Greek, Latin, Sanskrit and Tamil: The Meaning of the Word Ἐρυθρὰν in Erythraean Sea

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Ἐρυθρὰν of Greek and Erythraeos of Latin denote a portion of ocean. From the Greek word ἐρυθρὸν, it is thought that the sea is red in colour and so got its name, the Red Sea. There is also another thought that the name of the sea is not due to its colour, but the first person who crossed this sea was called Erythras, and so the sea is named after him. The research that has been done so far has taken into account the Greek and Persian language root to this word, but has not yet reached a final conclusion. Tamil Nadu also has a remarkable place in this connection. In the word Ἐρυθρὰν θάλατταν, “Ery” means “throw” both in Greek and Tamil and “thrae” means hair in Greek and “wave” in Tamil. The word “thrae” has a common meaning which is that of either a group, or in general any gathering of a small number of objects. Thus, Ἐρυθρὰν of Greek and Erythraeos of Latin has the meaning of ‘throwing ocean wave’ in Tamil. In studying the other word Περίπλους (Περί + πλους), of Περίπλους της Ερυθράς Θαλάσσης, the first part of the word, Περί, means big or long and the latter part of the word πλους, which is the metathesis of πόλεις has the meaning land or city. Thus the words Περίπλους της Ερυθράς Θαλάσσης has the meaning – “the cities or the lands of the ocean of throwing waves”. It is well known that both the Greeks and Romans had a flourishing sea trade with Tamil Nadu in the ancient period of history and there was ample possibility of words being borrowed from Tamil to Greek.

Keywords: Erythraean Sea, Greek, Latin, sea trade, Tamil Nadu

Introduction

Many are aware of the Red Sea, but may not know the reason for calling it so. Only a few know the ancient name of the Red Sea, and when looked by its name, has a lot of hidden mysteries.

Ἐρυθρὰν Θάλατταν (Red Sea)

The ancient literary sources of Greek mention a sea name called Ἐρυθρὰν θάλατταν; this is translated as “Red Sea.”

μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα τὴν Βαβυλωνίαν διελθόντες εἰς τὴν Ἐρυθρὰν ἐξερεύγονται θάλατταν. Diod. 2.11. 2, 3	After this they pass through Babylonia and empty into the Red (Ἐρυθρὰν) Sea. (Oldfather 1989)
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The ancient literary sources of Latin also mention the name of the same sea. Here it is translated as Indian Ocean (Heraeus 1976).

Puella senibus dulcior mihi cyncis,
 Agna Galaesi mollior Phalantini,
 Concha Lucrini delicatior stagni,
 Cui nec lapillos praeferas **Erythraeos**,
 5. Nec modo politum pecudis Indicae
 dentem
 Nivesque primas liliumque non tactum;

Martial, Epigrammata 5. 37.

Child, more sweet to me than the song
 of aged swans, more tender than a lamb
 of Phalantine Galaesus, more delicate
 than a shell of the Lucrine lake; you to
 whom no one could prefer the pearls of
 the **Indian Ocean**, or the newly
 polished tooth of the Indian elephant, or
 the newly fallen snow, or tho untouched
 lily;

Thus, the words Ἐρυθρὰν θάλατταν of Greek and Erythraeos of Latin sometimes denote Red Sea, and at other instances denote Indian Ocean or Arabian Sea or Bay of Bengal as depicted in the Figure 1.

Figure 1. Location of the Erythraeos or Ἐρυθρὰν θάλατταν

Significance of the Location

There were two trade routes between Europe and Asia. One route was by land and the other by sea. The way through the land was called the Silk Road; along the path of the sea, Erythraeos or Ἐρυθρὰν θάλατταν has an important place. From the

many articles that were transported through this sea route, the much valued pearls from Pandion Country¹ in the Tamil land finds a special mention here (Pugazhendhi 2021a) (Heraeus 1976).

9. Splendet *Erythraeis* perlucida moecha Your mistress shines resplendent
lapillis, with *Erythraean pearls*;
Martial, Epigrammata 9. 2.

The pearls² are mentioned as Erythraean pearls in Latin literature. At many times silk was the main material of trade and transport along the silk route and also through sea route (Warmington 1928)³. This was due to a problem that was raised in the silk route (Żuchowska 2013)⁴ as shown in the Figure 2.

¹59. Ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ Κομαρεῖ ἐκτείνουσα (πρὸς τὸν νότον) χώρα μέχρι Κόλχων, ἐν ᾗ κολύμβησις τοῦ πνικκοῦ ἐστίν· ἀπὸ δὲ κατακρισίμων κατεργάζεται· ὑπὸ τὸν βασιλέα Πανδίονά ἐστι. Μετὰ δὲ Κόλχους ἐκδέχεται πρότερος * αἰγιαλὸς ἐν κόλπῳ κείμενος, ἔχων χῶρον μεσόγειον, λεγόμενον Ἀργάλου· ἐν ἐνὶ τόπῳ * τερονεῖται τὸ παρ' αὐτὴν τὴν Ἠπιοδώρου [νῆσον] συλλεγόμενον πνικκόν· φέρονται γὰρ ἐξ αὐτῆς σινδόνες, * ἐβαργαρεῖτιδες λεγόμεναι.

Περίπλους της Ερυθράς Θαλάσσης

59. From Comari toward the south this region extends to Colchi, where the pearl-fisheries are; and it belongs to the Pandian Kingdom. Beyond Colchi there follows another district called the Coast Country, which lies on a bay, and has a region inland called Argaru. At this place, and nowhere else, are bought the pearls gathered on the coast thereabouts; and from there are exported muslins, those called Argaritic.

Periplus of the Eritheranian Sea (Wilfred 1912)

²καὶ τάδε δὲ μετεξέτεροι Ἰνδῶν περὶ Ἡρακλέος λέγουσιν, ἐπελθόντα αὐτὸν πᾶσαν γῆν καὶ θάλασσαν καὶ καθήραντα ὃ τι περ κακόν, καινὸν εἶδος ἐξευρεῖν ἐν τῇ θαλάσσει κόσμου γυναικείου, ὄντινα καὶ ἐς τοῦτο ἔτι οἱ τε ἐξ Ἰνδῶν τῆς χώρας τὰ ἀγώγιμα παρ' ἡμέας ἀγινέοντες σπουδῇ ὠνεόμενοι ἐκκομίζουσι, καὶ Ἑλλήνων δὲ πάλαι καὶ Ῥωμαίων νῦν ὅσοι πολυκτέανοι καὶ εὐδαίμονες μέζονι ἔτι σπουδῇ ὠνεόνται τὸν μαργαρίτην δὴ τὰν θαλάσσιον οὕτω τῇ Ἰνδῶν γλώσσει καλεόμενον. τὸν γὰρ Ἡρακλέα, ὡς καλὸν οἱ ἐφάνη τὸ φόρημα, ἐκ πάσης θαλάσσης ἐς τὴν Ἰνδῶν δυναγινέειν τὸν μαργαρίτην δὴ τοῦτον, τῇ θυγατρὶ τῇ ἐωυτοῦ 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 (Eberhard 1885)

³Woven silk destined to be dyed for wear, and unwoven silk destined to be worked up in Egypt, Syria, and Galilee could be sent conveniently byway of the Persian Gulf or the Red Sea, and this cheaper route avoiding Parthia would be encouraged by the Romans..... silk sellers frequented **Kaviripaddinam in the Chola Kingdom**..... Rome, who encouraged such developments for the purpose of eliminating the Parthians and the expensive land-route, and we ultimately bear of Indian silks besides Chinese, Parthian, and Median robes. But the Indians became intermediaries in two ways-for though part of the silk sent by them to the Romans was

Figure 2. Cut off the Chain of Silk Route and the Extension of Erythraeos Route

Thus Ἐρυθρὰν θάλατταν or Erythraeos has an important place in the sea trade, much more than on the Silk Road. There is no clear evidence available as to show how the people of these far away places came to know each other and were able to take up the journey of such a long sea trade. It is said that the frequent occurring floods might have been one of the reasons that have made people of these places to meet. It can be assumed from the words of Berossus, from Apollodorus of the Chaldæan Kings, who belonged to the third century BC (Cory 1832):

He tells that the first king was Alorus of Babylon, a Chaldæan: he reigned ten sari: and afterwards Alaparus, and Amelon who came from Pantibiblon: then Ammenon the Chaldæan, in whose time appeared the *Musarus* Oannes the Annedotus from the Erythræan Sea. Then succeeded Megalarus from the city of *Pantibiblon* and he reigned eighteen sari: and after him Daonus the shepherd from Pantibiblon reigned ten sari; in his time (he says) appeared again from the Erythræan Sea a fourth Annedotus, having the same form with those above, the shape of a fish blended with that of a man. Then reigned Euedorachus from Pantibiblon, for the term of eighteen sari; in

diverted from the land-route for that purpose, part of it was the result of India's own trade in Chinese silk.

