

**PRE – EGYPTIAN REED BOAT *ABORA 2* CROSSES
THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA**

ON FOOTSTEPS OF THE FAMOUS NAVIGATOR THOR HEYERDAHL

by

Dominique Görlitz

Summary

The reed boat expedition Abora 2 is a mutual German-Norwegian experiment to sail a prehistoric reed boat on a voyage across the East Mediterranean Sea. The main aim of this project is to prove if prehistoric reed boats were able to sail across and even against the wind, to follow a fixed expedition route.

The expedition more than fulfilled the expectations and proved that the prehistoric Egyptians were fully capable of sailing to other parts of the ancient world to carry out trade and cultural exchange. The Abora 2 was totally stable and seaworthy, and clearly designed for ocean voyages because of its maritime architecture as preserved in the rock drawings found in Upper Egypt.

The crew of Abora 2 came mainly from Germany and Norway, although one crew member was from Bolivia and two others came from Egypt and Morocco to support it. They sailed together 1164 nautical miles across the Mediterranean just as the prehistoric civilizations had done.

In the keel water of Thor Heyerdahl

THIRTY-TWO years after Thor Heyerdahl navigated across the Atlantic Ocean with RA II the question is why is a new reed boat expedition necessary? Although RA II travelled 6,000 km in the open sea from Morocco to Barbados, most archaeologists criticize that Thor Heyerdahl always sailed before the wind and with the currents. If prehistoric civilizations had really brought

any cultural influence into the pre-Columbian cultures they would have first had to cross the Mediterranean to reach the Atlantic at all. However, this means that the first reed boat sailors must have been able to navigate their rafts across and even against the predominant winds in the Mediterranean because the maritime conditions were completely different in comparison to the Atlantic Ocean. The wind mainly comes from N to NW due to the west wind drift and the current is

also not regular from one main direction. But RA II didn't have this manoeuvrability to cross such unfavourable maritime conditions.

FOR THAT reason the young team led by German scientist Dominique Goerlitz wanted to continue Thor Heyerdahl's work with this new reed boat expedition ABORA II. Expedition leader, Dominique Goerlitz, is an experimental archaeologist and biologist with extensive reed boat construction experience. Two Norwegian skippers, Arne Osmundsvaag and Hans-Erik Hansen, foreman of the Explorers Club Norway, supported him.

Figure 1:

The reed boat ABORA 2 on its navigation across the Eastern Mediterranean. It was the first time in the modern Age that a prehistoric water craft had tried to make a back and forth voyage. ABORA 2 wanted to sail in the footsteps of prehistoric cultures to prove the theory that even in ancient times there existed an advanced navigation system to connect people and civilizations by sea.

The name Abora comes from the Canary Islands where the Guanches have worshipped this God on stepped pyramids. The legends tell the story that the power of Abora was at its greatest when the sea – Moneiba – and sky – Ataman – met at sunset. The power of Abora was supposed to provide support for travellers and thus was a fitting symbol for the planned expedition.

FOR MANY years the expedition leader had been preparing this new expedition. At first he studied pre-Egyptian rock drawings. These pictures were mainly engraved in Upper Egypt between 3300 until 2800 B.C. On some of these rocks drawings, Mr. Goerlitz found picture-elements of boat-like drawings, which suggest the use of leeboards to control the vessels windward greediness, i.e. to navigate against the wind.

Figure 2:

Rock drawings from the Eastern Nubian dessert of Upper Egypt which prove the use of side or lee boards on papyrus-like rafts. Dating these drawings is difficult. The first vessel comes from Wadi Sayala about 2800 B.C.. The right one seems to be from earlier in the prehistoric period. Also re-markable is the position of the mast and the use of sword-like bild elements on the bow and even on the stern of the vessels. Especially during navigation you will need both positions to control the sailing course.

TO PROVE his theory Mr. Goerlitz has already constructed several reed boats to navigate these rafts. Already in 1999 Dominique Goerlitz sailed with his first engaged expedition Abora I from Sardinia over Corsica to Italy. But his first attempt was not a big success because of technical difficulties in the reconstruction of the ancient sailing rigging. Originally, he wanted to sail to the Canary Islands, but the expedition finished after just 680 km in the port of Piombino. The main reason for this failure was the fact that the mast was too much in the middle of the boat and he could not use all swords on the bow to reduce the side drift while sailing. Moreover, Abora I was made of unfavourable Chinese reeds. The team didn't have the financial capability to use the "Mediterranean papyrus" – *Scirpus lacustris*. That's why Abora I did not work very well and could not reach the main expedition goal. Nevertheless, the Abora team collected a lot of experience in making and handling such reed boats. After a careful evaluation of all data they absolutely wanted to continue their experiences of the first Abora expedition in a new project.

