

**THE COMMERCE AND
NAVIGATION OF THE
ERYTHRAEAN SEA**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649079858

The commerce and navigation of the Erythraean sea by John Watson McCrindle

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

JOHN WATSON MCCRINDLE

**THE COMMERCE AND
NAVIGATION OF THE
ERYTHRAEAN SEA**

HF386

P38

HENRY MORSE STEPHENS

BOMBAY :

PRINTED AT THE EDUCATION SOCIETY'S PRESS, BYCULLA.

TO THE
LIBRARY OF
MUMBAI UNIVERSITY

ac

PREFACE.

In the Preface to my former work, "Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian," I informed the reader that it was my intention to publish from time to time translations of the Greek and Latin works which relate to ancient India, until the series should be exhausted, and the present volume is the second instalment towards the fulfilment of that undertaking. It contains a translation of the *Periplús* (*i. e.* *Circumnavigation*) of the *Erythrean Sea*, together with a translation of the second part of the *Indika* of Arrian describing the celebrated voyage made by Nearkhos from the mouth of the Indus to the head of the Persian Gulf. Arrian's narrative, copied from the Journal of the voyage written by Nearkhos himself, forms an admirable supplement to the *Periplús*, as it contains a minute description of a part of the Erythrean Coast which is merely glanced at by the author of that work. The translations have been prepared from the most approved texts. The notes, in a few instances only, bear upon points of textual criticism, their main object being to present in a concise form for popular reading the most recent results of learned enquiry directed to verify, correct,

or otherwise illustrate the contents of the narratives.

The warm and unanimous approbation bestowed upon the first volume of this series, both by the Press in this country and at home, has given me great encouragement to proceed with the undertaking, and a third volume is now in preparation, to contain the *Indika* of Ktésias and the account of India given by Strabo in the 15th Book of his Geography.

Patna College, June 1879.

ANONYMI [ARRIANI UT FERTUR]
PERIPLUS MARIS ERYTHRÆI.

TRANSLATED FROM THE TEXT

As given in the *Geographi Græci Minores*, edited by
C. Muller : Paris, 1855.

WITH INTRODUCTION AND COMMENTARY.



PERIPLUS OF THE ERYTHRÆAN SEA.

INTRODUCTION.¹

The *Periplus of the Erythræan Sea* is the title prefixed to a work which contains the best account of the commerce carried on from the Red Sea and the coast of Africa to the East Indies during the time that Egypt was a province of the Roman empire. The Erythræan Sea was an appellation given in those days to the whole expanse of ocean reaching from the coast of Africa to the utmost boundary of ancient knowledge on the East—an appellation in all appearance deduced from the entrance into it by the Straits of the Red Sea, styled Erythra by the Greeks, and not excluding the Gulf of Persia.

The author was a Greek merchant, who in the first century of the Christian era had, it would appear, settled at Berenikê, a great seaport situated in the southern extremity of Egypt, whence he made commercial voyages which carried him to the seaports of Eastern Africa as far as Azania, and to those of Arabia as far as Kanê, whence, by taking advantage of the south-west monsoon, he crossed over to the ports lying on the western shores of India. Having made careful

¹ The Introduction and Commentary embody the main substance of Müller's Prolegomena and Notes to the *Periplus*, and of Vincent's *Commerce and Navigation of the Ancients* so far as it relates specially to that work. The most recent authorities accessible have, however, been also consulted, and the result of their inquiries noted. I may mention particularly Bishop Caldwell's *Dravidian Grammar*, to which I am indebted for the identification of places on the Malabar and Coromandel coasts.

observations and inquiries regarding the navigation and commerce of these countries, he committed to writing, for the benefit of other merchants, the knowledge which he had thus acquired. Much cannot be said in praise of the style in which he writes. It is marked by a rude simplicity, which shows that he was not a man of literary culture, but in fact a mere man of business, who in composing restricts himself to a narrow round of set phrases, and is indifferent alike to grace, freedom, or variety of expression. It shows further that he was a Greek settled in Egypt, and that he must have belonged to an isolated community of his countrymen, whose speech had become corrupt by much intercourse with foreigners. It presents a very striking contrast to the rhetorical diction which Agatharkhidês, a great master of all the tricks of speech, employs in his description of the Erythrean. For all shortcomings, however, in the style of the work, there is ample compensation in the fulness, variety, accuracy, and utility of the information which it conveys. Such indeed is its superiority on these points that it must be reckoned as a most precious treasure: for to it we are indebted far more than to any other work for most of our knowledge of the remote shores of Eastern Africa, and the marts of India, and the condition of ancient commerce in these parts of the world.

The name of the author is unknown. In the Heidelberg MS., which alone has preserved the little work, and contains it after the *Periplus* of Arrian, the title given is 'Αρριανού περίπλους τῆς Ἐρυθρᾶς θαλάσσης. Trusting to the correctness of this