⁴Chinese sources reveal that the Parthians did not encourage foreign traders, striving to retain their monopoly on commerce between East and West. In Hou Han Shu, the Chronicle of the Later Han Dynasty covering the first two centuries AD, we can read: King of this country [Da Qin – Roman Empire] always wanted to send envoys to China, but people from Anxi [Parthia], wishing to control their trade in the multicoloured silk, blocked the road and they could not reach [China] (HHS 88, Account on Western Regions 78, Account on Da Qin [Roman Empire]).

his days there appeared another personage from the Erythraean Sea like the former, having the same complicated form between a fish and a man, whose name was Odacon Chron. 39. Euseb. Chron. 5.

Berossus : From Apollodorus of the Chaldaean Kings.

Thus, the floods might have made the people of Ἐρυθρὰν θάλατταν – Erythraeos to shift and move to far away places. Here it is noted that the Ionic Greeks also had the name Ἐρυθρῶν who had inhabited that place.

<p>σέβονται δὲ οὐδέν τι ἥσον καὶ Ἐλλησποντίων Παριανοί, τὸ μὲν ἀνέκαθεν ἐξ Ἰωνίας καὶ Ἐρυθρῶν ἀποικισμένοι, Paus. 9.27.1.</p>	<p>He is worshipped equally by the people of Parium on the Hellespont, who were originally colonists from Erythrae in Ionia (Jones 1918)</p>
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<p>Ἐρυθραῖοι δὲ οἱ Ἴωνες Ἐπιθέρσῃν τὸν Μητροδώρου, δύο μὲν ἐν Ὀλυμπίᾳ πυγμῆς, Paus. 6.15.6.</p>	<p>[6] The Ionians of Erythrae dedicated a statue of Epitherses, son of Metrodorus, who won two boxing prizes at Olympia, (Jones 1918)</p>
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Those people seem to differ from the people who belong to Greece.

<p>(3) γλῶσσαν δὲ οὐ τὴν αὐτὴν οὗτοι νενομίκασι, ἀλλὰ τρόπους τέσσερας παραγωγέων. Μίλητος μὲν αὐτέων πρώτη κέεται πόλις πρὸς μεσαμβρίην, μετὰ δὲ Μυοῦς τε καὶ Πριήνη. (4) αὗται μὲν ἐν τῇ Καρίῃ κατοίκηνται κατὰ ταῦτα διαλεγόμεναι σφίσι, αἶδε δὲ ἐν τῇ Λυδίῃ, Ἐφεσος Κολοφῶν Λέβεδος Τέως Κλαζομεναὶ Φώκαια: αὗται δὲ αἱ πόλεις τῇσι πρότερον λεχθείησι ὁμολογέουσι κατὰ γλῶσσαν οὐδέν, σφίσι δὲ ὁμοφωνέουσι. ἔτι δὲ τρεῖς ὑπόλοιποι Ἰάδες πόλεις, τῶν αἱ δύο μὲν νήσους οἰκέαται, Σάμιον τε καὶ Χίον, ἡ δὲ μία ἐν τῇ ἡπείρῳ ἱδρύται, Ἐρυθραί. Χῖοι μὲν νυν καὶ Ἐρυθραῖοι κατὰ τὸντὸ διαλέγονται, Σάμιοι δὲ ἐπ' ἐωυτῶν μόννοι. οὗτοι χαρακτηρὲς γλώσσης τέσσερες γίνονται. Hdt. 1. 142.</p>	<p>(3) They do not all have the same speech but four different dialects. Miletus lies farthest south among them, and next to it come Myus and Priene; these are settlements in Caria, and they have a common language; Ephesus, Colophon, Lebedos, Teos, Clazomenae, Phocaea, all of them in Lydia, (4) have a language in common which is wholly different from the speech of the three former cities. There are yet three Ionian cities, two of them situated on the islands of Samos and Chios, and one, Erythrae, on the mainland; the Chians and Erythraeans speak alike, but the Samians have a language which is their own and no one else's. It is thus seen that there are four modes of speech. (Godley 1920)</p>
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The reason for this name Erythrae - Erythraeans is not clear to understand, but there are possibilities for one to assume that it may denote some person.

οἱ δὲ καὶ ἐπαριθμοῦσι τοῖς κατελεγμένοις *Ερύθραν* παῖδα Λεύκωνος τοῦ Ἀθάμαντος—ἀπὸ τούτου *Ερυθραῖ* πόλις ἐκαλεῖτο Βοιωτῶν.
Paus.6.21.11.

Some add to the aforesaid *Erythras*, the son of Leucon, the son of Athamas, after whom was named *Erythrae* in Boeotia
(Jones 1918)

There is also some thoughts that they might have originated from Crete.

Ερυθραῖοι δὲ τὸ μὲν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἀφικέσθαι σὺν *Ερύθρῳ* τῷ Ῥαδαμάνθους φασιν ἐκ Κρήτης καὶ οἰκιστὴν τῇ πόλει γενέσθαι τὸν *Ερυθρον*: τούτων τῶν κατελεγμένων ἐχόντων *Ερυθράς*, Κλέοπος ὁ Κόδρου συλλέξας ἐξ ἀπασῶν τῶν ἐν Ἰωνίᾳ πόλεων ὅσους δὴ παρὰ ἐκάστων ἐπεισήγαγεν *Ερυθραίους* συνοίκους.
Paus.7.3.7.

The *Erythraeans* say that they came originally from Crete with *Erythrus* the son of Rhadamanthus, and that this *Erythrus* was the founder of their city. The peoples I have enumerated occupied *Erythrae* when Cleopus the son of Codrus gathered men from all the cities of Ionia, so many from each, and introduced them as settlers among the *Erythraeans*.
(Jones 1918)

This Erythraeans of Crete were also related with Panchaea of *Ερυθρὰν θάλατταν*.

μυθολογοῦσι δ' οἱ ἱερεῖς τὸ γένος αὐτοῖς ἐκ Κρήτης ὑπάρχειν, ὑπὸ Διὸς ἡγμένοις εἰς τὴν Παγχαίαν, ὅτε κατ' ἀνθρώπους ὦν ἐβασίλευε τῆς οἰκουμένης: καὶ τούτων σημεῖα φέρουσι τῆς διαλέκτου, δεικνύντες τὰ πολλὰ διαμένειν παρ' αὐτοῖς Κρητικῶς ὀνομαζόμενα: τὴν τε πρὸς αὐτοὺς οἰκειότητα καὶ φιланθρωπίαν ἐκ προγόνων παρεληφέναι, τῆς φήμης ταύτης τοῖς ἐγγόνους παραδιδόμενης ἀεί. ἐδείκνυν δὲ καὶ ἀναγραφὰς τούτων, ἃς ἔφασαν τὸν Δία πεποιῆσθαι καθ' ὃν καιρὸν ἔτι κατ' ἀνθρώπους ὦν ἰδρύσατο τὸ ἱερόν.
Diod.5.46.3.

According to the myth which the priests give, the gods had their origin in Crete, and were led by Zeus to Panchaea at the time when he sojourned among men and was king of the inhabited earth. In proof of this they cite their language, pointing out that most of the things they have about them still retain their Cretan names; and they add that the kinship which they have with the Cretans and the kindly regard they feel toward them are traditions they received from their ancestors, since this report is ever handed down from one generation to another. And it has been their practice, in corroboration of these claims, to point to inscriptions which, they said, were made by Zeus during the time he still sojourned among men and founded the temple.
(Oldfather 1989)

Further, the people belonging to Ionia, Babylon and Crete are seen to be related with the word *Ερυθρὰν*. The location of these places is pointed out in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Locations of Ionia, Babylon and Crete

Thus the word 'Ερυθρὰν - Erythraeans has an important place in both sea trade and inhabitation. Due to this, the root meaning of this word has an important place in the research field.

