ' ἄμμε
διακρινεῖ φιλόητος

Thus she spake with piteous tears falling
down her cheeks, and to her Jason
replied: "Let the empty blasts wander at
will, lady, and the messenger-bird, for vain
is thy talk. But if thou comest to those
abodes and to the land of Hellas,
honoured and revered shalt thou be by
women and men; and they shall worship
thee even as a **goddess**, for that by thy
counsel their sons came home again, their
brothers and kinsmen and stalwart
husbands were saved from calamity. And

³⁶Mangalavazhthu Padal, Pugar Kandum, Song 25

போதில் ஆர்திருவினாளபுகழ் உடைவடிவு என்றும்,
தீது இலாவடமீனின்திறம் இவள்திறம் என்றும்,
மாதரார்தொழுது ஏத்தவயங்கியபெரும் குணத்துக்
காதலாள்; பெயர்மன்னும் கண்ணகி என்பாள் மன்னோ.

ἄλλο, π ἄρος θάνατόν γε μεμορμένον in our bridal chamber shalt thou prepare
ἀμφικαλύψαι." our couch; and nothing shall come
between our love till the doom of death
fold us round."
3.1118-1130, Argonautica

Here it may be argued that Medea is the daughter of Sun God. It is to be noted that in no other place the Sun God has a main role in the life of Medea. So Goddess Medea did not originate from heaven as that of being a daughter of Sun God, but a human woman who because of her chastity became a Goddess. The attainment of power due to the chaste behaviour is also dealt in the same way in the Tamil philosophy. The Greek historian Herodotus, who belonged to 480 BC also mentioned about this power of chastity in his way of understanding which was related with South East Asian Countries.

Σεσώστριος δὲ τελευτήσαντος ἐκδέξασθαι ἔλεγον τὴν βασιλίην τὸν παῖδα αὐτοῦ Φερῶν, τὸν ἀποδέξασθαι μὲν οὐδεμίαν στρατηίην, συνενειχθῆναι δὲ οἱ τυφλὸν γενέσθαι διὰ τοιόνδε πρῆγμα. τοῦ ποταμοῦ κατελθόντος μέγιστα δὴ τότε ἐπ' ὀκτωκαίδεκα πήχεας, ὡς ὑπερέβαλε τὰς ἀρούρας, π νεύματος ἐμπεσόντος κυματῆς ὁ ποταμὸς ἐγένετο:

When Sesostris died, he was succeeded in the kingship (the priests said) by his son Pheros. This king waged no wars, and chanced to become blind, for the following reason: the Nile came down in such a flood as there had never been, rising to a height of thirty feet, and the water that flowed over the fields was roughened by a strong wind;
Hdt. 2.111.1

τὸν δὲ βασιλέα λέγουσι τοῦτον ἀτασθαλίη χρησάμενον, λαβόντα αἰχμὴν βαλεῖν ἐς μέσας τὰς δίνας τοῦ ποταμοῦ, μετὰ δὲ αὐτίκα καμόντα αὐτὸν τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς τυφλωθῆναι. δέκα μὲν δὴ ἔτεα εἶναι μιν τυφλόν, ἐνδεκάτῳ δὲ ἔτει ἀπικέσθαι οἱ μαντήιον ἐκ Βουτοῦς πόλιος ὡς ἐξήκει τέ οἱ ὁ χρόνος τῆς ζημίας καὶ ἀναβλέψει γυναικὸς οὐρῶ νιψάμενος τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς, ἧτις παρὰ τὸν ἑωυτῆς ἄνδρα μῦνον πεφοίτηκε, ἄλλων ἀνδρῶν ἐοῦσα ἄπειρος,

then, it is said, the king was so audacious as to seize a spear and hurl it into the midst of the river eddies. Right after this, he came down with a disease of the eyes, and became blind. When he had been blind for ten years, an oracle from the city of Buto declared to him that the term of his punishment was drawing to an end, and that he would regain his sight by washing his eyes with the urine of a woman who had never had intercourse with any man but her own husband.
Hdt. 2.111.2