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Figure 3: In 1999 the team led by Dominique Görlitz sailed with ABORA 1 in the footsteps of prehistoric pyramid cultures in the C-Mediterranean to connect the Mediterranean world with the Canary Islands. Unfortunately, the first boat could not reach its expedition goal because the mast was put too much towards the middle of the boat and the crew could not use all swords to navigate it against the wind. Nevertheless, the team collected immense experience which proved the basis for the next step of the reed boat investigations.

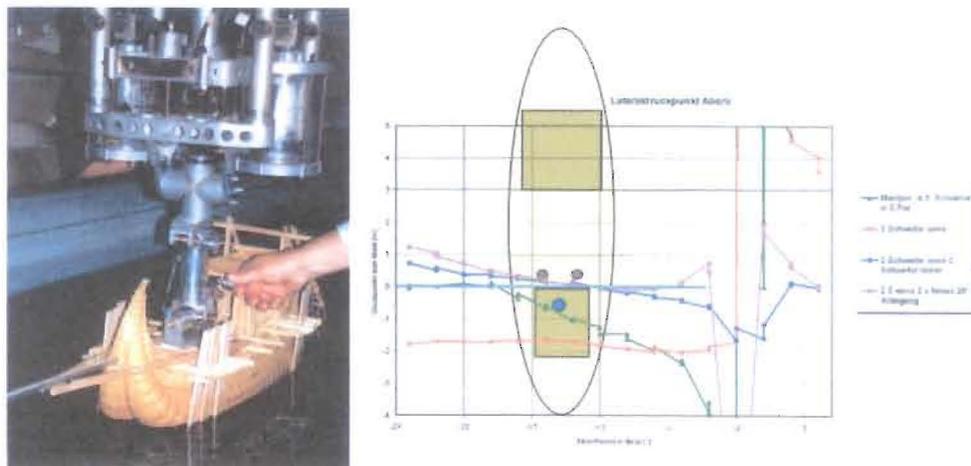


Figure 4: In the faculty of science FH Kiel Dominique Görlitz tested reed boat models to investigate the hydrodynamic characteristics of the hull. The results are remarkable because the team discovered that the strokes on the rock drawings must be lee boards. The diagram shows the position and changing of the centre of the force in several sword configurations. Beige coloured and on the right is a scale drawing of ABORA 2 at a position of 15 degrees drift. You can see that the swords immediately stabilize the centre of the force and move it back and forth according to the necessary setting of the swords.

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Boat building on the other end of the world

THE FIRST step in the realization of the project was to find better material and professional help. Consequently, Dominique Goerlitz went with his Norwegian skipper of Abora 1, Hans-Erik Hansen, to the Kon-Tiki Museum and asked for contacts among the famous Aymara-Indians of the Lake Titicaca in Bolivia. Thor Heyerdahl's daughter, Bettina, was immediately willing to help them and brought them into contact with the Bolivians. Furthermore, Thor Heyerdahl gave

them his personal approval and support for the new experiment. With basic finance from Arne Osmundsvaag and large personal contributions from Dominique and his girlfriend, Cornelia Lorenz, it was possible to launch the project in Bolivia where he also found support from the tourist company CRILLON TOURS & SPA in La Paz.

Figure 5:

THIS PICTURE shows the making of ABORA 2 with the help of the famous Aymara Indians from the Lake Titicaca in Bolivia. The very experienced Limachi family made the new hull. They used not only their own experience but also that of the expedition leader Dominique Görlitz. According to the ways of ancient architecture the Aymara bundled together 6 tons totora reeds to make a very powerful hull.