'Ερυθρὰν - Erythraeans – The Meaning

There are some arguments in the search of the meaning of these words (Schoff 1913).⁵ The colour red is also related with this name (Schoff 1913).⁶

Red Colour

The name of the sea is related with the word “red”. There are many words for “red” in ancient Greek like πυρρὰν, φοινίσσουσα and ἐρεῦσα.

⁵The origin of geographical names is often beyond explanations: they arise by accident, pass from mouth to mouth and from age to age, taking on new meanings and new locations, until they become mere arbitrary words, and imagination must come in to explain them. So it is with the name of the Erythraean Sea.

⁶Now it is true that from Roman times onward Mare Rubrum, Red Sea, meant the long gulf that separates Egypt from Arabia; and it is equally true that under certain conditions of wind and climate a reddish vegetable scum forms on its almost stagnant waters, from which the name “Red” might have been suggested.

315ἵππου μελαίνης ἡγεμὼν τρισμυρίας,
πυρρὰν ζαπληθὴ δάσκιον γενειάδα
 ἔτεγγ', ἀμείβων χρωῖτα πορφυρέα βαφῇ.
 Aesch. Pers. 316

[315] leader of the Black Cavalry,
 thirty thousand strong, in death dyed
red his thick and shaggy beard,
 changing its color with a deep crimson
 stain.

(Smyth 1926a)

185. πολύθυτον δὲ δι' ἄλσος Ἀρ-
 τέμιδος ἤλυθον ὁρομένα,
φοινίσσουσα παρῆδ' ἐμὴν
 αἰσχύνῃ νεοθαλεῖ,
 Eur. I. A.
 (Murray 1913)

(185) Through the grove of Artemis,
 rich with sacrifice, I sped my course, my
 cheek stained with **red** from maiden
 modesty,
 (Coleridge 1891)

394. παῖδες δ' ὀρφανικοί: ὁ δέ θ' αἷματι
 γαῖαν **ἐρεῦθων**
 πύθεται, οἰωνοὶ δὲ περὶ πλέες ἡὲ
 γυναιῖκες.
 Hom. Il. Book 11.

and his children fatherless, while
 he, **reddening** the earth with his
 blood,
 (Murray 1924)

ἀλλ' οὐ Ζεὺς ἄνδρεςσι νοήματα πάντα
 τελευτᾷ:
 329. ἄμφω γὰρ πέπρωται ὁμοίην γαῖαν
ἐρεῦσαι
 Hom. Il. Book 18.

for both of us twain are fated to
redden the selfsame earth with our
 blood
 (Murray 1924)

In this ἐρεῦσαι is the word used for red which has phonetic resemblance with the word Ἐρυθρὰν that is related with sea. So the name of the sea is related with the word red.

Ἐρυθρὰν γὰρ λέγειν τινὰς τὴν θάλατταν
 ἀπὸ τῆς χροῖα^ς τῆς ἐμφαινομένης κατ'
 ἀνάκλασιν, εἴτε ἀπὸ τοῦ ἡλίου κατὰ
 κορυφὴν ὄντος εἴτε ἀπὸ τῶν ὀρῶν
 ἐρυθραينوμένων ἐκ τῆς ἀποκαύσεως:
 ἀμφοτέρως γὰρ εἰκάζειν: Κτησίαν δὲ τὸν
 Κνίδιον πηγὴν ἱστορεῖν ἐκδιδοῦσαν εἰς τὴν
 θάλατταν ἐρευθὲς καὶ μυτῶδες ὕδωρ:
 Strab. 16.4.20

Some of these say, that the sea is red
 from the colour arising from reflection
 either from the sun, which is vertical,
 or from the mountains, which are red
 by being scorched with intense heat;
 for the colour, it is supposed, may be
 produced by both these causes. Ctesias
 of Cnidus speaks of a spring which
 discharges into the sea a red and
 ochrous water.
 (Jones 1924)

The word Ἐρυθρὰν – Erythraeans is related to the word ἐρεῦθων, and so the word 'red' is not fully accepted by both Latin and Greek scholars.

14. Nec, cur verterit se natura, causa. Mare certe, quo adluitur, ne colore quidem abhorret a ceteris. Ab *Erythro* rege inditum est nomen: propter quod ignari rubere aquas credunt. Terra lini ferax:

Roman historian, 1st-century AD
(Curtius 1908)

14. certainly the sea by which India is washed does not differ even in colour from other seas. Its name was given it from king *Erythrus*; for which reason the ignorant believe that its waters are red.
(Rolfe 1946)

Thus, the reason for the name of the Erythras which is related with the red colour seems to shift to a Persian person called Erythras (Schoff 1913).⁷

Ἀγαθαρχίδην δὲ τὸν ἐκείνου πολίτην παρά τινος Βόξου, Πέρσου τὸ γένος, ἱστορῆσαι διότι Πέρσης τις Ἐρύθρας, ἵπποφορβίου τινὸς ὑπὸ λεαίνης οἴστρῳ κατασχομένης ἐξελαθέντος μέχρι θαλάττης κάκειθεν εἰς νήσόν τινα διάραντος, σχεδῖαν πηξάμενος πρῶτος περαιωθεὶς πρὸς τὴν νῆσον: ἰδὼν δὲ καλῶς οἰκήσιμον τὴν μὲν ἀγέλην εἰς τὴν Περσίδα ἀπαγάγοι πάλιν, ἀποίκους δ' ἐκεῖ στείλαι τε καὶ τὰς ἄλλας νήσους καὶ τὴν παραλίαν, ἐπώνυμον δὲ ποιήσειεν ἑαυτοῦ τὸ πέλαγος. τοὺς δὲ Περσέως υἱὸν ἀποφαίνεσθαι τὸν Ἐρύθραν, ἡγήσασθαι τε τῶν τόπων. λέγεται δ' ὑπὸ τινων τὰ ἀπὸ τῶν στενῶν τοῦ Ἀραβίου κόλπου μέχρι τῆς κινναμωμοφόρου τῆς ἐσχάτης πεντακισχλίων σταδίων, οὐκ εὐκρινῶς, εἶτ' ἐπὶ νότον εἶτ' ἐπὶ τὰς ἀνατολάς. λέγεται δὲ καὶ διότι ὁ σμάραγδος καὶ ὁ βήρυλλος ἐν τοῖς τοῦ χρυσοῦ μέταλλοις ἐγγίνεται. εἰσὶ δὲ καὶ ἄλλες εὐώδεις ἐν Ἀραβίᾳ, ὥς φησι Ποσειδώνιος.
Strab. 16.4.20

Agatharchides, his fellow-citizen, relates, on the authority of a person of the name of Boxus, of Persian descent, that when a troop of horses was driven by a lioness in heat as far as the sea, and had passed over to an island, a Persian of the name of Erythras constructed a raft, and was the first person who crossed the sea to it; perceiving the island to be well adapted for inhabitants, he drove the herd back to Persia, and sent out colonists both to this and the other islands and to the coast. He [thus] gave his own name to the sea. But according to others, it was Erythras the son of Perseus who was the king of this country.

(Jones 1924)

Thus the word Ἐρυθρὰν – Erythraeans is related with a Persian name Erythras. Even today the argument is divisive, because so far as this research is concerned it is only related with the evidence found in Greek and Persian sources (Schoff 1913).⁸ However, there are many sources related with the word Ἐρυθρὰν, meaning Erythraeans Sea. One other source is Tamil.

⁷The word Erythraean, which came to them from Persia. It is through that connection that its origin and meaning must be sought.

⁸The presence of algae in sufficient quantity to colour the surface over a large area would be an exceptional occurrence, not likely to lend a name to the sea. This suggestion was made by Lobo more than a century ago. In conclusion we may say that looking out of Greece through Persia to the ancient East, we may gather from the name Erythraean several meanings, all of them reasonable. “Sea of the East, the Orient, or the rising sun”; “Sea where the sun was

Tamil and Ἐρυθρὰν

Tamil Nadu is situated on the Ἐρυθρὰν – Erythraean Sea route and also took part in the sea trade (Schoff 1917).⁹ The pearl (Seland 2016, Warmington 1928)¹⁰, pepper (Warmington 1928)¹¹, (Cappers 2006)¹², sapphires (Warmington 1928)¹³,

worshipped”; “Sea whence came the people who brought the purple or Erythraean dye”, and finally, “Sea of King Erythras” typifying the ancient pre-Semitic Akkadian- Dravidian trade. Certainly with these vistas of the past opened through that name, we cannot rest satisfied with an interpretation that would limit it to a temporary accumulation of vegetable matter localized at a point to which the name was not originally applied.