καὶ τὸν πρώτης τῆς ἑωυτοῦ γυναικὸς πειρᾶσθαι, μετὰ δὲ, ὡς οὐκ ἀνέλεπε, ἐπεξῆς πασῶν πειρᾶσθαι: ἀναβλέψαντα δὲ συναγαγεῖν τὰς γυναῖκας τῶν ἐπειρήθη, πλὴν ἢ τῆς τῷ οὐρῶ νιψάμενος ἀνέβλεψε, ἐς μίαν πόλιν, ἣ νῦν καλέεται Ἐρυθρὴ βῶλος: ἐς ταύτην συναλίσαντα ὑποπρῆσαι πάσας σὺν αὐτῇ τῇ πόλι:

Pheros tried his own wife first; and, as he remained blind, all women, one after another. When he at last recovered his sight, he took all the women whom he had tried, except the one who had made him see again, and gathered them into one town, the one which is now called "Red Clay"; having concentrated them together there, he burnt them and the town;
Hdt. 2.111.3

Here it is noted that chastity gives power. In this reference it was related with body. Whereas in Tamil, it is also related with mind. In the case of unmarried even if a one single thought connected with opposite sex comes across in the mind within a fraction of second, the power of the chastity will disappear. If the married one maintained bondage with only that person whom she had married, then the chastity will retain. This is the main philosophy of Tamil chastity.

Chaste Women and the Winged Chariot

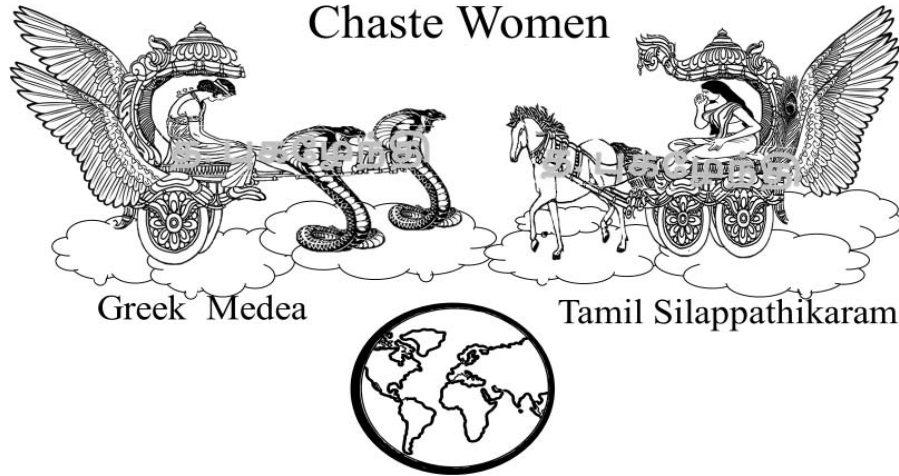
At the end of the epic Medea, Medea got a winged chariot from her grandfather Helios.

Μῆδεια
τί τάσδε κινεῖς κἀναμοχλεύεις πύλας,
νεκρούς ἐρευνῶν κάμῃ τὴν εἰργασμένην;
παῦσαι πόνου τοῦδ'. εἰ δ' ἐμοῦ χρεῖαν ἔχεις,
1320 λέγ' εἴ τι βούλη, χειρὶ δ' οὐ ψαύσεις ποτέ:
τοιόνδ' ὄχημα πατρὸς Ἥλιος πατήρ
δίδωσιν ἡμῖν, ἔρυμα πολεμίας χερρός.

Jason tries to open the doors of the house. Medea appears aloft in a winged chariot upon the mechane, which rises from behind the skene.
Medea
Why do you rattle these gates and try to unbar them, in search of the corpses and me who did the deed? Cease your toil. If you need anything from me, speak if you

like. But your hand can never touch me:
such is the chariot Helios my grandfather
has given me to ward off a hostile hand.
1317 – 22, Medea, Euripides

In no other place, the God and Goddess who are relatives of Medea offer their help to Medea. So, the winged chariot of Helios for Medea is also to be researched. According to the Tamil philosophy of chastity, a chaste woman, at the end of their life, can get a chariot from the sky as a mark of her divine power.³⁶



Thus the scenes seen in the Greek epics have the resemblances and some differences with the philosophy of fate and chastity as shown in the Table.