In the small village of Huatajata they found a favourable construction site and support from the famous Aymara family Limachi who had already worked for Thor Heyerdahl to make RA II and TIGRIS. In the summer of 2001 Dominique Görlitz and Cornelia Lorenz were able to start the construction of the reed hull. It was made of totora reeds, the same species which was in use in the ancient Mediterranean Sea. This new material works much better than common reed and lasts for about one year in the water. In a couple of weeks the 10 Aymaras and two Germans made the hull according to the same method used in old Egyptian double hull architecture which was used all over the Mediterranean. Two main bundles were lashed together with a third and smaller role. The result is a double-hull-raft similar like a modern catamaran. On deck on the double hull were fixed four additional gunwals to carry all superstructures. The team was able to make a 12 m long, 4,3 m wide reed boat weighing 6 tons in the Andean mountains.

However, ABORA 2 was meant to sail 20.000 km away in the Mediterranean Sea.

How to transport this boat to the other side of the world? Again a solution was found in the maritime nation of Norway; Wilh Wilhelmsen Agencies from the Hamburg SÜD Shipping Line organized a favourable transportation from Arica in Chile to Alexandria in Egypt.

Figure 6:

IN JUST 2 months the boat builders were able to make a 12 m long, 4 m wide and 6 t reed baot. This hull had a lot of improvements in comparison with ABORA 1 or RA II. But the most important fact is that the construction material was originally grown in the Mediterranean. Therefore, the use of totora reeds from Lake Titicaca was not a scientific failure.

Completion according to ancient rock drawings in the Nile valley

Abora 2 was invited to take part in the opening ceremony of the worldwide library of Alexandria in late April 2002. To realise this Abora 2 still had to be transported across the highest mountains of America and all the way across the Atlantic to come from the 3850 m Lake Titicaca to the antique city of Alexander the Great.

Figure 7:

In the city of Alexander the Great ABORA 2 found its new construction site. Here, in the old Eastern port the vessel was rigged according to the old pictures with two cabins, mast, two steering oars and the side swords.

ABORA 2 was rigged under the protection of the governor of Alexandria at a private yacht club in Alexandria. The boat was rigged in accordance with prehistoric rock drawings from NE-Africa. Thousands of engraved boat-like drawings in the Nubian Wadis (Arabian: dry river valleys) beyond the Nile show clearly that the main stage in developing seaworthy vessels had already been made in prehistoric times. You can see

on these drawings all the necessary constructions for a sailing boat like mast, steering oars, different types of sails and bild elements proving the use of lee boards on bow and stern for sailing keelless papyrus rafts. Unlike RA II, the new ABORA ship was strictly constructed according to a purely prehistoric pattern to save the scientific value of the project. All superstructures were made in a very simple way using just rope and wood, just as the ancients would have made it. After four weeks of working the vessel was completed. Unfortunately, the inauguration was postponed due to political reasons in the Middle East.

THE LAUNCHING took place at exactly the same time as Thor Heyerdahl unexpectedly died on April 18th, 2002. This sadly meant a great loss for Dominique Görlitz and his crew, but at the same time a commitment to prove, with their voyage, his theory that an advanced navigation system really did exist in prehistoric times.

During the funeral of Thor Heyerdahl in Oslo Dominique Görlitz got to know the leader of the famous EXPLORERS CLUB New York, Richard C. Wiese, who immediately arranged to equip ABORA 2 with the Explorers Club flag just like Thor Heyerdahl did on all his expeditions. On behalf of the EXPLORERS CLUB the ABORA team wanted to say goodbye and thank you to this marvellous person.

Figure 8:

Dominique Görlitz took leave of the great Thor Heyerdahl in Oslo April, 25th 2002. Both stand in a close contact together. For Dominique Görlitz and his crew this was a great loss but at the same time a commitment to prove with their voyage his theory that an advanced navigation really did exist in prehistoric times.

Figure 9:

Like KON-TIKI and RA II, ABORA 2 carried the EXPLORERS CLUB FLAG. The

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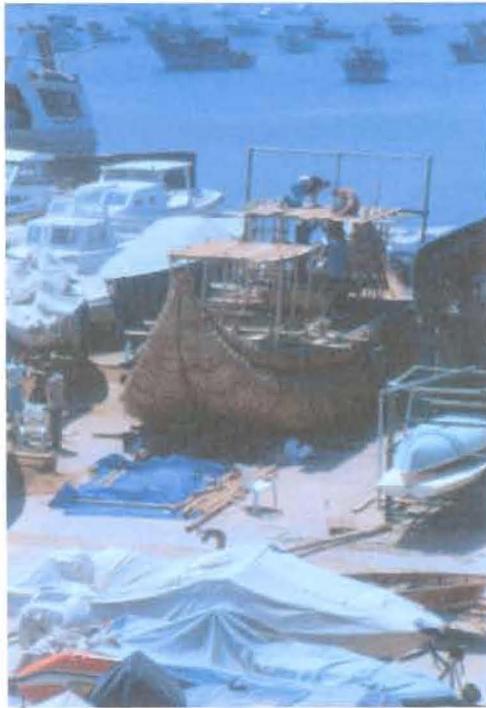