⁹The **Tamil poem Paddinappalai** gives us a vivid description of a busy port of the **Chola Kingdom, Kaviripaddinam**, which was built on the northern bank of the **Kaviri River**, then a broad and deep stream into which heavily laden ships entered from the sea without slackening sail. At the beach were raised platforms and warehouses where cargoes were stored. The goods were stamped with the royal tiger stamp after payment of customs duty and then released to the merchants. Close by were settlements of the Yavana merchants, which name included not only Ionians or Greeks, but Graeco-Bactrians and Parthians. Here were quartered foreign traders from other lands beyond the seas, and precious cargoes of many kinds were brought from all directions. The author of the Periplus mentions the three kingdoms of southern India: Chera, with its port of **Muziris**, the **Muchiri** of the **Tamil** poets; **Pandya**, the capital of which, **Madura**, Pliny reports as Modiera; and the “coast country”, that is, **Chola**, with its capital called Argaru, that is Urugapura, Uraiyir, the modern Trichinopoly on the Kaviri, while the port of **Kaviripaddinam** he mentions as Camara, and says that there were in that port not only the large single-masted vessels peculiar to the Malabar coast, but others very much larger which made the voyage to Chryse and the Ganges. He mentions Chryse as an island opposite the Ganges and under the rising sun and tells us that beyond Chryse the sea comes to an end, and that to the north was “a land called This with an inland city called Thinae from which silk was brought overland through Bactria to the Gulf of Cambay and by way of the Ganges to the ports of Damirica”, that is, **Tamil Land, the Tamilakam** of their poets (Peripl. Mar. Erythr. 63, 64).

¹⁰In the early Empire, when Barygaza was the port most frequently visited, the ultimate source of the pearls was probably the Persian Gulf, for it was from here that the merchants of Barygaza procured them; but some of better quality may have been brought from South India and Ceylon, which are still among the chief producers. Literature tells us that traders in coral and pearls frequented **Kaviripaddinam of the Chola Kingdom**, and this town contained **resident Greek merchants**; similarly, a poet who visited Uraiyur, the ancient Chola capital, speaks of coral and pearls together, with rare gems also, and as is shewn by the passage in the “Toy cart”, jewellers’ shopsregularly sold coral.

¹¹Black Pepper which, when the Periplus was written was exported in vast quantities from **Muziris** and Nelcunda, being brought down from Nelcunda to Bacare in large boats, while doubtless the port of Tyndis, receiving supplies down the river Ponnani, sent them on to swell the quantities gathered into **Muziris** and carried away by Greeks in especially large ships brought for the purpose...Pepper became part of the everyday life of every respectable household in Rome, since its chief use was as an ordinary spice, only a few old people, it was said were unable to taste pepper and other eastern fruits in their food. In consequence the spice appears in almost every recipe given by Apicius in his ten books and seems to have been more important than salt or sugar is in the cookery books of today. But besides this both species of peppers were used in all kinds of medicines and drugs, as Pliny, Galen, Celsus, Scribonius, and other writers who deal with medicines, constantly shew, and pepper is generally the only Indian spice which appears in medical recipes preserved on papyri. Its use as a medicine dates from the time of Hippocrates to whom it was the “Indian remedy”, and the constant mention of it in Graeco-Roman medicine, particularly in connection with agues and fevers, has led Dr

iron (Warmington 1928)¹⁴ and timber (Pugazhendhi 2021b)¹⁵ were the important articles of trade. This trade leads to literary transactions also. This category is of three types, viz. 1. Literary Themes, 2. Literary Forms, 3. Literary Policy.

Literary Themes

The theme of the Latin subjective love elegy related with Erythraean pearls is parallel with the Tamil subjective love elegy (Wilhelm, 1976).

May you live long, my heart!
Even if this city were gifted to
me, I will not leave my girl with
long, black hair and blazing jewels.

218- 220, Pattinappālai,
Sanga Ilakkiam,
(Tamil Virtual University 1995)

I prophesy you'll wish for your wife's
true love:
I think the Gods themselves have learnt
that by now.
You'd not prefer to have all the land in
the world
that sturdy farmers plough with strong
oxen,
nor all the **pearls produced by happy
India**,
where the waves of Eastern Seas redden.

II Cornutus's Birthday, Book II,
Tibullus, (Smith 1913)

Literary Forms

Latin subjective love elegy has the form consisting of a hexameter verse followed by a pentameter verse. This form and theme are parallel with the Tamil subjective love elegy.

Jones to the conclusion that it was used as an antidote against the ever present malaria in the Roman Empire. We need not wonder that attempts were made to introduce the cultivation of pepper to the West, and in Petronius the wealthy Trimalchio grows his own pepper, but Pliny says that when planted in Italy it lost its flavour.

¹²Black pepper (*Piper nigrum*) is native to southern India and is attested by archaeological evidences.

¹³For the author of the Periplus found sapphires at **Muziris** and Nelcunda only..... The hard sapphire first came into use as a gem-stone in the Graeco-Roman period, and extant examples shew us its use (generally unengraved, as was natural) in jewellery and rings and shew too the quantities obtained under the Byzantine Empire. Engraved sapphires one-half and even one inch wide, the so-called signet of Constantius II (a sapphire of 53 carats) and a perforated stone of Hadrian's time are all extant examples of ancient trade in splendid oriental sapphires

¹⁴Fine swords made of Indian steel had been famous, since the time of Ctesias, and the Roman trade in Indian Iron and Steel was an important one. Since Pliny says that the finest of all iron was sent by the Seres with their tissues and skins the natural conclusion is that this metal was from the province of Shan-Si in China or atleast from Ferghana. But, as Schoff has pointed out, the Periplus does not indicate the exportation of silk and steel together at the same marts, and we must take Seres as being Cheras of the Malabar coast (981).

¹⁵The three woods *σανταλίνων*, *δοκῶν* and *κεράτων* have been transported through sea trade from the Tamil land to the Greek and Hebrew lands.

இருநோக்கு இவளுக்கன் உள்ளது ஒருநோக்கு
நோய்நோக்கொன் நந்நோய் மருத்து.

1091, kurriparithal
Thirukkural.
(Tamil Virtual University 1995)

omnes humanos sanat medicina dolores:
solus amor morbi non amat artificem.

57&58, Book II,
The Elegies Of Propertius,
(Butler 1912)

Her gorging eyes have two gazes, one gaze
inflicts the malady, the other gaze is remedy
for that malady.

Medicine cures all the anguish of
mankind; love alone loves no
physician

Literary Policy

Tamil subjective love elegy has some literary policy in its subjective love elegy. It won't be mentioned the name of the subjective and its partner in the text. This policy is also seen in Latin love elegy (Beyers 1962).¹⁶ This was due to the travel of commercial ships between these two lands and this is confirmed by the ancient Greek work called Περίπλους της Ερυθράς Θαλάσσης.

Βασιλείας δ' ἐστὶν ἡ μὲν Τύνδις
Κηπροβότρου, κώμη 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

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**¹⁷; 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

¹⁶The form of E. 7 is interesting because it is not really dramatic. All critics note that the singers do not themselves appear. Meliboeus introduces the words of the singers as he introduces Daphnis' words, and the text should dispense with the words Corydon Thyrsis alternately. Since in E.1, 3, 5 and 9 the odd number and the dramatic arrangement really are the sign of interplay between characters actually present, would we not be justified in thinking that this departure from the norm is intentional, specially emphasizing the absence of any data on which to judge character? Even if there is not any special emphasis, it is true that we learn nothing of the characters of the two poets from their own actions either before or during the contest.

¹⁷In Greek language the word 'βάρβαρον' is used to denote the foreigners.

