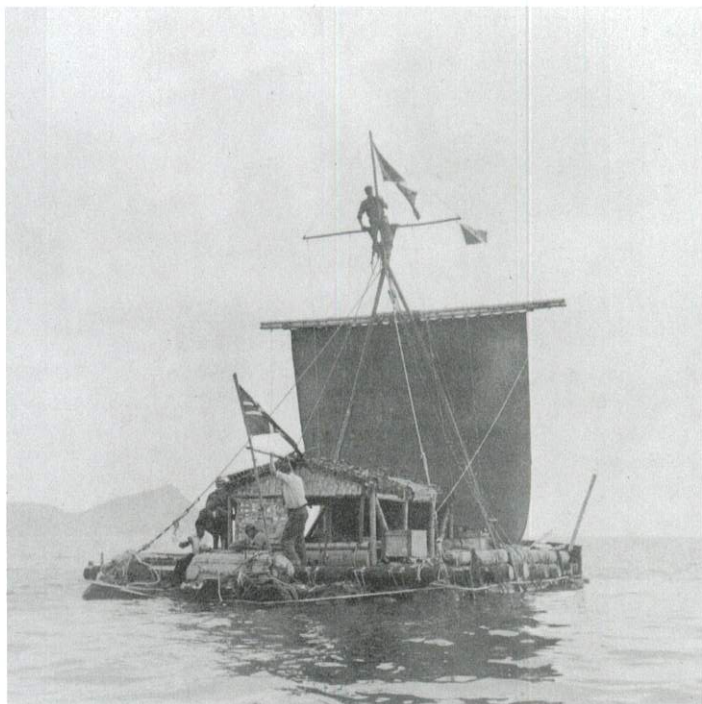


English



THE KON-TIKI MUSEUM GUIDE



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WELCOME TO THE KON-TIKI MUSEUM

Thor Heyerdahl (1914–2002) is one of history's most famous explorers. His extraordinary life and expeditions are an endless source of inspiration!

In 1947, he crossed the Pacific Ocean on the balsawood raft Kon-Tiki, and his documentary film about the expedition won an Academy Award four years later. He later carried out similar expeditions, with the reed boats Ra, Ra II and Tigris, through which he conveyed his strong commitment, both to the environment, and to world peace. Heyerdahl is also known for important archaeological excavations on the Galápagos Islands, Easter Island, The Maldives, and Túcume.

You can take part in all of this, here in the museum, where you can see the original Kon-Tiki balsawood raft and reed boat Ra II, in addition to a wide range of artefacts from Heyerdahl's world famous expeditions that are on display.

Let the museum inspire you to challenge science and explore the world, in the footsteps of Thor Heyerdahl.

Martin Biehl

Director of the Kon-Tiki Museum



THOR HEYERDAHL

Thor Heyerdahl was born on 6 October 1914 in Larvik, a small coastal city south of Oslo, where he also spent his formative years. His father, also called Thor, was a brewer, and his mother, Alison, was the head of the Larvik regional museum association. It was Alison who inspired Thor's life-long interest in animals and the natural sciences. At one point, he even had a zoological museum in his father's old brewery. Thor was good at drawing, and by the age of eight he was drawing imaginative pictures of South Sea islands and had resolved to become an explorer when he grew up.

Thor Heyerdahl enjoyed cross-country skiing and long hikes in the wilderness. In his youth, there were many outings in the mountains of southern and central Norway where he learned how to survive on his own in nature. Later on, he and his friend Erik Hesselberg went on long treks together, exploring the Rondane and Jotunheimen mountain regions, camping under open skies – or in snow caves. Heyerdahl was always accompanied on these trips by his faithful Greenland husky, Kazan.

Thor wrote about his treks for the weekly magazine *Tidens Tegn* and a variety of other publications. These were often illustrated with his own photographs or his subtle and witty line drawings. Gradually the articles he wrote became more pedagogical in tone, with such topics as "How to build an igloo", and Heyerdahl gained experience in communicating ideas while becoming a familiar presence in a network of outdoor enthusiasts.

After secondary school Heyerdahl began to study zoology and geography at the University of Oslo in 1933. Here he was introduced to Bjarne Kroepelien, who had traveled to Tahiti during WWI. While living on Tahiti he fell in love with Tuimata, one of the daughters of a Tahitian chief, Teriieroo. The 1918 influenza pandemic struck Tahiti, and half of the island's residents died, including Tuimata. Kroepelien subsequently amassed a unique collection of books on Polynesia, and years later he bequeathed his "Polynesia Library" to the University of Oslo. Heyerdahl's access to these books as well as Kroepelien's friendship with Chief Teriieroo would have a major impact on his life and career.





FATU HIVA (1937)

In 1933 Thor Heyerdahl met Liv Coucheron Torp. She was two years younger than he. As sweethearts they spent much time together outdoors, hiking and camping. Thor asked Liv if she would accompany him on a trip to an island in the South Pacific. He wanted to escape Western civilization and return to nature, surviving only on what nature would provide, like many islanders of the South Pacific. It was not difficult to convince Liv to join him. They decided to head for Fatu Hiva, one of the Marquesas Islands in French Polynesia.

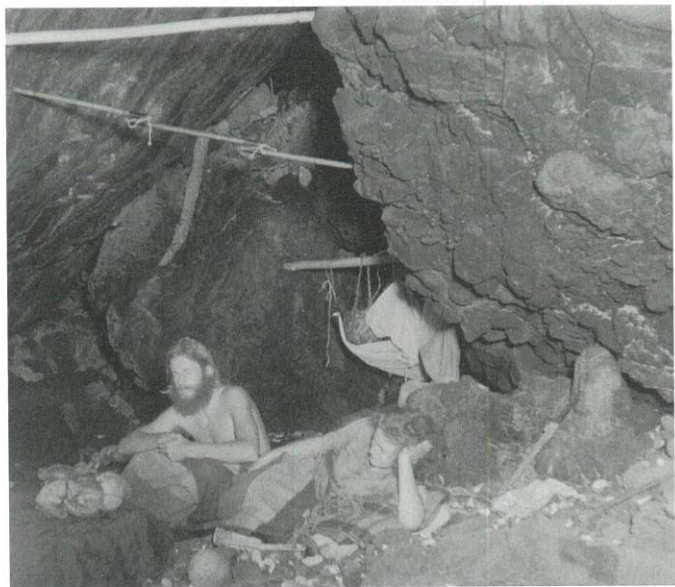
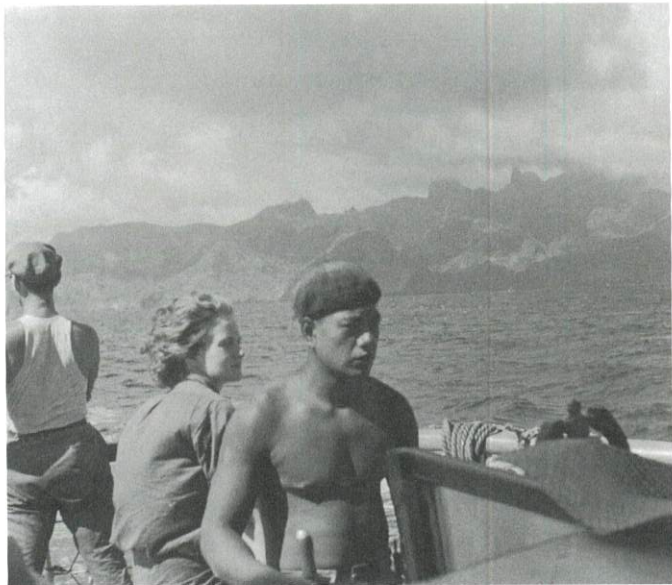
They married on Christmas Eve 1936 and set sail for Fatu Hiva the following day. Thor was 22 years old; Liv was 20. They stopped at Tahiti on their way to Fatu Hiva. They met the local chieftain of Tahiti, Teriieroo, who gave counsel to the young couple.

Thor collected local snails and insects during their storybook stay on Fatu Hiva, on advice from Professor Kristine Bonnevie at the Zoological Museum in Oslo. The material he collected could form the basis for a doctoral thesis.