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As pre-Egyptians across the Eastern-Mediterranean

ON MAY 17th 2002 ABORA 2 started its adventurous voyage from Alexandria. ABORA 2 planned to sail in a huge Mediterranean triangle from Egypt-Lebanon-Cyprus, following archaeological evidence by sea. Originally, Görlitz planned stops in Beirut, Cyprus, Turkey and even Rhodes before returning to Alexandria. However, bureaucratic and other delays forced him to shorten the voyage.

The first challenge for ABORA 2 was to get free of the dangerous Cap Rashid to the North of Alexandria which blocks the way to the open sea to the NE. ABORA 2 was able to sail out of the huge Bay of Abu Kir – a first indication that this vessel was fully manoeuvrable because the pre-Egyptian craft had to make two turns and sail across the wind before they reached the open Mediterranean under their own force.

Figure 10:

ABORA 2 starts on its long journey. Nine people from Germany, Norway, Bolivia and Morocco went on an archaeological adventure to follow prehistoric trade lines from Egypt to Lebanon and Cyprus.

Figure 11:

LIFE ON BOARD of a Stone Age vessel is not as hard as most people would imagine. Each day's program was well organized and divided into 3 parts each of 6 hours: steering, free guard and readiness. After each shift everybody got time to relax and enjoy their free time.

During the first voyage the nine boat people travelled with irregular NW-winds over 300 nm to the Lebanese city of Beirut within 16 days. This trip was quite difficult because the wind often shifted direction and strength. For 80 % of this trip the crew navigated the vessel across and against the wind. Just before the coast of the white mountains of Lebanon they turned and the boat could sail the last few miles before the wind.

In Beirut the crew of ABORA 2 got in touch with important archaeologists who introduced them to an excavation of the oldest ship dock of the main kind in Byblos. This unique dock was made particularly for flat bottom water crafts which were most likely reed boats. It dates from about 2800 B.C. – exactly the period of ABORA 2. Its presence in front of the gates of Byblos proves that already in the pre-Phoenician period these people had a very long maritime tradition. This tradition did not just start suddenly with the exploration of the antique Phoenician fleet in the Mediterranean world when they were surrounded by their Babylonian and Egyptian neighbours who were constantly trying to occupy their homelands in second Millennium B.C..

ALL INDICATIONS also suggest the presence of Egyptian people in Lebanon in that, besides Egyptian inscriptions near Byblos the many anchors which have been found clearly suggest powerful cultural connections between both civilizations by sea.

Figure 12 & 13:

Recently, the oldest ship dock in the world was identified near Byblos. Byblos is one of the oldest cities in the world. It was founded in the prehistoric times as a port settlement. Nobody knows when the first trade vessel came here from the Nile valley but hundreds of anchor stones and similar cultural achievements like pillars and sarcophagi show a strong Egyptian influence in this Phoenician-city.



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Figure 10: The most important fact. Prehistoric reed boats were entirely able to manoeuvre, with a high-tech navigation system of lee boards and different sail positions. The side sword sailing technique allowed courses with moderate currents about 75-80 degrees on the true wind including side drift. So, ABORA 2 could really tack against the wind.