τὸ μὲν Ἑλληνικὸν ὥς ἐν ἀπὸ πάντων
ἀφαιροῦντες χωρίς, σύμπασι δὲ τοῖς ἄλλοις
γένεσιν, ἀπείροις οὖσι καὶ ἀμείτοις καὶ
ἀσυμφώνοις πρὸς ἄλληλα, **βάρβαρον** μὲν
κλήσει προσεπτόντες αὐτὸ διὰ ταύτην τὴν μίαν
κλήσιν καὶ γένος ἐν αὐτὸ εἶναι προσδοκῶσιν:
Plat. Stat. 262d
(Burnet 1903)

they separate the Hellenic race from all the
rest as one, and to all the other races, which
are countless in number and have no relation
in blood or language to one another, they give
the single name "**barbarian**";
(Fowler 1921)

In Tamil language the words "Barbar" and "Parpanar" (Tamil Virtual University 1995) are used to denote the foreigners including Greeks. (B and P sounds are same in Tamil language)

πεντακοσίους, ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ κατ' αὐτὴν
εἴκοσι. Ἡ δὲ Νέλκυνδα σταδίους μὲν ἀπὸ
Μουζιρέως ἀπέχει σχεδὸν πεντακοσίους,
ὁμοίως διὰ τε ποταμοῦ (καὶ πεζῇ) καὶ διὰ
θαλάσσης, βασιλείας δὲ ἐστὶν ἑτέρας, τῆς
Πανδίου· κεῖται δὲ καὶ αὐτὴ παρὰ
ποταμὸν, ὥσει ἀπὸ σταδίων ἑκατὸν
εἴκοσι τῆς θαλάσσης.

— παράγραφοι 53-54,

Περίπλους της Ερυθράς Θαλάσσης

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.

Periplus of the Eritheranian Sea (Wilfred
1912)

This is shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Greek and Tamil Nadu

In this way, the ancient Greek works guarantee the sea trade that took place between the Greeks and the Tamilians. This Pandion (Πανδίων) is the Panchaea (Παγχαία) associated with Crete and Pantibiblon of Babylon. Here it is to be noted that the king Pandion (Πανδίου) of Tamil Nadu was one among the members on the side of the Trojan army that is indicated in the epic Iliad.

’370 ὥς ἄρα φωνήσας ἀπέβη Τελαμώνιος
Αἴας,
καὶ οἱ Τεῦκρος ἅμ’ ἧε κασίγνητος καὶ
ὄπατρος·
τοῖς δ’ ἅμα **Πανδίων** Τεύκρου φέρε καμπύλα
τόξα.
Hom. Il. Book 12.

So saying Telamonian Aias
departed, and with him went
Teucer, his own brother, begotten
of one father, and with them
Pandion bare the curved bow of
Teucer.
(Murray 1924)

This Tamil Pandion was also related with the myth of Karna who has resemblance with Ion of Ionia. The Greek Sapphic stanzas of Lesbos that is situated near the Ionic of Erythrae has resemblance with Tamil Seppal songs (Pugazhendhi 2020). The Greek epics Argonautica and Medea have resemblance with Tamil epic, Silappathikaram (Pugazhendhi 2021a). This evidence ensures

that the people of Tamil Nadu took part in the sea trade of Ερυθράς Θάλασσης and so had relationships with the Greeks. Thus, apart from Greek and Persian there is also a need to search in Tamil language the meaning of the word Ερυθράς. Hence to get to know more about it, it is not apt to search for its meaning in Tamil sources in isolation, but when it is related along with Greek sources it will be more meaningful and relevant.

Ερυθράς in Tamil

Ancient Tamil literary sources mentions Ερυθράς - Erythraeans as Erytherai. The original text that shows its occurrence is as follows:

வெள்ளியும் இரு விகம்பு ஏர்தரும்; புள்ளும்
உயர் சினைக் குடம்பைக் குரல் தோற்றினவே;
பொய்கையும் போது கண் விழித்தன; பைபயச்
கடரும் சுருங்கின்று ஒளியே; பாடெழுந்து
இரங்கு குரல் முரசுமொடு வலம்புரி ஆர்ப்ப 5
இரவுப் புறங்கண்ட காலைத் தோன்றி,
எஃகு இருள் அகற்றும் ஏம்பு பாசறை,
வைகறை அரவம் கேளியர்! பல கோள்
செய் தார் மார்பு! எழுமதி துயில்!" எனத்
தெண்கண் மாக்கினை தெளிர்ப்ப ஒற்றி 10
நெடுங்கடைத் தோன்றியேனே அது நயந்து
'உள்ளி வந்த பரிசிலன் இவன்' என,
நெய்யுறப் பொரித்த குய்யுடை நெடுஞ்சூடு,
மணிக்கலன் நிறைந்த மணநாறு தேறல்,
பாம்பு உரித்தன்ன வான் பூங்கலிங்கமொடு, 15
மாரியன்ன வண்மையின் சொரிந்து,
வேனில் அன்ன என் வெப்பு நீங்க,
அருங்கலம் நல்கியோனே; என்றும்
செறுவில் பூத்த சேயிதழ்த் தாமரை
அறு தொழில் அந்தணர் அறம் புரிந்து எடுத்த 20
தொயொடு விளங்கும் நாடன், வாய்வான்
வலம்படு தீவின் பொலம் பூண் வளவன்;
எறி திரைப் பெருங்கடல்(Ερυθρὸν θάλατταν)
(Erythraeos)
இறுதிக்கண் செலினும்,
தெறு கதிர்க் கனலி தென் திசைத் தோன்றினும்,
என்னென்று அஞ்சலம் யாமே வென்வேல் 25
அருஞ்சமம் கடக்கும் ஆற்றல் அவன்
திருந்து கழல் நோன்தாள் தண் நிழலேமே.

The phonetic form and their meanings are given below (Tamil Virtual University 1995).

valam paTu tIvin polam pUN vaLavan;
eRytheraep perug kadal iRutikkaN
celinum,
teRu katirk kanali ten ticait tOnRinum,
25
'en?' enRu ajcalam, yAmE; ven vEl
aruj camam kaTakkum ARRAl avan

Valavan wears gold ornaments that
he took from an island with his unfailing
sword.
Even if the 'Ερυθρὸν θάλατταν should
end or the sun with
its hot rays appears in the south, we will
not fear and worry

tirun'tu kazal n'On tAL taN n'izalEmE. tiNai atu; tuRai paricilviTai; kaTain'ilai viTaiyum Am.	about what we would do. We rest in the cool shade of his strong feet with perfect anklets, the man who has the power to win with his victorious spear in difficult battles!
Puranānūru 397, Erukkattūr Thāyankannanār sang for Chōlan Kulamutrathu Thunjiya Killivalavan, Sanga Ilakkiam,	

Thus, Ερυθράς – Erythraeans mentioned as Erytherae in Tamil. Here it is expressed as a combination of two words.

Ερυθράν – Two Parts

The words found in Greek such as Ερυθράν, Ερυθράς, Ερυθραῖοι, and that in Latin Erythraeis shall be looked at as a combination of two words in the same way as seen in Tamil language. That is Ερυ + θράς or θραῖοι in Greek, and Ery + thraeis in Latin. There is a resemblance in the words such as “Ερυ or Ery or Eri” as that seen in Tamil (Tamil Virtual University 1995).

1. il ezu vayalai IRRu A tinRena, pan'tu n'ilattu eRin'tu , pAvai n'Ikki, Natrinal 179, Sanga Ilakkiam	my capable young daughter beat on her belly, threw her ball down on the ground, and abandoned her doll,
Uz aTi otugkinum uyagkum aim pAR ciRu pal kUn'taR pOtu piTittu aruLAtu, 20 eRi kol citaiya n'URavum ciRupuRam, 'enakku urittu' ennAL, n'inRa en amark kaN ajjaiyai alaitta kaiyE! makaTpOkkiya cevillittAy colliyat.	even if she walked with her usual delicate steps, she suffered. When I held her short, thick five-part braid with flowers and beat her without grace, and the Throwing stick that I used cracked and broke, she stood there without uttering,
Akanānūru 145, Kayamanār, Sanga Ilakkiam	
pakal ARRuppaTutta pazagkaN mAlai, 10. kAtalarp pirin'ta pulampin n'Otaka, Ar ajar uRun'ar aru n'iRam cuTTik kUr eHku eRijarin alaittal AnAtu,	painful evening that brought distress to lovers, has caused the sun to set, and helpless sorrow that surprisingly removes intelligence has come. It has come to hurt us like a sharp spear thrown at our precious chests.
Akanānūru 71, Anthi Ilankeeranār, Sanga Ilakkiam	

Thus, the Tamil word “ery or eri” has the meaning “throw”, the meaning for which can be searched in Greek and it also has these type of words.