S.No.	Concept	Greek	Tamil
1.	Reason for the Fate	- Not mentioned	1. Earlier Birth 2. Good deeds guard life and give good future 3. Bad actions will give punishment
2.	Can God change the Fate ?	Not mentioned	Cannot
3.	Anybody can escape from the Fate ?	Never, even the sooth sayers can't escape	Never, No one can escape
4.	The relationship between Fate and Chastity	Not mentioned.	Wounding a chaste woman will lead to extreme bad fate
5.	Whether chastity give devine power?	Not clearly mention, but the God can teach/give the power	Men or Women can get the divine power through chastity
6.	Whether the person who wounded chastity will be punished? –	Should be punish	Fate will punish
7.	Whether the curse will be proven ?	Yes.	Yes.

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193 எழு நாள் இரட்டி எல்லை சென்ற பின்
'தொழு நாள் இது' எனத் தோன்ற வாழ்த்தி,
பீடு கெழு நங்கை பெரும் பெயர் ஏத்தி,
வாடா மா மலர் மாரி பெய்து, ஆங்கு,
அமரர்க்கு அரசன் தமர் வந்து ஏத்த,
கோநகர் பிழைத்த கோவலன் தன்னொடு

199. வான ஊர்தி (Winged Chariot) ஏறினள்-மாதோ-

200. கான் அமர் புரி குழல் கண்ணகி-தான்-என்.

**Katturai Kathai,
Madhuraik Gandam,
Silappathikaram.**

Medea and Pandion

The situations that are related with Medea going to the kingdom of Pandion is also to be researched. She was in search of a safe place to escape from the opposing society.

σιγή δόμους ἐσβᾶσ', ἴν' ἔστρωται λέχος;
ἀλλ' ἔν τί μοι πρόσαντες: εἰ ληφθήσομαι
δόμους ὑπερβαινουσα καὶ τεχνωμένη,
θανοῦσα θήσω τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἐχθροῖς γέλων.
κράτιστα τὴν εὐθειᾶν, ἧ πεφύκαμεν
σοφοὶ μάλιστα, φαρμάκοις αὐτοὺς ἐλεῖν.
εἶέν: καὶ δὴ τεθνᾶσι: τίς με δέξεται πόλις;
τίς γῆν ἄσυλον καὶ δόμους ἐχεγγύους
ξένος παρασχῶν ῥύσεται τοῦμόν δέμας;
οὐκ ἔστι. μείνας' οὖν ἔτι σμικρὸν χρόνον,

creeping into the house where the marriage-bed is spread? One thing, however, stands in my path: if I am caught entering the house and plotting its destruction, I will be killed and bring joy to my foes. Best to proceed by the direct route, in which I am the most skilled, and kill them with poison. So be it! Now let us suppose they have been killed. What city will receive me? What friend will give me a safe country and a secure house and rescue me? There is no one. And so I shall wait a short time yet,

380 - 9, Medea, Euripides.

That time Aegeus, son of Pandion met Medea and gave assurance for hiding her safe so that no one can follow and capture her.

Μῆδεια

ἔσται τάδ': ἀλλὰ πίστις εἰ γένοιτό μοι
τούτων, ἔχοιμ' ἂν πάντα πρὸς σέθεν καλῶς.

Αἰγεύς

μῶν οὐ πέποιθας; ἢ τί σοι τὸ δυσχερές;

Μῆδεια

πέποιθα: Πελίου δ' ἐχθρός ἐστί μοι δόμος
Κρέων τε. τούτοις δ' ὀρκίοισι μὲν ζυγεῖς
ἀγοῦσιν οὐ μεθεῖ' ἂν ἐκ γαίας ἐμέ:
λόγοις δὲ συμβᾶς καὶ θεῶν ἀνώμοτος
φίλος γένοι' ἂν κάπικηρυκεύμασιν
τάχ' ἂν πίθοιο: τάμα μὲν γὰρ ἀσθενῆ,
τοῖς δ' ὄλβος ἐστί καὶ δόμος τυραννικός.

Medea

It shall be so. But if you were to give me a promise of this, I would have all I could wish from you.

Aegeus

Do you not trust me? What is your difficulty?