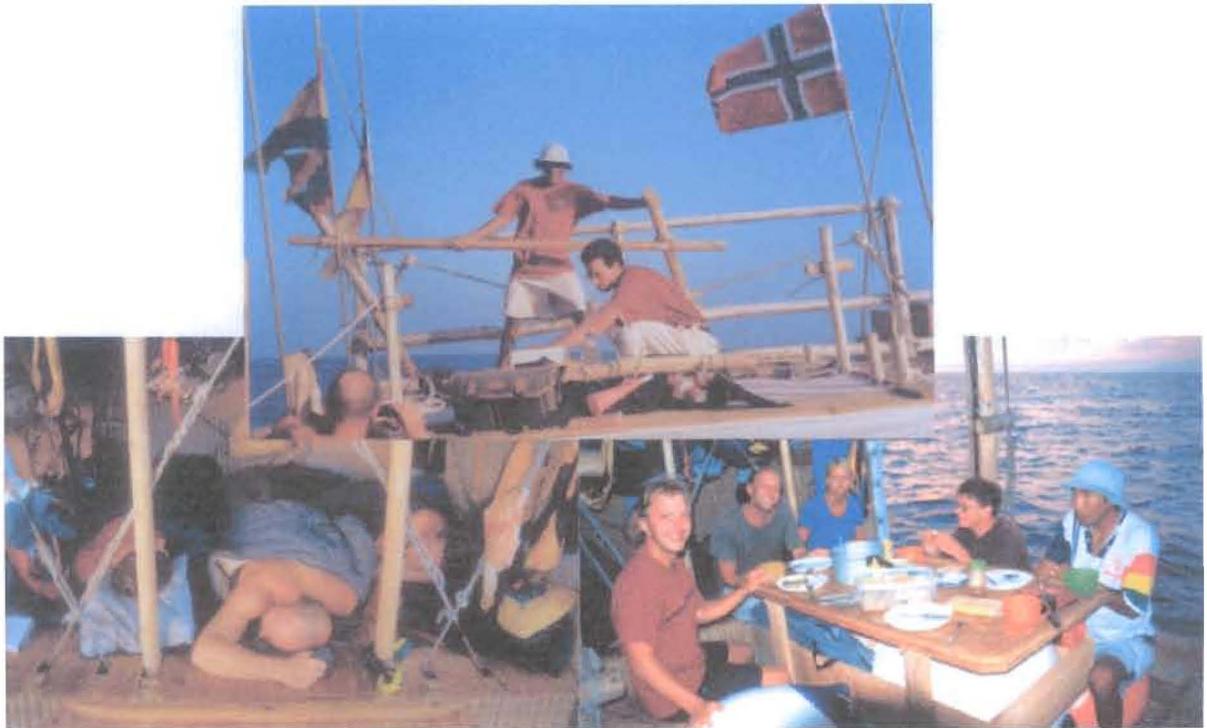


Figure 11: Life on board of a Stone Age vessel is not as hard as most people would imagine. Each day's program was well organized and divided into 3 parts each of 6 hours: steering, free guard and readiness. After each shift everybody got time to relax and enjoy their free time.



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AFTER 1 week's stay the ABORA 2 continued its 110 nm voyage to Cyprus in just 5 days. Right in front of the coast they came into very strong winds from the west. The yard broke in 7 bft wind and until 4 m high waves. In the port city Larnaca the rigging was repaired. New crew members from Germany and Norway were also recruited. Before the voyage was continued from the city of Limassol the crew received the acknowledgement of archaeologists from the university of Nicosia. They guided the expedition leader into two excavations which showed totally unexpected findings of old Egyptian game stones and even Egyptian fayence jewellery in a Chalcolithic village near the city of Paphos from 3000 B.C.. In Cyprus the voyage of ABORA 2 could help archaeologists to evaluate cultural interactions between Cyprus and the Nile valley culture.

Figure 14:

Sailing on the limit. With a wind speed of 7 bft ABORA 2 sailed 3 kn across the wind. In just 4 days the reed boat navigated the 110 nm distance from Beirut to Cyprus. However, right in front of the coast of Larnaca the yard broke in strong winds.

Finally, on July 1st 2002 ABORA 2 could set sail on its return trip to Egypt. However, the native sailors did not have much hope that the crew would be able to sail back to Alexandria in that period. "Until the end of August the wind will be too much from W to SW. You should wait at least until September because then the wind will again be from the right Northern direction for your ancient papyrus raft to sail back to Egypt", was the recommendation of a leading scientist, Glafkos Kariolou from the Kyrenia Association.

HOWEVER, the ABORA 2 crew had no other choice and took the challenge. With strong western winds ABORA 2 sailed back in just 3.5 days to the vicinity of the coast of Egypt. The desired NW-wind failed to come.

The boat people had to decide whether to finish the experiment in the East Egyptian city of Port Said or to attempt the difficult task of sailing back to Alexandria?