Thor and Liv began to take an interest in local stories about where Fatu Hiva's forefathers had come from. They had already heard the prevailing anthropological theories that all of Polynesia had been populated by people from East Asia. Heyerdahl's theory that indigenous South American peoples were the first to populate Polynesia took shape after he and Liv made several interesting discoveries on Fatu Hiva and the neighboring island of Hiva Oa.

One day, Liv said she found it remarkable that the waves always seemed to hit the east coast of Fatu Hiva. She and Thor began to put the pieces of the puzzle together and speculate: Could the Pre-Columbian cultures of South America have populated Polynesia by sailing the winds and currents across the Pacific? Experts in the field did not believe the Indians had boats that could reach that far across the Pacific, but Thor was not convinced. His famous scientific theory began to take shape.

Thor and Liv returned to Norway a year later. Austere living conditions and problems with the native residents led to their decision to return to Norway, well aware that "paradise on earth" is an illusion.



Div o' Thor
 Leser om
 Mit o' Thor o' Thor

White Shadows in the Southern Seas

EN HELLIG ØRØD AL SOM LEVER ALERE EN KUL

ATU OVA
 HIVA OVA
 NUSO HIVA
 TIA F. VALLEY
 DET ER IS BER I ALT
 TEMPERATUREN ER 04 25
 ET JOSELT KLIMA UTEN REANTIO
 STÅSTE OG VAKRE MEYVESAEK
 GJESTEVENLIGE FOLK

MASSEVIS AV FUGL
 SKILLPADDER
 KOKOAPALKER

KRABBER SOM GÅR I TRÅVE
 FORVILLETE HESTER OG KVE
 GÅSER, HØNER KATTER OG HUND
 MASSEVIS AV VANNFALL
 BRUDFRUKTTREER
 DET VIRMER AV FUGL
 POLYNESIENNE VÅR KLEDD I
 PARER
 BLENKPRUT ER BOKTERBANK
 15 BOKSJELENE
 ME ER AV VULKANER OG HØIENDELS
 FJELL SOM SÅR ROSAM STELT OG PRA HILLET
 DE INTERESSE TAVLER ER EN KANVA
 PÅLA GÅR I KUNNS GRALLER DER DER



EN HVIT KOLONI MED FRANSK
 GUVERNØR
 EN KATOLSK KIRKE MED EN FRANSKPREST
 ET HOSPITAL
 FÅRVERI KE FISK I LAGØNEN
 EN HERLIG KJØDERIKTIG LØFT
 TÅRØRBTTER
 SOTROTETER SOM VETER OPTIL 25KG





Stone sculpture from Fatu Hiva.

KON-TIKI (1947)

On 28 April 1947, a raft made of balsawood carrying six men and a parrot sailed out of Callao, Peru. Its skipper was the then 33-year-old Thor Heyerdahl, and their destination was Polynesia.

The expedition was a result of the theory Heyerdahl had been pondering ever since his stay on Fatu Hiva: this group of islands in the South Pacific could not have been populated solely by peoples from the west. It must also have been populated by indigenous South Americans. Among the circumstantial evidence Heyerdahl pointed to, was the story of Con-Tiki Viracocha, a native chief who, legend has it, sailed west from Peru into the sunset on a large balsawood raft. Heyerdahl had presented his theory to a group of leading American anthropologists in the spring of 1946, but they gave him the cold shoulder. One of them, Herbert Spinden, even went so far as to challenge Thor: "Well, you can try a trip from Peru to the Pacific islands on a balsa-wood raft!"

Heyerdahl took the challenge to heart and immediately set about planning the expedition that would take him and a crew across the Pacific Ocean on his own balsa raft.



Thor Heyerdahl at the Explorers Club in New York, 1946.





The crew of the Kon-Tiki expedition. From the left:
Knut Haugland, Bengt Danielsson, Thor Heyerdahl,
Erik Hesselberg, Torstein Raaby and Herman Watzinger.

First Heyerdahl had to recruit a crew. This proved relatively easy, and he soon had five well-qualified men on his team. Together they traveled to Ecuador to procure balsa timber for the raft and then on to Peru to build it.

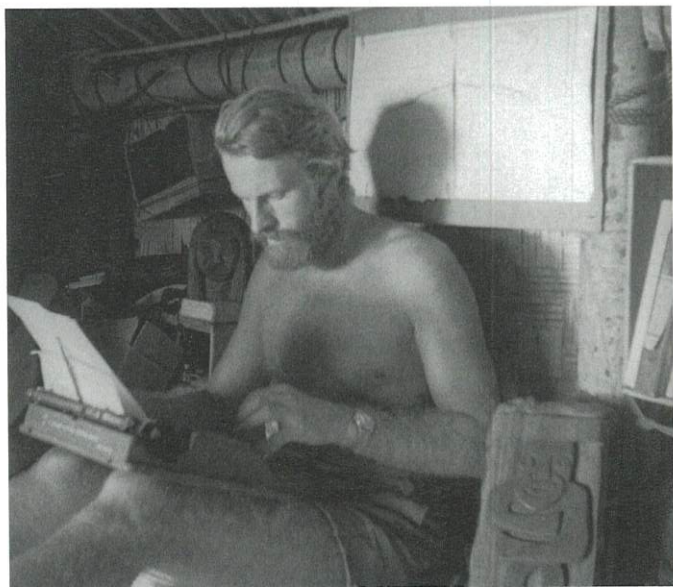
Through personal contacts Heyerdahl corresponded with representatives of the American military and was able to obtain everything from sleeping bags, field rations, suntan lotion, and canned goods, to navigational instruments and radio equipment.

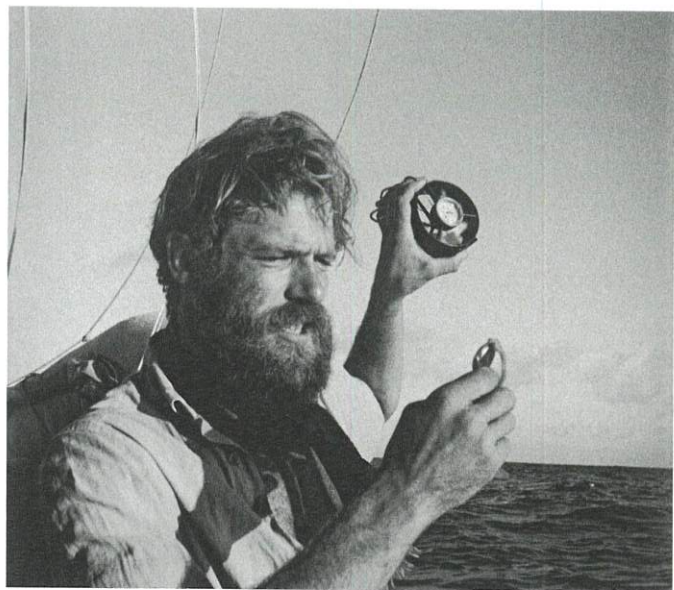
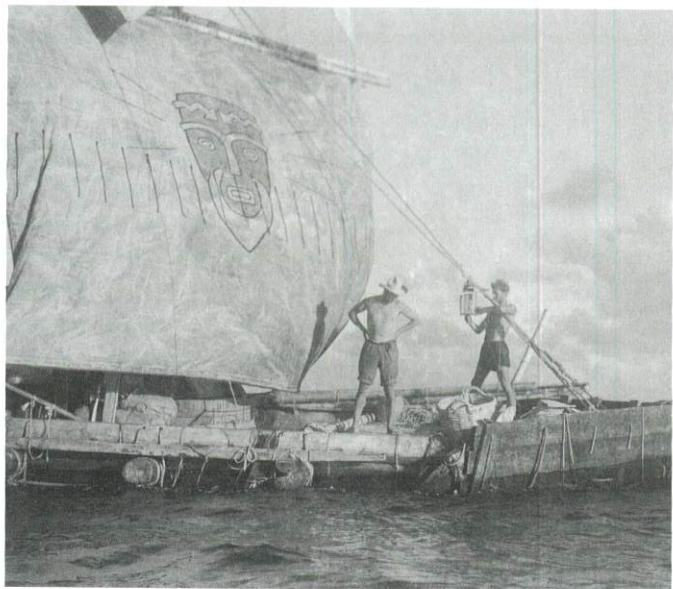
Heyerdahl also needed a secretary for the expedition, and Gerd Vold from the Norwegian embassy in Washington quickly volunteered for the job. Among other things she was to coordinate contact between the raft and those on shore.