Medea

I trust you. But Pelias' house is hostile to me, and Creon as well. If you are bound by an oath, you will not give me up to them when they come to take me out of the country. But if you have made an agreement in mere words and have not sworn by the gods, you might become their friend and comply with diplomatic requests. For I am weak, while they have wealth and royal power.

Αἰγεύς

πολλὴν ἔδειξας ἐν λόγοις προμηθίαν:
ἀλλ', εἰ δοκεῖ σοι, δρᾶν τάδ' οὐκ ἀφίσταμαι.
ἐμοὶ τε γὰρ τάδ' ἐστὶν ἀσφαλέστερα,
σκῆψίν τιν' ἐχθροῖς σοῖς ἔχοντα δεικνύναι,
τὸ σόν τ' ἄραρε μᾶλλον: ἐξηγοῦ θεοῦς.

Aegeus

You have shown much prudence in your speech. Well, if you like, I do not object to doing this. Not only is this plan safer for me, since I can show your enemies some pretext, but your own case is more secure. Name the gods I must swear by.

Μῆδεια

ὄμυ πεδὸν Γῆς πατέρα θ' Ἥλιον πατρός
τούμου θεῶν τε συνπιθεῖς ἅπαν γένος.

Medea

Swear by the plain of Earth, by Helios, my grandfather, and by the whole race of gods all together.

Αἰγεύς

τί χρῆμα δράσειν ἢ τί μὴ δράσειν; λέγε.

Aegeus

To do what or to refrain from what? You must say.

Μῆδεια

μήτ' αὐτὸς ἐκ γῆς σῆς ἔμ' ἐκβαλεῖν ποτε,
μήτ', ἄλλος ἢ τις τῶν ἐμῶν ἐχθρῶν ἄγειν
χρήζη, μεθήσειν ζῶν ἐκουσίω τρόπῳ.

Medea

That you yourself will never banish me from your land and that, if any of my enemies ask to take me, you will not willingly give me up as long as you live.

Αἰγεύς

ὄμυμι Γαῖαν Ἥλιου θ' ἄγνον σέλας
θεοῦς τε πάντας ἐμμενεῖν ἅ σου κλύω.

Aegeus

I swear by Earth, by the holy light of Helios, and by all the gods that I will do as I have heard from your lips.

Μήδεια
ἀρκεῖ: τί δ' ὄρκω τῷδε μὴ ἰμμένων πάθοις;

Medea
That is good. But what punishment do you call down on yourself if you do not abide by your oath?

Αἰγεύς
ἂ τοῖσι δυσσεβοῦσι γίγνεται βροτῶν.

Aegeus
The punishment that befalls the impious among mortals.

Μήδεια
χαίρων πορεύου: πάντα γὰρ καλῶς ἔχει.
κἀγὼ πόλιν σὴν ὡς τάχιστ' ἀφίξομαι,
πράξασ' ἂ μέλλω καὶ τυχοῦσ' ἂ βούλομαι.

Medea
Go your way with joy. For all is well, and I shall come to your city as soon as I can, when I have accomplished what I intend and gained what I wish.
Exit Aegeus
731 - 755, Medea, Euripides.

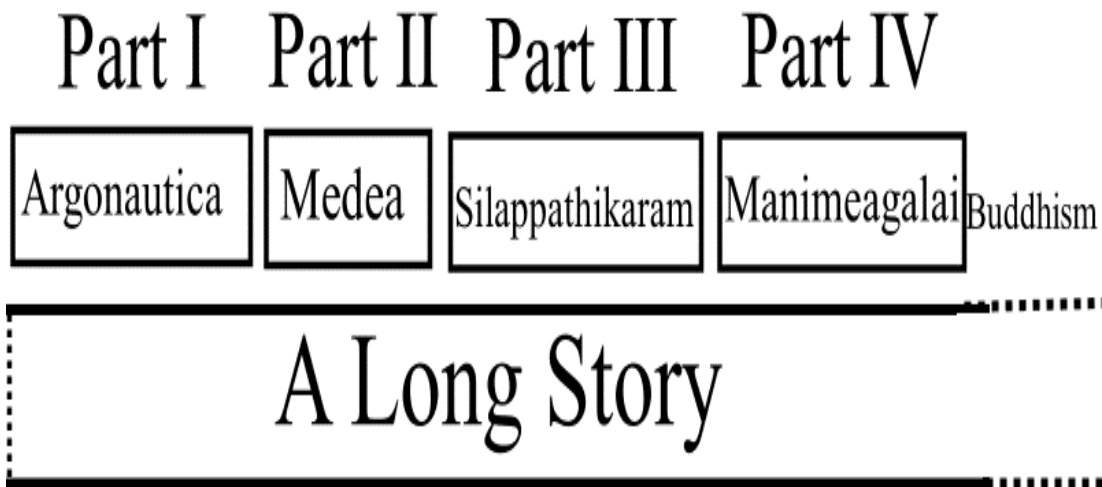
Thus only after that assurance by Aegeus, Medea went to Aegeus, son of Pandion.