Over 11 days they tacked with the Stone Age vessel in front of the African Shelf in a westerly direction, during which time this prehistoric watercraft was able to travel 80 nm. During the day one sailed with westerly winds in a northerly direction and went on during the night on a SW-course supported by a lightly shifting NE-current 6-9 nm over ground to west. These hard days provided the definitive proof of the sailing capability of ABORA 2 because the main task of this expedition was to navigate this keelless reed boat with the aid of the side-sword-sailing-technique across and against the wind.

Figure 15:

ABORA 2 tacked 11 days during day and night against unfavourable westerly winds. The crew were able to navigate their vessel 80 nm in a westerly direction. This was the ultimate proof of the high manoeuvrability of the prehistoric vessel. This maritime performance more than fulfilled the expectations of the expedition leader.

The course sailed confirmed the project hypothesis. ABORA 2 sailed with favourable winds and even with the current 80 degrees against the wind. Just before the coast of Africa ABORA 2 could even tack, a maritime capability which was never expected of prehistoric watercrafts.

Sailing experiences on prehistoric vessel

In order to prove the sailing capabilities of the reed boat, we chose to sail on a planned roundtrip in the Eastern Mediterranean. Thor Heyerdahl also expressed an interest in the possible findings that a roundtrip – starting at and returning to the same place – would give about reed boats and also about contact between the archaeological sites around the



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coasts and on the islands in the area.

To realise this main goal the reed boat ABORA 2 had to sail approximately 85 % of its way across and against the wind. The side-sword-sailing-technique enabled us to tack against unfavourable winds with this keelless vessel. The main task of the leeboards was to make this craft windward greedy and to reduce side drift during sailing.

THE NAVIGATORS of ABORA 2 usually set three swords on the bow and two on the stern to navigate the boat on the right course. The swords were mainly put into the water on the lee side of the vessel. Therefore, the swords are often called leeboards. However, in stronger winds we needed to use both sides of the vessel. In very strong winds the seamen had to handle 14 leeboards to keep the course against the winds. Just one sword is very heavy and difficult to guide in its bracket. Mostly, two people were needed to set one sword. Therefore, each manoeuvre was very hard work for the crew because they had to move a lot of swords in a short space of time to set ABORA 2 on a new course.

Fortunately, the crew learnt very rapidly how to handle their reed boat. They were constantly learning from their new experiences to improve their sailing practice and found new and easier ways to tack against the wind.

We said after the ABORA 1 expedition in 1999 "that we have not totally understood all the ways of setting the swords and handling the sail", but now we can say that we have learnt how to perform any manoeuvre on board this ancient sailing vessel. ABORA's crew has even learnt to turn the boat with the bow over the wind like a modern Latin sailing boat. If you study the SIMRAD-GPS-logs on the nautical map (pict. 16) you can find very close course lines which prove that this vessel was able to change its direction very quickly.

The most important discovery during the expedition was the fact that ABORA 2 really could tack against the wind. The crew realised a shifting current during night had supported our sailing course by reducing the drift. After sunset the current usually changed totally and the wind also changed its direction a little. Then, the wind came more or less from 306 degrees NWW and ABORA 2 sailed 225 degrees SW. In this situation our reed boat sailed 71 degrees against the apparent and 81 degrees against the true wind with a drift of just 10 degrees (GPS log 525; July-10th,-19:28).

Such results are amazing because they prove that prehistoric people were able to navigate their reed boats to any place within the Mediterranean Sea when they followed the circum-Mediterranean current. Unexpectedly shifting currents also helped their attempts because they reduced the side drift during tacking.

THE WIND was moderate most of the time, on average ABORA II made a speed of around 1-2 knots. The maximum speed logged was a little more than 3,5 knots. Above this the wind force on the boat and rigging is enormous because of the water resistance. Nevertheless, the average speed was not as low as it seems to be because in favourable conditions ABORA 2 could overcome about 45 nm per day against the winds. According to the technical possibilities of neolithic times ABORA 2 was a very fast mover: we could cover 1164 nm in just 41 sailing days which means ABORA 2 sailed almost 30 miles per day on average mainly across the wind.

All data from the expedition will be studied, analysed and published. So far we can say however that the expedition was successful and proved that reed boats can be sailed along a planned route, not just drifted with wind and current. The crew of ABORA I and II has acquired experience in sailing such vessels during just a handful of years. One

can only imagine how the prehistoric seamen could have handled these boats with centuries and generations of experience and evolution of reed boat technology.