κρόσσας μὲν πύργων ἔρυον, καὶ **ἔρειπον** The pinnets of the fortifications
ἐπάλξεις, they dragged down and
Hom. Il. 12. 258 **overthrew** the battlements,
(Murray 1924)

δόμων πίτνοντα, πᾶν δ' **ἐρείμιμον** I saw the cornice of the house fall, and
στεγος the whole roof **hurled in ruins** on the
Eur. I. T. 48. ground, from the highest pillars.
(Potter 1938a)

κύματος ἐξαναδύς, τά τ' **ἐρεύγεται** Making his way forth from the surge
ἡπειρόνδε, νῆχε παρέξ, where it **belched** upon the shore, he
Hom. Od. 5. 438 swam outside,
(Murray 1919)

τοιγάρ σ' ὁ δαίμων εἰσορᾷ μὲν οὐ τί πω Therefore the divinity looks upon
ὥς αὐτίκ', εἴπερ οἶδε κινουῖνται λόχοι you—not yet as he soon will look, if
πρὸς ἄστν Θήβης. οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ' ὅπως indeed those armies of yours are
πόλιν moving against Thebes. There is no
1373. κείνην **ἐρείψεις**, ἀλλὰ πρόσθεν way in which you can ever **overthrow**
αἷματι that city. Before that you will fall,
πεσεῖ μινθεῖς χὼ σὺναιμος ἐξ ἴσου. polluted by bloodshed, and so too your
Soph. OC. brother.
(Storr 1912) (Jebb 1889)

Thus the Greek root word “ἐρεῖ” conveys the same meaning “throw” as that of the Tamil word “ery”. Here it is used in the verb form. Some of the words that are used in the noun form are related with water bodies. For example, one such root word “ἐρεῖ” which is used in noun form has relation with sea.

μηδ' ἐν νάπαισι Πηλίου πεσεῖν ποτε Would that the pine trees had never
τμηθεῖσα πεύκη, μηδ' **ἐρετμῶσαι** χέρας been felled in the glens of Mount Pelion
5. ἀνδρῶν ἀριστέων οἱ τὸ πάγχρυσον and furnished **oars** for the hands (5) of
δέρος the heroes who at Pelias' command set
Πελία μετῆλθον. οὐ γὰρ ἂν δέσποιν' ἐμὴ forth in quest of the Golden Fleece!
Eur. Med. (Kovacs 1994a)

ἀλλὰ μυρίοι μὲν ἄνδρες ἀσπίσιν What! shall countless warriors,
πεφραγμένοι, armed with shields, those
μυρίοι δ' **ἐρέτμ'** ἔχοντες, πατρίδος myriads sitting at the **oar**, find
ἡδικομένης, courage to attack the foe and die
δρᾶν τι τολμήσουσιν ἐχθροὺς χυπερ Ἑλλάδος for Hellas,
θανεῖν, (Coleridge 1891)
Eur. I A.
(Murray 1913)

ταῦτά τέ μοι τελέσαι πῆξαί τ' ἐπὶ τύμβῳ ἐρετμόν , τῷ καὶ ζωὸς ἔρεσσον ἐὼν μετ' ἐμοῖς ἐτάροισιν. Hom. Od. Book 1.	Fulfil this my prayer, and fix upon the mound my oar wherewith I rowed in life when I was among my comrades.' (Murray 1919)
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280. νῆ' ἄρσας ἐρέτησιν ἐείκοσιν, ἥ τις ἀρίστη, ἔρχεο πεισόμενος πατρός δὴν οἰχομένοιο, Hom. Od. Book 1.	(280) Man with twenty rowers the best ship thou hast, and go to seek tidings of thy father, (Murray 1919)
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In Latin “eruerē” means “to belch or vomit forth, to throw up”.

Nam simul expletus dapibus vinoque sepultus cervicem inflexam posuit, iacuitque per antrum 632. immensus, sanie eructans et frusta cruento per somnum commixta mero, nos magna precati numina sortitique vices, una undique circum Verg. Aeneid. Book 3	For soon as, gorged with feasting and o'ercome with drunken slumber, the foul giant lay sprawled through the cave, his head dropped helpless down, disgorging as he slept thick drool of gore and gobbets drenched with bloody wine; then we, calling on Heaven and taking place by lot (Williams 1910)
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14. Cedet Erythraeis eruta gemma vadis Martial, Epigrammata, Book 8.	and even the pearl fished from the Indian seas. (Pearse 2008)
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Thus the Tamil word “Ery or ery or eri” and Greek word “ἐρεῖ” and Latin “eruta” have the same meaning “throw” in all these languages. Further it is also related with oar and it has resemblance with “ἔρυ” of Ἐρυθρὰν (ἔρυ + θρὰν) of the Greeks.

Θρὰν - Θραῖοι – Thraeis

The second part of Ἐρυθραῖοι or Ἐρυθρὰν in Greek and Erythraeis of Latin are θρὰν - θραῖοι – thraeis. Resemblance with this second part of the word is also seen in subjective love elegy poems of Tamil literature (Tamil Virtual University 1995).

avan tAnum, n'ilam **thiraikkum** kaTal He himself, with an army like the **wave**
 tAnaip **surfed**
 15. polan' tumpaik kazal pANTil ocean that contains the land, wears a gold
 kaNai poruta tuLait tOlanE. thumpai flower
 garland and carries a shield pierced by
 Puranānūru 97, Poet Avvaiyār sang for arrows
 Athiyamān Nedumān Anji, Sanga
 Ilakkiam

puL uRa ocin'ta pU mayagku aLLal Will our friendship
 kazic curam n'ivakkum iruj ciRai ivuLi with the lord of the ocean with
 abundant
 10 **thirae** taru puNariyin kazUum **waves**, who washes his horses tied to
 mali **thiraic** cErppanoTu amain'ta n'am large
 toTarpE? yokes in the water brought by **waves**,
 after riding through brackish waters
 near mud
 where birds have sat and dropped
 flowers,
 ruin her?

ini n'inain'tu irakkam AkinRu: tiNi Sadness is what it will be if I think about it
 maNal now.
 ceyvuRu pAvaikkuk koy pUt taii, When I was young, I used to play with girls
 taN kayam ATum makaLiroTu kai near the cool pond as they made sand dolls
 piNain'tu, and decorated them with the flowers they
 plucked.
 tazuvuvazit tazLi, tUgkuvazit tUgki, We held hands, hugged each other, I swayed
 5. maRai enal aRiyA mAyam il when
 AyamoTu they swayed, and we played with innocence
 uyar cinai marutat tuRai uRat tAzn'tu, with
 n'lr n'aNip paTi kOTu ERi, cIr mika, nothing to hide. I would climb on a low
 karaiyavar maruLa, **thiraiakam** pitira, branch
 n'eTu n'Irk kuTTattut tuTumenap of a marutham tree with tall branches, close
 pAyn'tu, to the
 10. kuLittu maNal koNTa kallA water, and dive **into the huge pond** with a
 iLamai splash
 aLitOtAnE! yANTu uNTu kollo as those on the shore would look in
 toTit talai vizut taNTu UnRi, amazement
 n'aTukkuRRu, as I brought out a handful of sand from the
 irum iTai miTain'ta cila col bottom.
 peru mUtALarEm Akiya emakKE? That was being an ignorant youth. Where
 did

Puranānūru 243, Poet Thodithalai that go? It's pitiable now that I have a thick,
 Viluthandinār sang for Ollaiyūr Kilān metal-capped walking stick and a trembling
 Makan Perunchāthan, Sanga gait.
 Ilakkiam I have become too old and can just utter a few
 close words between coughs. This is
 pathetic.

Here the waves are denoted with the word “therae” and the water bodies are called as “tiraikam”. The word “therae” derived from its verb form which is equivalent to the verb form that represents “swarm” - a large number of particles that are together. Here the water particles related to the meaning of “swarm” join and make the waves. How this word is used in the Sanskrit language may also be studied.

Therae in Sanskrit

In the Sanskrit language the word “therae” is not meant as wave, but “Samutherae” (Samu + therae) means flood or ocean (Griffith 1896).