The crew of the Kon-Tiki raft was, in addition to Thor Heyerdahl, Herman Watzinger, Erik Hesselberg, Knut Haugland, Torstein Raaby, and Bengt Danielsson. Thor's criteria in choosing crew members were that they all possess unwavering courage as well as one unique qualification, indispensable for the expedition.

Herman Watzinger and Thor Heyerdahl met by mere coincidence in New York. Watzinger was an engineer specializing in thermodynamics, and was in the USA to study cooling technology. He asked to join the expedition, and Thor unhesitatingly said yes. Watzinger was second in command on the Kon-Tiki raft.

Erik Hesselberg was a close childhood friend of Heyerdahl's. He was a trained sailor and had spent five years in the merchant fleet, and was thus the only member of the Kon-Tiki crew with actual maritime experience. Hesselberg would be navigator on the journey. Hesselberg also had an arts education, and he was the one who painted the fabled Kon-Tiki mask on the raft's sail.

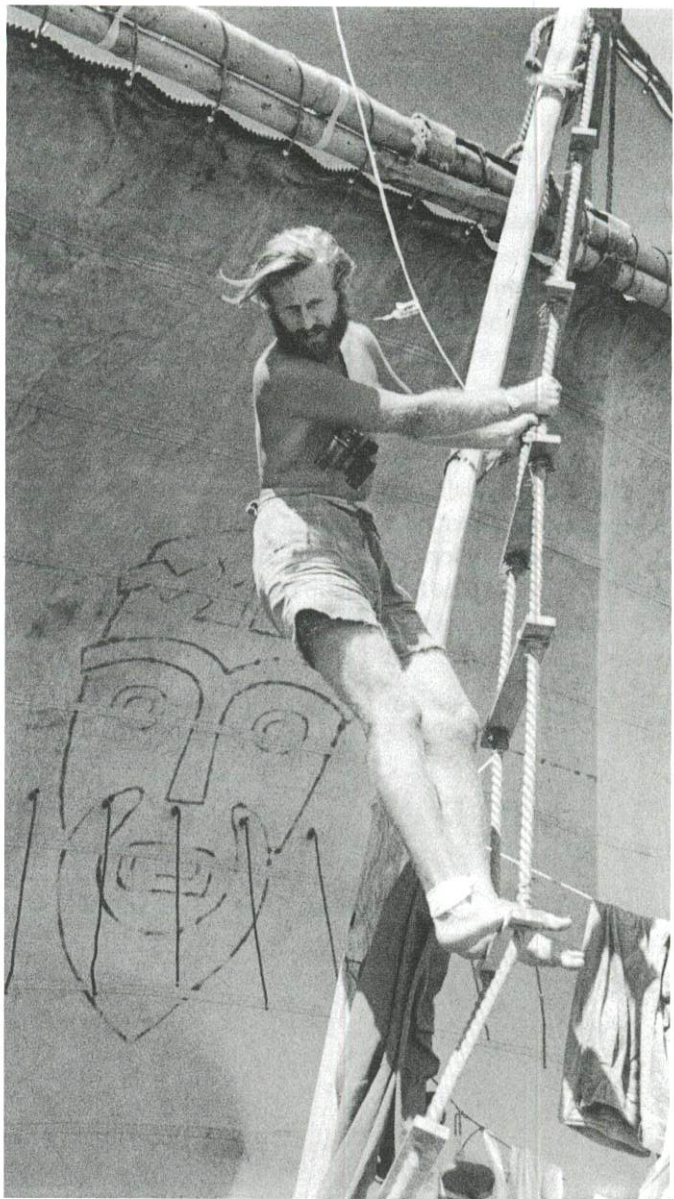




Knut Haugland had participated as a telegraph operator in the Norwegian heavy water sabotage at Rjukan in 1943, and through a series of dramatic experiences during the war Haugland demonstrated extraordinary resourcefulness and bravery. On the Kon-Tiki's voyage, he would be the one to save Herman Watzinger from drowning.

Torstein Raaby was cut from the same cloth as Haugland. He was also a radio expert and had spent many months on Finnmarksvidda (the Finnmark plateau) – behind enemy lines – under exceptionally strenuous conditions. Among his accomplishments Raaby had managed to send great quantities of information about the German warship Tirpitz by “tapping” the radio antenna of a German officer.

Bengt Danielsson was an anthropologist at the University of Uppsala. Danielsson had a scholarly interest in Heyerdahl's migration theory. He sought out Heyerdahl during the preparations for the Kon-Tiki expedition and asked if he could join. Danielsson became the sixth and final member of the expedition – and the only one who could speak Spanish.

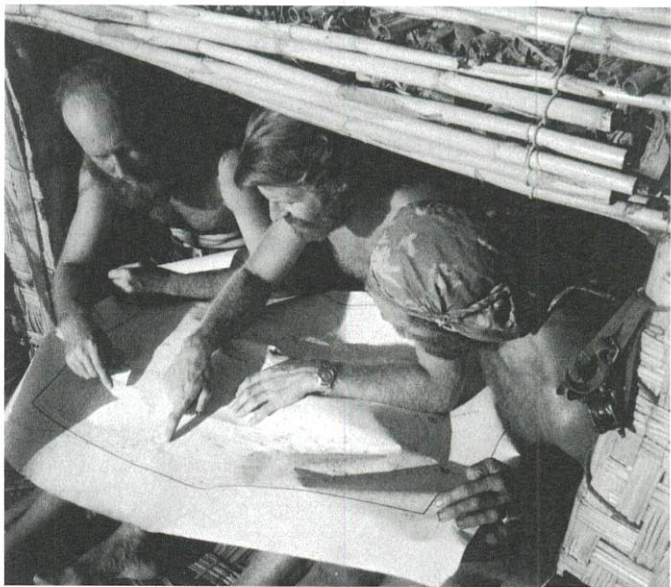


Hesselberg had navigational skills, but no one in the group could sail, and they had even less idea how to steer a balsawood raft. Such knowledge had been lost for hundreds of years. Nevertheless, Heyerdahl had faith that the crew would master the raft along the way, and that the easterly winds and the Humboldt Current would in the end carry the Kon-Tiki to Polynesia. Leading experts in anthropology and seamanship considered it highly unlikely that the raft would reach its destination. Some even warned that it would disintegrate within the first two weeks and that the expedition was pure suicide.

The experts were proved wrong. After 14 days at sea Heyerdahl and his crew were confident that the raft was indeed seaworthy. And not just that: their vessel was "a fantastic seagoing craft," Heyerdahl wrote in his log.

After 101 days at sea the Kon-Tiki ran aground on a coral reef by the Raroia atoll in Polynesia. The expedition had been an unconditional success, and Thor Heyerdahl and his crew had demonstrated that South American peoples could in fact have journeyed to the islands of the South Pacific by balsa raft.

Heyerdahl's book, *The Kon-Tiki Expedition* published in 1948, has been translated into more than 70 languages, and tens of millions of copies have been sold to date. The film – of the same title, shot by the crew during the journey – won the Academy Award for best documentary film in 1951.



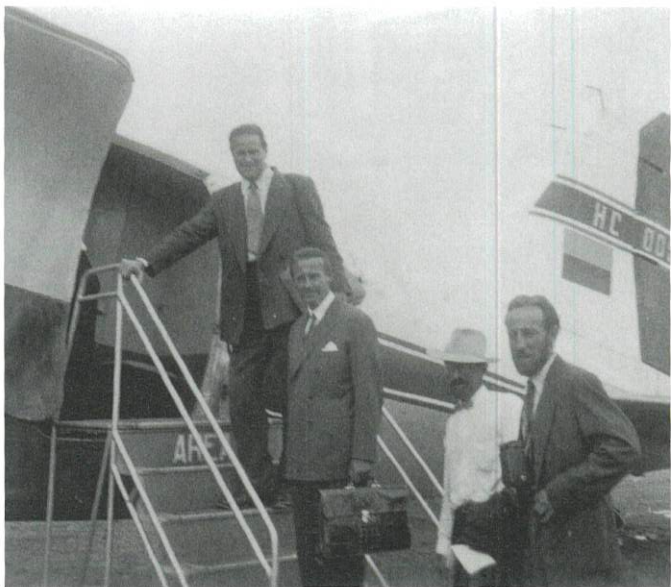


GALÁPAGOS (1953)

Thor Heyerdahl organized and led an archaeological expedition to the Galápagos Islands in 1953, accompanied by the two archaeologists, Erik K. Reed and Arne Skjølsvold. This was the first archaeological work ever done on the archipelago. Heyerdahl and his colleagues claimed that people from South America had been visiting the Galápagos – long before Christopher Columbus reached the Americas. The archaeologists found an Inca flute and shards from more than 130 pottery objects, which were later identified as pre-Inca, which supported their theory.