ABORA 2 sailed according to archaeological traces

On the afternoon of July, 21st 2002 ABORA 2 again sailed back in the port of Alexandria. Over 1164 nm laid behind the crew which consisted of 6 men and 3 women. They lived together in harmony on board of their swimming reed island for more than 66 days.

TODAY ABORA 2 lies in the campus of the university of Alexandria and awaits professional preservation. But of course, there is no money left at the end of the experiment and we are dependent on donations. Time is short. If no solution is found by the end of October 2002 the fate of ABORA 2 will be sealed. The vessel which made seafaring history will end up on the scrap heap.

In view of the back and forth voyage of ABORA 2 along a fixed expedition route with constantly shifting weather conditions it is very likely that man had already made long voyages across the Mediterranean before the invention of the wooden sailing vessel. There is a very strong possibility of a close cultural exchange by sea. The main skipper of ABORA 2 and a naval engineer, Arne Osmundsvaag, pointed out the following fact at the end of the expedition: "The pre-Egyptian artists of these boats-like drawings must have been professional boat builders and navigators. I am very impressed by the details of these paintings as well as the seaworthy properties of the reed boat. ABORA 2 was totally stable and always able to sail across the wind."

Figure 16:

The expedition route of ABORA 2. In 66 days the vessel could travelled 1164 nm mostly across the winds. Before the shelf of

Africa ABORA 2 even tacked 80 nm against the wind. The voyage proved that already in predynastic times Egyptians could have been done such a back and forth trip with a reed boat. With more time ABORA 2 would have been able to go anywhere in the Eastern Mediterranean. All data were logged by SIMRAD-GPS-techniques and advices.

Figure 17:

The expedition vessel ABORA 2 on the Mediterranean Sea. No other craft of prehistory is comparable with the reed boat. It is easy to make from natural materials and simple tools, lasts more than one season in the sea and can navigate at least across the wind. The reed boat was a high-tech craft at the end of the Stone Age.

For many years a lot of experts have criticized the RA II expedition of Thor Heyerdahl, saying he would never have reached the Atlantic Sea with a old-Egyptian papyrus boat coming from the Eastern Mediterranean against the Northwest winds. Now, this point of view must be completely changed because, with enough time, ABORA 2 could have reached any place within the Mediterranean Sea. It demonstrated that the civilizations of the Mediterranean could get in touch with each other and even with the lands beyond the Strait of Gibraltar. This voyage delivered a lot of experimental datas about navigational routes according to the oceanography and archaeology of theMediterranean.

IN A CONTEST with a prehistoric team in a roundvoyage on the Eastern Mediterranean our crew would have had no real chance of arriving first in spite of a lot of modern technical devices like GPS and compasses. The prehistoric people woud have had huge experience in making and steering reed boats across the ocean. For that reason we concede our watercraft a lot of respect because with such sailed reed boats the deep-seafaring has started somewhere on the Mediterranean Sea. Old rock drawings from NE-Africa, Asia