<p>5. āṛṣṭiṣeṇo hotraṃ ṛṣirniṣīdan
devāpirdevasumatimcikivān
sa uttarasmādadharaṃ samudramapo
divyā asṛjadvarṣyā abhi
6. asmin samudre adhyuttarasminnāpo
devebhīrnivṛtā atiṣṭhan
tā adravannārṣṭiṣeṇena sṛṣṭā devāpinā
preṣitāmṛkṣiṇīṣu </p> | <p>5 Knowing the God's good-will,
Devapi, Ṛṣi, the son of Rstisena, sate as
Hotar.
He hath brought down from heaven's
most lofty summit the ocean of the rain,
celestial waters.
6 Gathered together in that highest
ocean, the waters stood by deities
obstructed.
They hurried down set free by
Arstisena, in gaping clefts, urged
onward by Devapi.</p> |
|--|--|

Rig Veda Book 10 Hymn 98

Here “Sam” means meeting,

<p>8. tveṣaṃ rūpaṃ kṛṇuta uttaraṃ yat
sampr̥ñcānaḥ sadane ghobhiradbhiḥ
kavirbudhnaṃ pari marmṛjyate dhīḥ sā
devatātā samitirbabhūva
Rig Veda Book 1 Hymn 95</p> | <p>8 He makes him a most noble form of
splendour, decking him in his home with
milk and waters.
The Sage adorns the depths of air with
wisdom: this is the meeting where the
Gods are worshipped.</p> |
|--|--|

<p>6. pari sadmeva paśumānti hotā rājā na
satyaḥ samitiriānaḥ
Rig Veda Book 9 Hymn 92</p> | <p>6 As the priest seeks the station rich in
cattle, like a true King who goes to
great assemblies.</p> |
|--|--|

<p>3. samāno mantraḥ samitiḥ samānī
samānaṃ manaḥ saha cittameṣām
Rig Veda Book 10 Hymn 191</p> | <p>3 The place is common, common the
assembly, common the mind, so be
their thought united.</p> |
|--|--|

Thus sam + udre or sam + therae, literally means “gathering of water bodies”, to represent a flood or ocean. Thus the word “therai” means “wave” that is seen in

both Tamil and Sanskrit. This is a word that has the meaning of “swarm” which means a “group” in general for any gathering of a small number of objects, whether of persons, animals, or inanimate things that are represented by the words στίφος, εσμός, σμήνος, όγλος in Greek. Thus many water particles join together to form the wave which is called as “therae” in Tamil. There is a word in Greek, which has resemblance with this word, but with a different meaning.

“*Τρίχας*”

“*Τρίχας*” is the word that occurs in Greek language.

<p>77. ἦ ῥ' ὁ γέρων, πολιάς δ' ἄρ' ἀνὰ <i>τρίχας</i> ἔλκετο χερσὶ τύλων ἐκ κεφαλῆς; οὐδ' Ἔκτορι θυμὸν ἔπειθε. Hom. II. Book 22.</p>	<p>Thus spake the old man, and with his hands he plucked and tore the hoary <i>hairs</i> from his head; (Murray 1924)</p>
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<p>Ἀτρεΐδης δὲ ἐρυσσάμενος χεῖρεσσι μάχαιραν, ἣ οἱ παρ' ξίφεος μέγα κουλεὸν αἰὲν ἄωρτο, 254. κάπρου ἀπὸ <i>τρίχας</i> ἀρξάμενος Διὶ χεῖρας ἀνασχὼν εὐχέτο: Hom. II. Book 19.</p>	<p>And the son of Atreus drew forth with his hand the knife that ever hung beside the great sheath of his sword, and cut the firstling <i>hairs</i> from the boar, and lifting up his hands made prayer to Zeus; (Murray 1924)</p>
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<p>Ἀτρεΐδης δὲ ἐρυσσάμενος χεῖρεσσι μάχαιραν, ἣ οἱ παρ' ξίφεος μέγα κουλεὸν αἰὲν ἄωρτο, 273. ἀρνῶν ἐκ κεφαλῶν τάμνε <i>τρίχας</i>; αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα κήρυκες Τρώων καὶ Ἀχαιῶν νεῖμαν ἀρίστοις. Hom. II. Book 3.</p>	<p>And the son of Atreus drew forth with his hand the knife that ever hung beside the great sheath of his sword, and cut <i>hair</i> from off the heads of the lambs; and the heralds portioned it out to the chieftans of the Trojans and Achaeans. (Murray 1924)</p>
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Here the word “*τρίχας*” has the meaning hair. Hair present in the head, the hair covering the animal body are denoted by the word *τρίχας*. Thus, Tamil “Therae” and Greek “*τρίχας*” have phonetical resemblance, but with different meanings. At the basic level, both the words are related with “swarm” which are similar to the group of water particles that join to form the wave, the hairs also are seen to occur in groups as that found in the head and body as shown in the Figure 5.

Figure 5. *Swarm and Therae*

In this way, at the basic level these two words have resemblance. More than this, the word Θρινακίη¹⁸ which represents the old name of Sicily, derived from trident (as sacred to Poseidon), has the resemblance with the word θρᾶν - θραῖοι read thraeis and the second part of the word Ἐρυθραῖοι or Ἐρυθρὰν in Greek and Erythraeis of Latin.

ὁπότε κε πρῶτον πελάσης ἐνεργέα νῆα
107. Θρινακίη νήσω, προφυγὼν built ship to the island **Thrinacia**,
 ἰοειδέα πόντον,..... escaping from the violet sea,.....
 (Murray 1919)

Hom. Od. Book 11.

Here it is noted that this Θρινακίη is also related with water and sea. Thus the combination of “ery + theræ” denoting the sea metaphorically with the meaning

¹⁸Whet'er there was anything more than an accidental connection with the name of the Greek city Erytbrae in Boeotia.

of throwing of the waves in subjective elegy poems of Tamil literature (Tamil Virtual University 1995).

aRitalum aRitiyO-pAka!-perugkaTal
eRi tirai kozliya ekkar veRi koLa,
 ATu vari alavan OTuvayin ARRAtu,
 acaii, uL ozin'ta vacai tIr kuRumakaTku
 5. uyavinen cenRu, yAn, uL n'Oy
 uraippa,
 maRumozi peyarttal ARRAL, n'aRu
 malar
 jAzal am cinait tAz iNar kozuti,
 muRi timirn'tu utirtta kaiyaL,
 aRivu ajar uRuvi Ay maTa n'ilaiyE?

Natrinai 106, Thondaimān Ilanthiraiyan,
 Sanga Ilakkiam

Do you know, or do you not know,
 oh charioteer,
 about the confused mental state
 of my beautiful woman in anguish?

When I went and told her about my
 inner pain, she was unable to reply.
 She plucked clusters of fragrant
 flowers from a beautiful, low gnālal
 tree branch along with tender sprouts,
 and crushed and threw them down,
 the peerless young woman who got
 tired chasing striped crabs that play
 in the fragrant heaps of sand brought
 by the **Eritherai Kadal** [throwing waves
 ocean].'

muzagku tirai kozliya mUri ekkar,
 taTan' tAT tAzai muLLuTai n'eTun'
 tOTTu
 aka maTal potuLiya mukai mutir vAn
 pUg
 kOTu vArn'tanna, veN pUt tAzai
 5. **eRi tirai** utaittalīn, pogkit tAtu cOrpu,

Natrinai 203, Ulōchanār, Sanga Ilakkiam

If separated from him even for
 a day after our intimate friendship,
 in the fragrant grove on the sand dunes
 brought by the **roaring waves**,...

5. muTagku puRa iRavin mOvAy
 ERRai,
eRi tirai tokutta ekkar n'eTug kOTTut
 tuRu kaTaR talaiya tOTu poti tAzai
 Natrinai 211, Kōttiyūr Nallanthaiyār,
 Sanga Ilakkiam

.....food in the salt pans fed by the
moving ocean waves, near the
curved backwaters,

ciRu veN kAkkaic cev vAyp perun'tOTu
eRi tirait tivalai Irm puRam n'anaippa,

If he leaves, the lord of the
 vast **ocean shores**,...

Kurunthokai 334, Ilampoothanār, Sanga
 Ilakkiam

Thus the word used to denote ocean in Greek “Ερυθρὰν” and “Erythraeis” in Latin are denoted as “Erythrae” in Tamil with the meaning of “Ocean of throwing waves” as described in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Erythrae

Another word Periplous represented by Περίπλους which is related with “Ἐρυθράν” also needs to be researched. Here the word Periplous is thought by the author of the Greek work as “Περίπλους” and the same is denoted by Περίπλους της Ερυθράς Θαλάσσης. There are some thoughts raised by this author (Seland 2016),¹⁹ but the same word in Tamil gives rise to different thoughts.

Περίπλους

This word can be sub-divided as Περί + πλους. In Greek the word “Περί” has a meaning which is described below.