The research team concluded that there had never been a permanent settlement on the archipelago because drinking water is only available in the rainy season. Back in Ecuador, Heyerdahl and his colleagues, conducted experiments on an Inca navigational instrument: the guara, a centerboard. They proved that the rafts using the guara could alter course and sail against the wind. For Heyerdahl, this confirmed his theory that Pre-Columbian peoples could not only sail across the Pacific Ocean – they could also return home again.

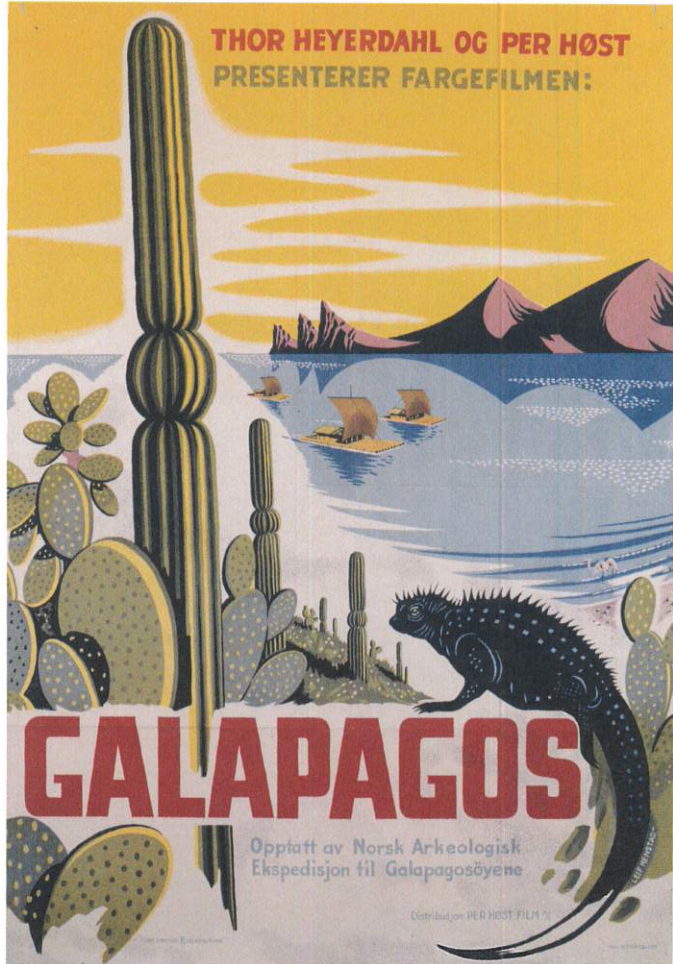
In 1955, Thor Heyerdahl made a documentary film about the Galápagos expedition with help from the zoologist and film producer Per Høst. The music for the film was composed by Sune Waldimir.



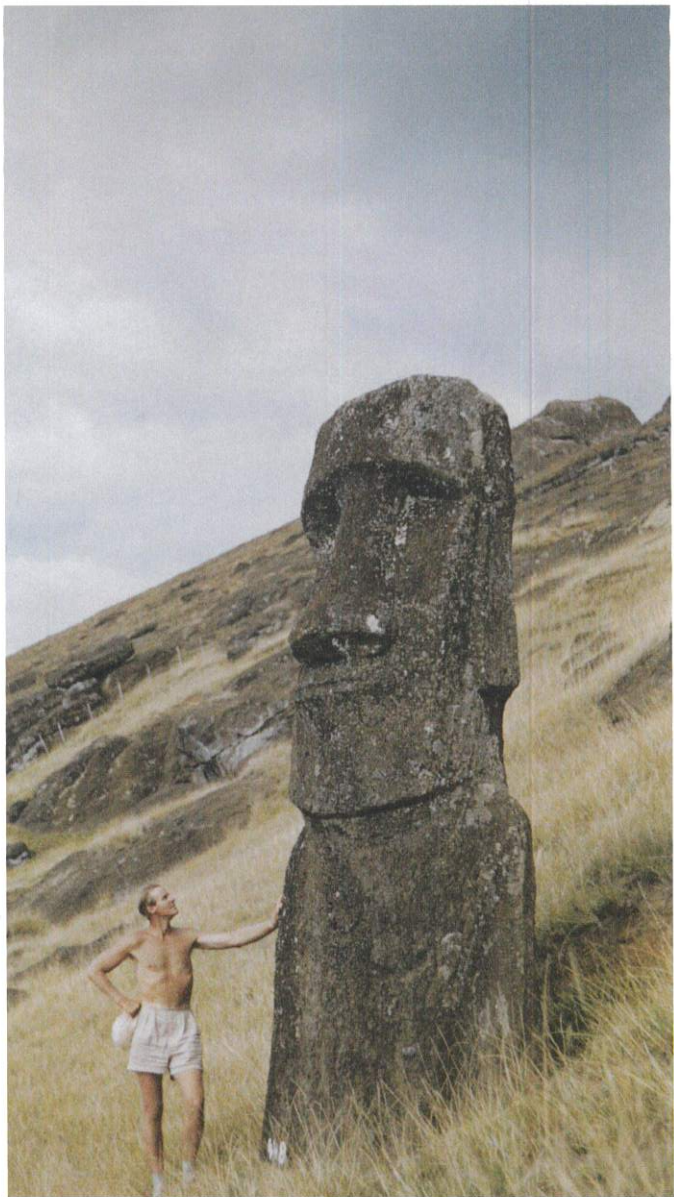


The expedition team. In front, from the left: Erik K. Reed, Thor Heyerdahl and Arne Skjølsvold. At the rear, from the left: Carl Angermeyer and Erling Graffer.

THOR HEYERDAHL OG PER HØST
PRESENTERER FARGEFILMEN:



Poster for the Galápagos film (1955),
released two years after the expedition.



EASTER ISLAND

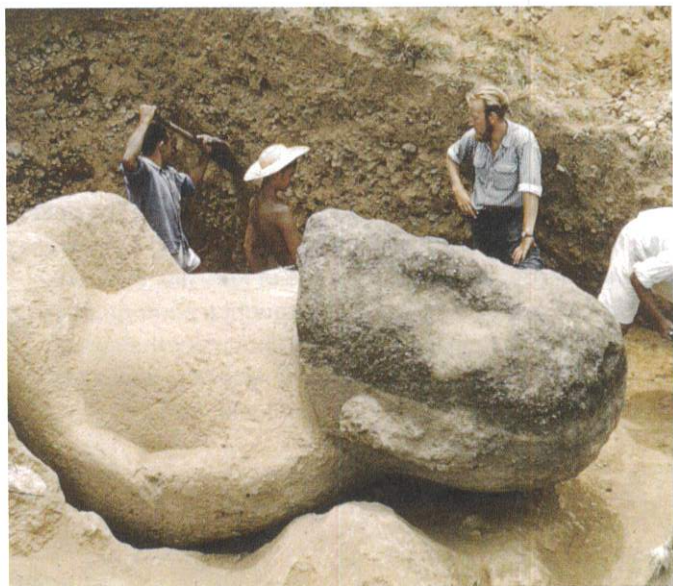
(1955–1956, 1986–1988)

Thor Heyerdahl set out on a new expedition in 1955, this time to Easter Island. There were five archaeologists with him this time: Arne Skjølsvold from Norway, Gonzalo Figueroa from Chile, and Edwin N. Ferdon, William T. Mulloy and Carlyle S. Smith from the United States.