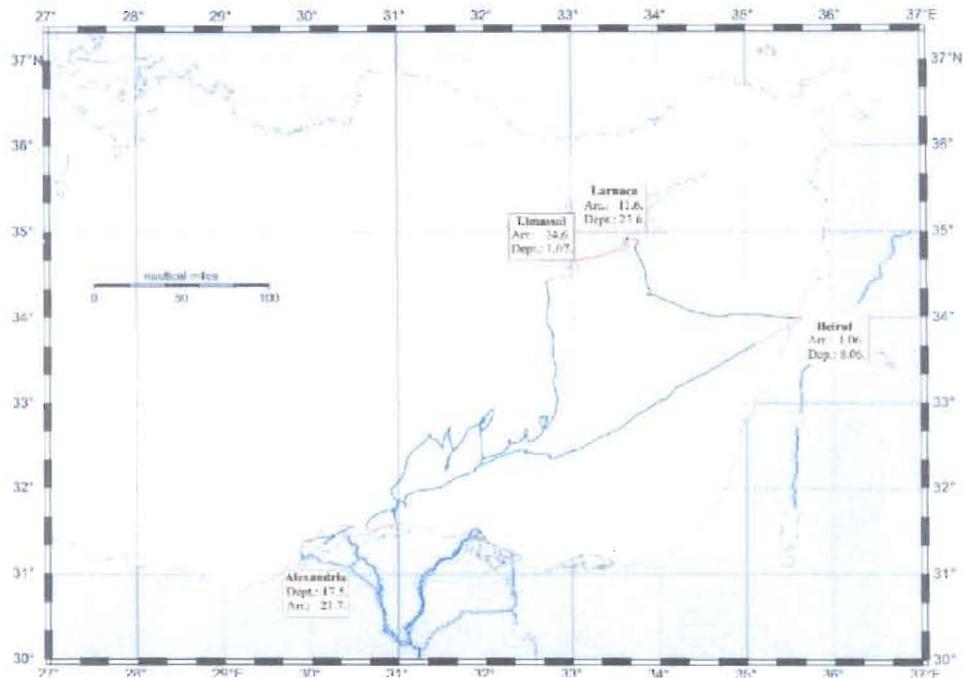


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anterior and Spain prove, that this developing stage had already taken place in the Stone Age. Reed boats are very secure sea crafts because of the raft construction method. They have a enormous buoyancy, last longer than one year in salt water and were easy to make with Stone Age tools. In contrast to the prehistoric dug-outs they could carry much more cargo and sail on fixed trade lines at least across to the predominant winds.

FOR THESE REASONS there is no doubt in my mind that in prehistoric times there already existed an advanced reed boat navigation system. Moreover, the voyage of ABORA 2 has shown that sailing, science and teamwork can come together in an excellent symbiosis to answer some of the unsolved questions of archaeology.

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Zusammenfassung

Die Schilfbootexpedition ABORA 2 ist ein Deutsch-Norwegisches Experiment zur Erprobung eines vorgeschichtlichen Schilfbootes auf einer Seereise über das Ostmittelmeer. Das Hauptziel dieses Projektes bestand darin, zu experimentell zu beweisen, dass das vorzeitliche Schilfboot in der Lage war, quer und sogar gegen den Wind zu segeln. Es folgte dabei einer geplanten Rundreise im Ostmittelmeer.

Die Expedition hat ihre Erwartungen mehr als erfüllt, und bewiesen, dass vorgeschichtliche Ägypter durchaus in der Lage waren, zu allen Teilen der antiken Welt zu segeln, um Handel und Kulturaustausch durchzuführen. ABORA 2 war total stabil und seetüchtig. Sie war aufgrund ihrer Schiffsarchitektur unverkennbar für Ozeanreisen konstruiert, so wie sie in Felsbildern Oberägyptens dargestellt worden ist.

Die Mannschaft der ABORA 2 kam hauptsächlich von Deutschland und Norwegen. Drei Mitglieder unterstützen die Crew aus Bolivien, Marokko und Ägypten. Sie segelten zusammen 1164 Seemeilen über das Mittelmeer auf den Spuren prähistorischer Zivilisationen.

Angesichts der Hin- und Rückreise entlang einer vorgegebenen Reiseroute mit ständig wechselnden Wetterbedingungen ist es sehr wahrscheinlich, dass die Menschen bereits vor der Erfindung der seetüchtigen Holzschiffe weite Reisen über das Mittelmeer unternommen und miteinander in einem engen Kulturaustausch gestanden haben. Die seit Jahrzehnten gehegte Kritik an Thor Heyerdahls RA II Expedition, man hätte mit einem ägyptischen Papyrusboot vom O-Mittelmeer aus niemals den Atlantik erreicht, muss nun revidiert werden, denn mit ausreichend Zeit hätte die ABORA 2 überall hin im Mittelmeer segeln können. ABORA 2 war ausgestattet mit modernster SIMRAD-Navigationstechnik, die präzise alle gefahrenen Kurse gegen den Wind aufgezeichnet und damit wissenschaftlich dokumentierte. Angesichts dieser Messdaten und der zurückgelegten Fahrtstrecke kann es keine Zweifel mehr geben, dass die Menschen bereits in der Steinzeit die Meere überquerten und dabei sogar gegen den Wind zum Ausgangspunkt ihrer Explorationen zurücksegeln konnten.

Die Fahrt der ABORA 2 hat außerdem gezeigt, dass Segelsport, Wissenschaft und Teamarbeit eine hervorragende Symbiose eingehen können, um bisher ungelöste Fragen der Archäologie zu beantworten.