Περι

ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὥς θέλξει σε δυνήσεται: οὐ γὰρ
ἐάσει
φάρμακον ἐσθλόν, ὃ τοι δώσω, ἐρέω δὲ
ἐκαστα.
293. ὁππότε κεν Κίρκη σ' ἐλάσῃ **περιμήκει**
ῥάβδῳ,
δὴ τότε σὺ ξίφος ὅζῳ ἐρυσσάμενος παρὰ

but even so she shall not be able to
bewitch thee, for the potent herb that I
shall give thee will not suffer it. And I
will tell thee all. When Circe shall
smite thee with her **long** wand, then do
thou draw thy sharp sword from beside
thy thigh and rush upon Circe, as

¹⁹Recent studies have questioned this, raising questions about whether the work, although written in the form of a single author, might be of a cumulative nature and later date, thus placing it in the tradition of ancient geographical scholarship rather than as a practical guide.

μηροῦ
Κίρκη ἐπαῖξει, ὥς τε κτάμεναι μενεαίνων.
Hom. Od. Book 10.

though thou wouldst slay her.
(Murray 1919)

Here the word “Περὶ” has the meaning of “long” in Greek language which is also the same in subjective elegy poems of Tamil literature (Tamil Virtual University 1995).

eri akain'tanna tAmarai iTai iTai
arin'tu kAl kuvitta cen' n'el vinaijar
kaL koNTu maRukum cAkATu aLaRRu
uRin,
Ay karumpu aTukkum pAypunal Ura!
5 *periya* n'AN ilaimanRa; 'pori enap

Akanānūru 116, Paranaṛ,
Sanga Ilakkiam

Oh man from the town where water
flows,
carts that bring liquor to paddy reapers
who
reap and heap red paddy which has
flame-like,
lotus blossoms growing in between, gets
stuck in the
mud and sugarcane are lined to get
them moving!
You certainly have no **big** shame!

Iyal puRRattu Irm puRattu iRutta
kurumpi valcip perug kai ERRai
tUgu tOl tutiya vaL ukir katuvalin,
pAmpu matan aziyum pAnAT
kagkulum,
5 ariya allaman ikuLai! '*periya*
kEzal aTTa pEzvAy ERRai

Akanānūru 8, Perunkundrūr Kilār
Sanga Ilakkiam

My friend! It would not be difficult
for us, to go in the middle of the night,
on a path where a **big** male bear uses his
pointed, sharp claws covered by loose
skin to grab the fungus combs that
are on the wet side of a termite mound,

atu varal anmaiyo aritE; avan mArpu
uRuka enRa n'ALE kuRuki,
Igku AkinRE-tOzi!-kAnal
ATu arai putaiyak kOTai iTTa
aTumpu ivar maNaR kOTu Ura, n'eTum
panai
kuRiya Akum tuRaivanaip
periya kURi yAy aRin'tanaLE.

Mother knows about him
from great words, my friend,
the lord of the seashore

Kurunthokai 248, Ulōchanār
Sanga Ilakkiam

Thus, in both of the languages Greek and Tamil, the first part of the word Περὶπλους (Περὶ + πλους), that is “περι” is denoted as “peri” which has the meaning of big and long. The second part of the word “πλους” needs to be searched in Greek.

“Πλους”

In Greek language the word “πόλεις” is used to denote the land.

75. ἐλῶσι γάρ σε καὶ δι’ ἡπείρου μακρᾶς
βιβῶντ’ ἀν’ αἰεὶ τὴν πλανοστιβῆ χθόνα
ὑπὲρ τε πόντον καὶ περιρρύτας πόλεις.

Aesch. Eum.

For as you go always over the earth that
wanderers tread, they will drive you on,
even across the wide mainland, beyond
the sea and the island *cities*.

(Smyth 1926b)

294. Εὐβοίη Ἀθήναις ἔστι τις γείτων
πόλις ...
Eur. Ion

There is a *city*, Euboea, which is a
neighbor to Athens.
(Potter 1938b)

144. φράζεο νῦν ὅπως κε πόλιν καὶ
ἄστὺ σώσῃς
οἷος σὺν λαοῖς τοῖ Ἰλίου ἐγγεγάασιν:
II. Book 17.

Bethink thee now how by thyself
thou mayest save thy *city* and home
aided only by the folk that were born
in Ilios;
(Murray 1924)

Thus in Greek the word “πόλεις” which denotes the city is seen as a metathesis²⁰ of the word “πλους” (Περίπλους - Περί + πλους). There is a resemblance with this word and it is represented by the word “Pulam” in subjective elegy poems of Tamil literature.

Pulam

maNi miTain'tanna kunRam kavaiiya
5. am kATTu Ar iTai, maTap piNai
tazLi,
tiri maruppu iralai pul arun'tu ukaLa,
mullai viyan *pulam* parappi, kOvalar
kuRum poRai marugkin n'aRum pU
ayara,
patavu mEyal arun'tu matavu n'aTai n'al
An

the mountains appear like coral
set with sapphire, a stag embraces its
doe, grazes on grass and romps around
on a beautiful forest path, mullai vines
have spread on the *vast land*, and near
the hills cattle herders adorn themselves
with fragrant flowers,

Akanānūru 14, Okkūr Masāthanār,
Sanga Ilakkiam
(Tamil Virtual University 1995)
yAyum jAyum yAr AkiyarO?

My mother and your mother,

²⁰Metathesis – is the transposition of sounds or syllables in a word or of words in a sentence like foliage > foilage, anemone > anenome, cavalry > calvary.

en'taiyum	n'un'taiyum	em	muRaik	what are they to each other?
kELir?				My father and your father,
yAnum	n'Iyum	ev	vazi aRitum?	how are they related?
cem	pulam	peyal	n'Ir pOla	You and I,
anpuTai	n'ejcam	tAm	kalan'tanavE.	how did we know each other?
				Like rainwater that falls and
Kurunthokai	40, Sempulapēyaneerār,			merges with the red land , our
Sanga	Ilakkiam	(Tamil	Virtual	loving hearts have become one.
University	1995)			

In Greek φύλαξ, φυλασσε means “guarded” and “watch”.

Θεράπαινα	Servant
86. κίνδυνος: Ἑρμιόνη γὰρ οὐ σμικρὸν	86. There is risk. Hermione is no
φύλαξ.	slouch as guard.
Eur. Andr.	(Kovacs 1994b)

Thus the Greek words πόλις which means city and φύλαξ that denotes guard have resemblance with the Tamil word “pulam” which means land or guarded city. So the word “Περίπλους (Περί + πλους)” of “Περίπλους της Ερυθράς Θαλάσσης” has the meaning “big or long land or guarded cities” as indicated in Figure 7.

Figure 7. Περί + πλους

So the Greek word “Περίπλους” doesn’t denote the author, but places in Greek language, hence the words “Περίπλους της Ερυθράς Θαλάσσης” represent

big cities of the ocean of throwing waves, in both the languages, Greek and Tamil as indicated in Figure 8.

Figure 8. *Περίπλους της Ερυθράς Θαλάσσης - Meanings*

Conclusion

The Greek word Ἐρυθρὰν which means Erythraean Sea is mentioned in ancient literature. It is famous for the sea trade route. The Greek word ἐρεῦθων made one to misunderstand that the Red Sea is reddish in colour. In those times, this Greek word not only represented the present Red Sea, but also the places such as the Indian Ocean, Bay of Bengal, Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf. After that it was only attributed to denote Red Sea. There were also other thoughts which aroused against the colour red being the reason and so called Ἐρύθρας, which meant Erythras, a name of a Persian, who first crossed that sea. This sea route connects Greece to Far East Asia. One among them was Tamil Nadu. There are many references that prove the occurrence of sea trade of Greeks with Tamil Nadu. The word “Ερυ” pronounced as “Ery” means “throw” in both Greek and Tamil, and the word “thrae” means *wave* in Tamil and *hair* in Greek. Both languages relate it with “swarm”, which means joining of small particles into one big mass. Thus the word Ἐρυθρὰν called Erythraean means the ocean of throwing waves. Peripulos is also related with this sea and might be the author of the work called “Ερυθράς Θαλάσσης”. Peri means “big or long” both in Greek and Tamil and “pulam” means land, city in Tamil and polis means city and pulas means guard in Greek. Thus the words Περίπλους της Ερυθράς Θαλάσσης means the “Big guarded cities of the Ocean of Throwing Waves or Throw Wave Ocean”.

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