All along the coast of Easter Island, there are monolithic stone statues (“moai” in the local language). It was long believed that the statues at the island’s Rano Raraku quarry only consisted of heads. Heyerdahl and his research team excavated the statues and found, under the heads, that colossal torsos existed.

The expedition team was also granted access to secret family-owned caves on the island. Small, ancient sculptures found in these caves were, according to the local population, passed down through generations. Nobody except the local population of Easter Island knew about these sculptures before the expedition. Heyerdahl purchased 900 of them.

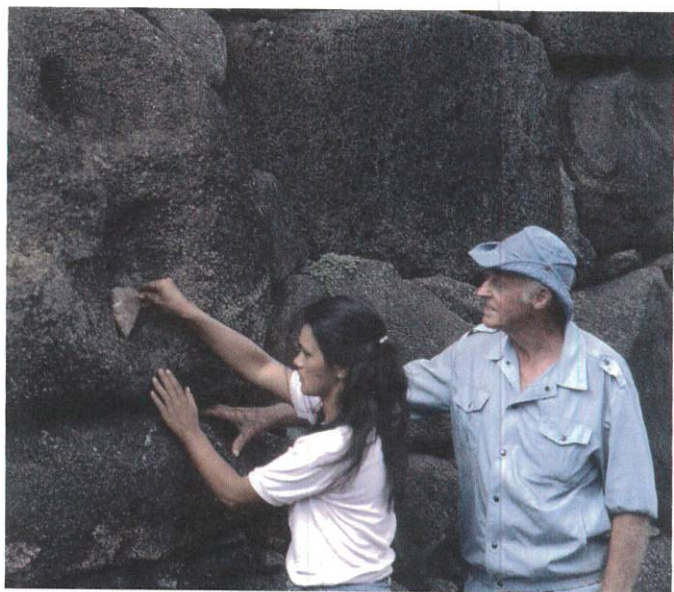
Heyerdahl’s book on the expedition *Aku-Aku: The Secret of Easter Island*, was published in English in 1958. As with Heyerdahl’s book about the voyage of *Kon-Tiki*, this book was also a best seller. Heyerdahl brought a photographer named Erling J. Schjerven along to document their work on film. He released a documentary, *Aku-Aku*, about the expedition in 1960, based on this material.





Heyerdahl returned to Easter Island in 1986. This expedition is best known for testing a local legend that the colossal statues had "walked" to their respective posts around the island.

Heyerdahl was aided by the Czech engineer Pavel Pavel and a group of sixteen local residents in an attempt to move a standing moai by pulling it with ropes attached to the statue's head and base. They managed to get the 15-ton statue to "walk" without much difficulty. Heyerdahl concluded that the mystery of how the statues had been transported was solved.



Moai walking experiment, Easter Island, 1986.

RA (1969) & RA II (1970)

The voyage of Ra begins with Thor Heyerdahl visiting Easter Island and discovering depictions of reed boats with masts and sails. He subsequently wanted to show that prehistoric civilizations, on both sides of the Atlantic, could have been in contact with each other by means of reed boats.

In 1969, the reed boat Ra – named after the ancient Egyptian god of the sun – constructed of local papyrus reed in front of the Great Pyramid of Giza in Egypt. It was then transported to the Moroccan coastal town of Safi, where it was launched.

Heyerdahl assembled a crew of seven men, all from different nations. He intended to demonstrate how a manifold group could cooperate effectively under stress and difficult conditions. The crew consisted of Norman Baker (USA), Carlo Mauri (Italy), Yuri A. Senkevich (Russia), Santiago Genoves (Mexico), Abdullah Djibrine (Chad) and Georges Sourial (Egypt), in addition to Heyerdahl himself.

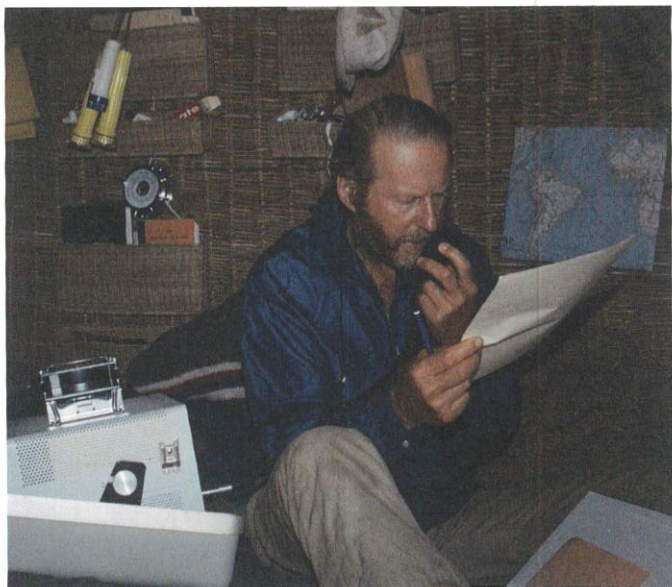
The papyrus boat traveled 5000 kilometers in eight weeks, despite its inadequate construction and a broken helm.

But the reed fiber absorbed much water, and Heyerdahl feared that the Ra would sink with its entire crew on board. He therefore aborted the expedition, just a week shy of reaching their destination, Barbados.

Ten months later, Heyerdahl launched Ra II from the same Moroccan port. This time he commissioned four Aymara indians from Lake Titicaca to build the reed vessel. Reed boats similar to those from ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt were still being made by craftsmen from this area in the Andes mountains.



Ra being constructed in front of the Great Pyramid of Giza, Egypt.



The crew from the first Ra voyage, except Abdullah Djibrine, joined the new expedition. The crew consisted of Norman Baker (United States), Carlo Mauri (Italy), Yuri A. Senkevich (Russia), Santiago Genoves (Mexico), Kei Ohara (Japan) and Madani Ait Ouhanni (Morocco), in addition to Heyerdahl himself.

The new boat was shorter than the first, but far more durable in construction. The Ra II sailed the 6100 kilometers from Morocco to Barbados in 57 days. The longstanding dogma that there could not have been any contact between the Mediterranean region and South or Central America prior to Columbus' discovery, was disproved.

During the voyage on board the Ra, the crew noted that the Atlantic Ocean was polluted – they encountered oil clumps of varying sizes on the ocean surface. They reported their findings to the United Nations (UN), and on the subsequent Ra II journey, Heyerdahl was asked by the UN Secretary-General U Thant to make daily observations of oceanic pollution. Oil clumps were encountered on 43 of the voyage's 57 days.

Heyerdahl presented reports regarding oceanic pollution on various occasions including at the UN's third Conference on the Law of the Sea. In 1972, the international community passed a ban on dumping of waste oil in open seas.

Heyerdahl later published a book on the two Ra expeditions, and a documentary film about the Ra expeditions was nominated for an Academy Award.



JANUARY 1971

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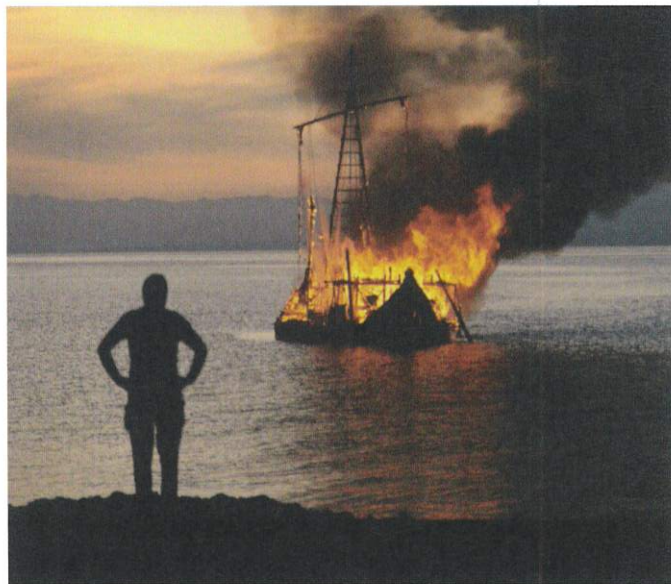
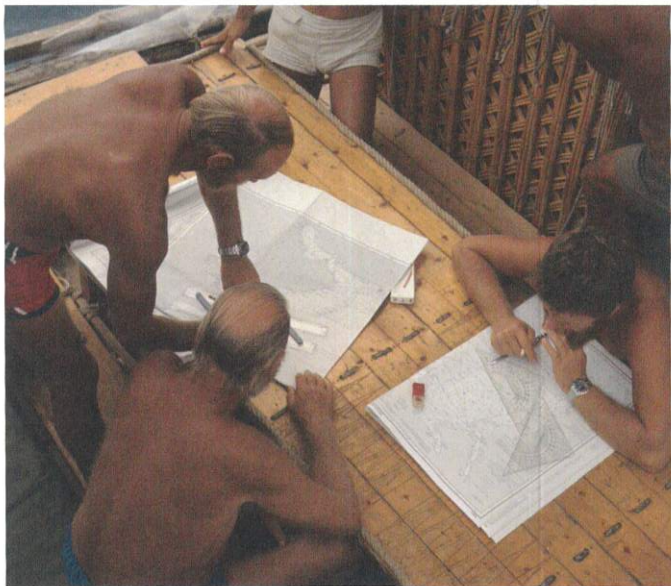
TIGRIS (1978–1979)