Μήδεια
αὐτὴ δὲ γασίαν εἶμι τὴν Ἐρεχθέως,
1385 Αἰγεῖ συνοικήσουσα τῷ Πανδίωνος.
σύ δ', ὡσπερ εἰκός, καθανῆ κακὸς κακῶς,
Ἄργου κἀρα σὸν λειψάνω πεπληγμένος,
πικρὰς τελευτὰς τῶν ἐμῶν γάμων ἰδῶν.

Medea
As for myself, I shall go to the land of **Erechtheus** to live with **Aegeus**, son of **Pandion**. But you, as is fitting, shall die the miserable death of a coward, struck on the head by a piece of the Argo, having seen the bitter result of your marriage to me.
1384 – 1388, Medea, Euripides

Thus, Medea left Jason and went to the kingdom of Pandion. There may be a chance for Jason to follow Medea to see his children. This possible situation is ruled out in Greek, but it is present in the Tamil epic where Kovalan who had resemblances with Jason came back to Pandion kingdom. The Tamil myth mentioned that he was killed due to his fate. According the Greek myth it is the assurance of the Aegeus, son of Pandion to stop the person who has followed Medea in his land. Thus Tamil Silappathikaram seems to be a continuation of the Greek epic Medea.

According the myth in Tamil, the daughter of Kovalan professed Buddhism. The Greek Goddess Hera also had resemblances with the Buddhist Goddess Kujaku Myoo. Kovalan who had resemblances with the Greek Jason portrayed 'Bodhisattva" (near to Buddha) in Buddhism.^{37, 38} The Tamil Sembean or Sibi or Sivi or Sibae who had resemblance with the Greek Prometheus was portrayed as Buddhist Pantheons.³⁹ The chaste wife of Kovalan was portrayed as Buddhist Goddess.⁴⁰



Thus the myth continues in Buddhism.

³⁷ Gift of Shoes and Sea Goddess Sankha Jātaka (No. 442), (Stories of former birth of Buddha).

³⁸ Beckwith, C. (2015) Greek Buddha: Pyrrho's Encounter with Early Buddhism in Central Asia (Princeton).

³⁹ Buddhist Pantheons and painted in the Dunhuang Cave #254, Northern Wei Dynasty, 4-6th Centuries Wall Painting, and the sculturs were made in the Buddhist temple of Borobudur, Indonesia.

⁴⁰ Worship of chaste woman or Patthini Goddess

II. CONCLUSION

In the Greek epic, Medea mentioned that she was going to the Kingdom of Pandion. Like the Greece, Tamil Nadu also has the Kingdom of Pandion. The statement of Medea might denote the Kingdom of Pandion in Greece or in Tamil Nadu or both. The myths related with that of Jason, Medea and their children were in Greek Argonautica and Medea had full resemblances with the myths of Silappathikaram which has a linkage in the Tamil Kingdom of Pandion. The Greek historians also attested the sea trade between Greece and the Kingdom of Pandion in Tamil Nadu. So these myths might be passed by media or by the sea traders. Apart from the myths, the philosophies of fate and chastity also transacted between these two societies. The Tamil philosophy gives weightage to the human whereas in Greek it is to God. The philosophy of chastity and fate which is seen in the Greek epics can throw more light with Tamil philosophy. These transaction of myths and philosophy shows the relation between Greece and Tamil Nadu. In this, the role of Pandion is a remarkable one.



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