The art of the ancient Egyptians contains representations of sailors in papyrus boats. In 1968 Thor Heyerdahl toured the pharaoh's tombs in the Valley of the Kings at Luxor and experienced this art firsthand. He subsequently became increasingly fixated on another conundrum: Did the early civilizations that emerged in Mesopotamia, the Indus Valley and Egypt have contact with each other via the nearby seas?

Scholars agreed that the Sumerians in ancient Mesopotamia had boats with sails, but believed their seafaring had been limited to the rivers and coastal waterways. Contrary, Heyerdahl believed that in ancient times, primitive vessels had also been used to sail the open seas, as he had already proved possible by his Kon-Tiki, Ra and Ra II expeditions. Heyerdahl was becoming ever more convinced that the world's oceans were not barriers to contact between ancient civilizations, but highways facilitating contact.

In 1976, Heyerdahl was in Iraq – former Mesopotamia – in order to study the Ma'dān or Marsh Arab reed boat. He was told that buoyancy is best if the reed is harvested in the month of August. Heyerdahl followed this recommendation when, in 1977, he led construction of his largest reed vessel – at 18 meters long – on a site where the Tigris and Euphrates rivers conjoin in the former Mesopotamia. The boat was christened the Tigris.





Heyerdahl sailed with an international crew of 11 men, including three of his partners from the two Ra expeditions: Norman Baker (USA), Yuri A. Senkevich (Russia) and Carlo Mauri (Italy). The rest of the crew of Tigris: Rashad Salim (Iraq), Asbjørn Damhus (Denmark), Hans Petter Bøhn (Norway), Germán Carrasco (Mexico), Norris Brock (USA), Detlef Soitzek (Germany) and Toru Suzuki (Japan).

The Tigris began its journey from the river Shatt al-Arab in Iraq and continued down the Persian Gulf and out into the Arabian Sea. Unlike the Kon-Tiki and the Ra boats which were propelled by winds and currents, the Tigris was to be sailed on a predetermined course, however she quickly proved more difficult to navigate than anticipated. Nevertheless, the vessel managed to reach the Indus Valley in what is today Pakistan as well as Djibouti in the Horn of Africa.

Heyerdahl was tempted to sail the Tigris into the Red Sea, but due to actions of war, he decided that Djibouti would be the journey's end. They had voyaged a total of 6800 kilometers in 143 days.

Heyerdahl had once again proven the seaworthiness of the oceangoing reed vessels, enabling the civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the Indus Valley to have frequent contact.

As a protest against war and violence, Heyerdahl decided that the Tigris should be burned. The crew signed a letter to the UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim with a call to citizens of all industrialized nations: "We are all complicit unless we demand from those responsible for decisions made on our behalf that modern weaponry must no longer be made available to any peoples whose forefathers denounced simple swords and hatchets." And on 3 April 1978 the Tigris was engulfed in flames outside the port at Djibouti.



THE MALDIVES (1983-1984)

Thor Heyerdahl received a letter in his mailbox one autumn day in 1982. The envelope contained a photograph of a hitherto unknown stone statue from the Maldives archipelago in the Indian Ocean, which allured him into initiating an archaeological expedition to find out more about the people who had made the statue.

No archaeologist had visited the Maldives since 1922. Heyerdahl led two archaeological expeditions there, in 1983 and 1984, with his old friend and archaeologist Arne Skjølsvold. Øystein Koch Johansen and Egil Mikkelsen, two younger Norwegian archaeologists, also joined his team in what would be the first of several collaborations with Heyerdahl.

Heyerdahl and the archaeologists found large stone mounds in the center of almost every island they visited. The mounds contained small temples made of carved blocks of stone or coral, some built as early as 550 AD.

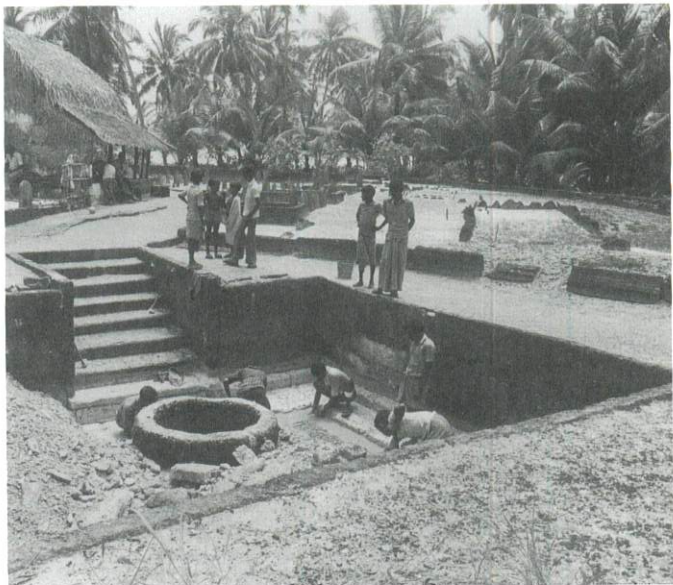
The expedition also found small stone wading pools near the temples with ceremonial stairs leading into them. Stone statues, some of which represent Buddha, small stupas which had decorated the temples, as well as incised stone tiles, were also excavated. Heyerdahl identified some of the stupas as phallus symbols.

The findings indicate the Maldives had been inhabited as early as 550 AD, when Buddhists probably had arrived from Sri Lanka to build the temples and ceremonial pools described above.

Heyerdahl believed that sun worshippers from the ancient Indus Valley arrived in the Maldives via India and Sri Lanka in the first century BC, based on the discovery of a Roman coin from about 90 BC. The Maldives are mentioned in written sources from the Roman era – which is proof that the islands were known to exist, and had been visited by people from the ancient world. Heyerdahl's theory of contact with the Indus Valley civilization did not gain general acceptance.

The Maldives were a hub for the cowrie shell trade, which was a means of payment in ancient times. Such shells have also been found in the north of Norway. The Maldives have been a regular port-of-call for centuries, used by seafarers and traders on the trade routes of Asia that also branched off toward Europe.

Heyerdahl's expedition to archipelago renewed scientific interest in the Maldives. Several archaeological excavations (including some by Egil Mikkelsen) were carried out there in the wake of Heyerdahl's first digs.





TÚCUME (1988–1992)

From 1988 to 1992, Thor Heyerdahl led archaeological excavations at the La Raya pyramid complex near Túcume, Peru. The site has 26 pyramid-shaped structures built of sun-dried bricks, sometimes referred to as adobe.

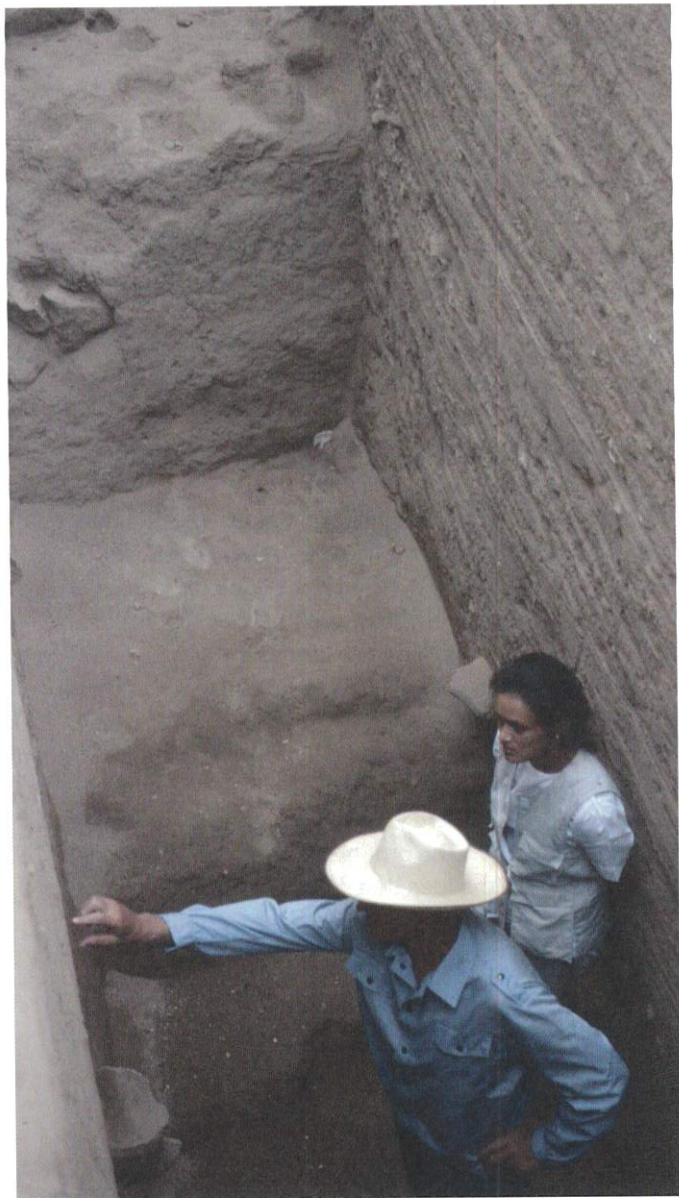
The excavations at Túcume was, at the time, the largest archaeological project in the world. The investigations determined that the pyramids were first constructed 1100 AD.

In March of 1992, the archaeologists made what was to be their most important discovery, a temple wall with well-preserved reliefs of mythical birdmen aboard two large seagoing vessels. Waves and more birdmen are depicted below the boats, all of them holding a spherical object.

Heyerdahl immediately summoned Arne Skjølsvold, his long-time friend and then Head of the Kon-Tiki Museum Research Department. Skjølsvold arrived four days later, and immediately exclaimed: "Thor, those things are birdmen crouching with eggs in their hands, just like the ones on Easter Island!"

In addition to the many beautiful objects that were found, the team also discovered some double-bladed ceremonial oars that were identical in shape to those known from Easter Island. This discovery, not to mention the temple wall of the birdmen, provided new evidence supporting Heyerdahl's theory that Indians from South America had also visited this legendary island.

Heyerdahl's Túcume expedition concluded his research on who discovered and settled the eastern Polynesian islands. He himself was convinced that the answer was to be found in the ancient maritime culture he discovered a part of at Túcume. Other researchers argue that the first inhabitants of these islands predominantly came from the west, but it is now generally accepted that there had also been contact between Polynesians and South American Indians around 1300 AD. This encounter did indeed bring the sweet potato to Polynesia. Recently, the DNA of South American Indians was found in the blood of the indigenous people on the Easter Island.



A GLOBAL CITIZEN

As human beings we are all the same, we all face the same practical challenges in life. This was one of Thor Heyerdahl's fundamental beliefs with respect to humanity. Furthermore, he believed in the capability of people to live and work together harmoniously, all ethnic, political, and religious differences notwithstanding.

By the end of the 1950s and up until the beginning of the 1990s Heyerdahl was particularly devoted to working for global peace. He appealed to the highest authorities and most powerful politicians in several countries, including Andrej Gromyko and John F. Kennedy.

Heyerdahl's ideas and values resonated with those of the World Federalist Movement, and he became a dedicated member. WFM is an organization that works for peace, for cooperation across national borders, and for a world order grounded in international law and justice. Thor was eventually appointed honorary vice president of the organization.

Heyerdahl was also involved in the work of World United Colleges. This organization runs several secondary schools around the world where youths from different countries live and study together. The organization was founded during the Cold War on the idea that such schools would stimulate young people with varied cultural backgrounds to learn from and about each other.

In 1978 Heyerdahl and an international crew sailed from Iraq to Djibouti on the reed boat Tigris. Heyerdahl intended to sail into the Red Sea as well, but warfare in the region prevented him from doing so. Instead he chose to burn the Tigris and send an impassioned letter to then Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kurt Waldheim, signed by the boat's entire crew:

“Our planet is bigger than the reed bundles that have carried us across the seas and yet small enough to run the same risks unless those of us still alive open our eyes and minds to the desperate need of intelligent collaboration to save ourselves and our common civilization from what we are about to convert into a sinking ship.”

ATLANTIC OCEAN POLLUTION OBSERVED

BY THE RA EXPEDITION.

Report and samples delivered to the Norwegian Delegation at the United Nations.

^(North Atlantic) by Thor Heyerdahl

The ~~surface~~ ^{surface} current moving constantly from Northwest Africa to tropic America is polluted by a ~~continuous~~ ^{continuity} of drifting oil clots. This is the essence of ~~these~~ ^{these range} observations made ~~from~~ ^{at sea level aboard} the papyrus vessels Ra I and Ra II during two consecutive ~~two~~ voyages in 1969 and 1970.

In organizing our marine experiment with the first papyrus boat ~~was~~ ^{like} tested at sea in ~~modern~~ ^{modern} times, our ~~expedition group was~~ ^{expedition group was} unprepared for pollution studies. The objectives of the enterprise were to investigate the seagoing qualities and possible range of a papyrus raft-ship and to test multi-national cooperation under stress. However, early in the voyage of Ra I pollution observations were forced upon all expedition members due to its grave nature and ^{because of} ~~our~~ ^{our} own proximity to the ocean surface coupled with our slow progress through the water. At an average speed of ~~approximately~~ ^{approximately} 2 and 2.5 knots, and rarely exceeding 3 knots, we covered ~~with Ra I~~ ^{with Ra I} 2,700 nautical miles (ca. 5,000 km.) ~~from~~ ^{from} May 25 to July 18, 1969, and ~~with Ra II~~ ^{with Ra II} 3,270 nautical miles (ca. 6,100 km.) ~~from~~ ^{from} May 17 to July 12, 1970.

The brief report accompanied ~~it~~ ^{it} by a

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST

During the crossing on the Ra the crew witnessed the degree to which the Atlantic Ocean had become polluted. They encountered oil clumps, large and small, on the ocean's surface and reported their discoveries to the UN. On their subsequent crossing with Ra II Heyerdahl was asked by the UN's Secretary-General to record on a daily basis his observations regarding oceanic pollution. Ra II encountered masses of oil on as many as 43 days of the 57-day journey.

The crew sent an appeal to then UN Secretary-General U Thant, and oil pollution in the world's seas and oceans garnered much attention, especially from the American media. Thor Heyerdahl was called to give testimony at a US Congressional hearing. He also worked for the Foreign Ministry of Norway, as one of their representatives, in preparatory meetings for the UN's first conference on the environment held in Stockholm in 1972. Among the resolutions passed at the conference was a ban on ocean dumping of waste oil – a direct consequence of the impassioned plea the international crew had sent from the sinking reed boat Ra. Thor Heyerdahl never ceased working for a better environment, and especially against pollution of the world's oceans, which he always referred to as the world's ocean, in the singular, because they are all connected. Heyerdahl considered the Ra expeditions to have been his most meaningful expeditions.

ARTIST

Few people know that Thor Heyerdahl also was an artist. He was perpetually communicating all that he experienced, and masterfully, through his well-written books, his films, pictures, lectures and presentations.

Like most children, Thor Heyerdahl loved to draw and paint. His early drawings were illustrations for his own stories about treks in the Norwegian wilderness published in newspapers and magazines. These drawings were somewhat naive, but nevertheless amusing. While traveling the South Pacific with his wife Liv in 1937–1938 he made a series of caricature drawings based on their experiences. In the following years and up until the time of the Kon-Tiki expedition, his drawings were infused with social commentary on his contemporaries' blind faith in progress, and the politics of wealth distribution.

Wood carving was another skill that captivated Thor Heyerdahl throughout his life. Early in his teens he displayed a talent for this particular handicraft. The Heyerdahl family has preserved a fantastic little tableau of a South Pacific island that Thor carved on the lid of a wooden chest. When he settled in Peru in the end of the 1980s, Thor Heyerdahl carved two Kon-Tiki heads in relief on the immense door to Casa Kon-Tiki, his home in Túcume.

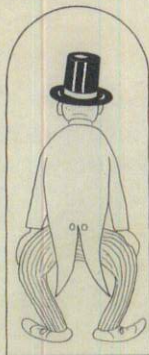
MAN
AND
MONKEY



ALL MEN GOT A HEAD
AND ONE MAN GOT A
HAT. THEN ALL MEN
GOT A HAT TO MAKE
USE OF ALL THEIR HEADS.
THE BRILLIANCE OF THEIR
HEADS SANK RIGHT INTO
THEIR
SHOES.

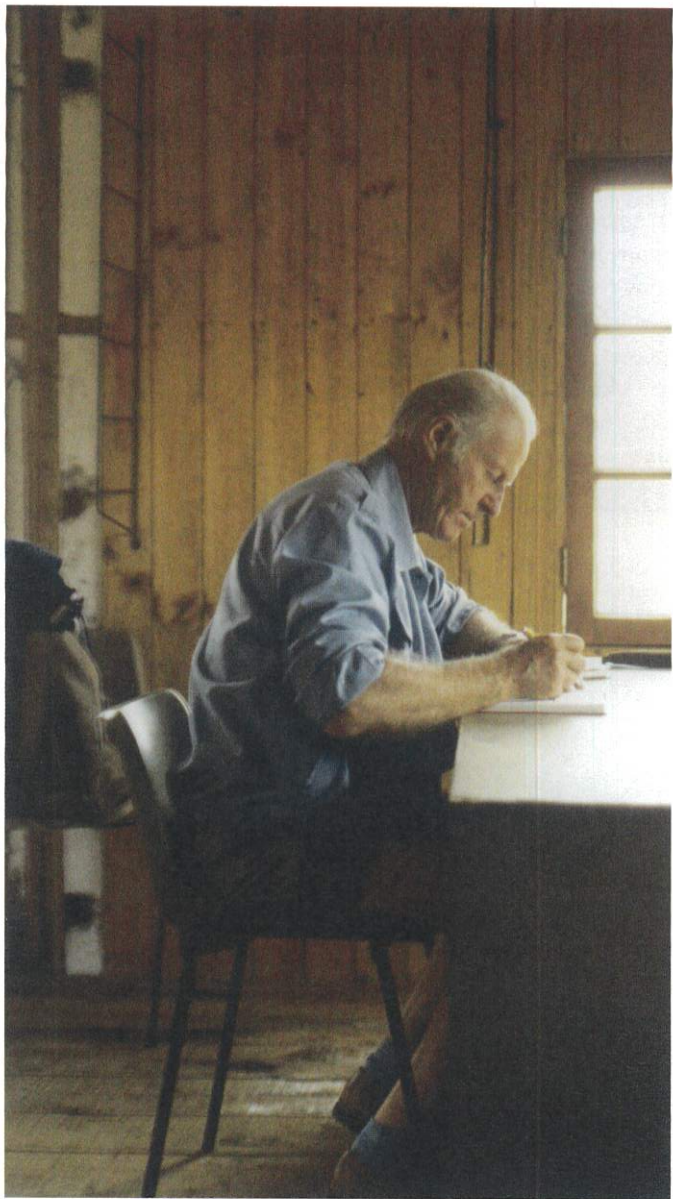


ONE MAN LOST HIS HEAD
AND BEGAN TO TIE IT ON.
THEN ALL THE OTHERS LOST
THEIR HEADS AND STARTED
TIE THEM ON!



ALL THE MONKEYS GOT A TAIL,
BUT EARLY MAN HAD NONE.
IN A MODERN PARTY ANY MALE
CAN HAVE HIS TAIL PUT ON.

79-96



THE COMMUNICATOR

Thor Heyerdahl spent the better part of his life behind a desk, either at home writing, or at libraries the world over, in search of and to advance new knowledge. He published many books and over fifty scholarly articles. Heyerdahl may not always have been right, but the essence of science lies in posing questions, and the questions Thor Heyerdahl posed are still of scholarly interest today.

Most people remember Thor Heyerdahl as a great communicator. Thor's ability to connect with people and engage them in conversations, was unique. He penned fourteen popular science books, many of them best-sellers. Gyldendal Norsk Forlag first published his *The Kon-Tiki Expedition* in 1948, selling tens of millions of copies worldwide. The film *Kon-Tiki* won an Academy Award in 1951 for best documentary film, and the film about the Ra expeditions was also an Academy Award nominee.

Thor Heyerdahl

Date of birth	6 October 1914
Date of death	18 April 2002
Profession	Ethnologist, experimental archaeologist and author
Nationality	Norwegian
Marriages	Liv Coucheron Torp (1936–1947) Yvonne Dedekam-Simonsen (1949–1969) Jacqueline Beer (1991–2002)
Children	Thor Jr. and Bjørn (with Liv) Anette, Marian and Helene Elisabeth (Bettina) (with Yvonne)



Member

Explorers Club, New York (1942); Hon. Mem. Geographical Society of Norway (1953); Hon. Mem. Geographical Society of Peru (1953); Hon. Mem. Geographical Society of Brazil (1954); Hon. Mem. La Société Royale de Géographie d'Anvers, Belgium (1954); Norwegian Academy of Sciences (1958); New York Academy of Science (1960); Hon. Mem. USSR Geographical Society, Moscow, Russia (1964); American Anthropological Association (1966); Hon. Mem. Bulgarica Geographica Societas, Sofia, Bulgaria (1972); World Wildlife Foundation; Green Cross (Founding member); Worldview International (Founding member) (1979); World Federalist Movement .

Selected Awards/Honors

Hon. Ph.D. University of Oslo (1961); Hon. Ph.D. Moscow State University (1989); Hon. Ph.D. University of San Martin (1991); Hon. Ph.D. Pacific Lutheran University (1998); Hon. Ph.D. University of Maine (1998); Hon. Ph.D. Latvian Academy of Science (1998); Hon. Ph.D. Western University (2011). Anders Retzius Medal (1950) and the Vega Medal (1962), The Swedish Society for Anthropology and Geography; Prix Bonaparte-Wyse Medal, Geographical Society (1951); Mungo Park Medal, Royal Scottish Geographical Society (1951); Lomonosov Medal, Moscow State University (1962); Royal Geographic Society Patron's Medal (1964); Bjug Harstad Distinguished Service Award, Pacific Lutheran University (1965); Bradford Washburn Award, Boston Museum of Science (1982); Fridtjof Nansen's prize for outstanding research (1985); International Prize, Spanish Geographical Society (1998); Austrian Decoration of Honor for Science and Art (2000). Grand Cross of the Royal St. Olav's Order (1987); Oficial de la Orden al Mérito por Servicios Distinguidos, Peru (1952); Grand Officer, Order of Distinguished Merit (1965); Knight of the Order of Merit, Egypt (1971); Grand Officer of the Order of Ouissam Alaouite, Marocco (1971); Aleko Konstantinov Medal (1972); Knight of the Golden Ark (1976); Peace Ambassador Award, UN/FAO (1976); International Pahlavi Environment Prize, UN (1978); Golden Blume von Rhydt (1981). The Explorers Club Medal (1979). St. Hallvard-Medaljen, Oslo (1997).

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BORDERS? I HAVE
NEVER SEEN ONE. BUT
I HAVE HEARD THEY
EXIST IN THE MINDS
OF SOME PEOPLE.

– THOR HEYERDAHL

