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## U.A.S. Newsletter, no. 70 (November 25, 1960)

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# U. A. S. NEWSLETTER

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Published approximately every six weeks by THE UNIVERSITY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. The purpose of the Newsletter is to disseminate knowledge of recent archaeological discoveries bearing on the Latter-day Saint scriptures; also of the archaeological activities and viewpoints of the Society and its members. Subscription by membership in the Society: three dollars per year; or Life Membership, fifty dollars. (Membership also includes subscription to other publications of the Society and of the BYU Department of Archaeology.)

70.0 ANCIENT TRANS-PACIFIC MIGRATION. "The question of trans-oceanic influence on the New World has been the subject of lively controversy for many years, and recent finds of many quite detailed cultural similarities between the hemispheres have reopened the question." With these words from the recent book by Julian H. Steward, Native Peoples of South America, we set the theme of this newsletter. Indeed the question has not only been reopened, but the seemingly impregnable dike of New World "independent inventionism" is receiving cracks that may soon be too large to fill with the fingers of traditionism.

Weaknesses in the dike began appearing as early as 1896, when British anthropologist E. B. Tylor discussed the Aztec game of patolli and its striking similarities to the Hindu game of parchisi (parcheesi). Though this was an essay in method, the obvious question raised by these similarities could not be overlooked. This did not prevent independent-inventionists, however, from ignoring the irritating parallel or consigning the game to the knap-sack of some late land migrant from Siberia. To suggest trans-Pacific migration as the explanation of such parallels between ancient America and the Old World was still heresy. A similar reaction greeted the several studies supporting trans-Pacific diffusion that came from the pen of British Egyptologist G. Elliot Smith (e. g. The Migrations of Early Culture, 1915).

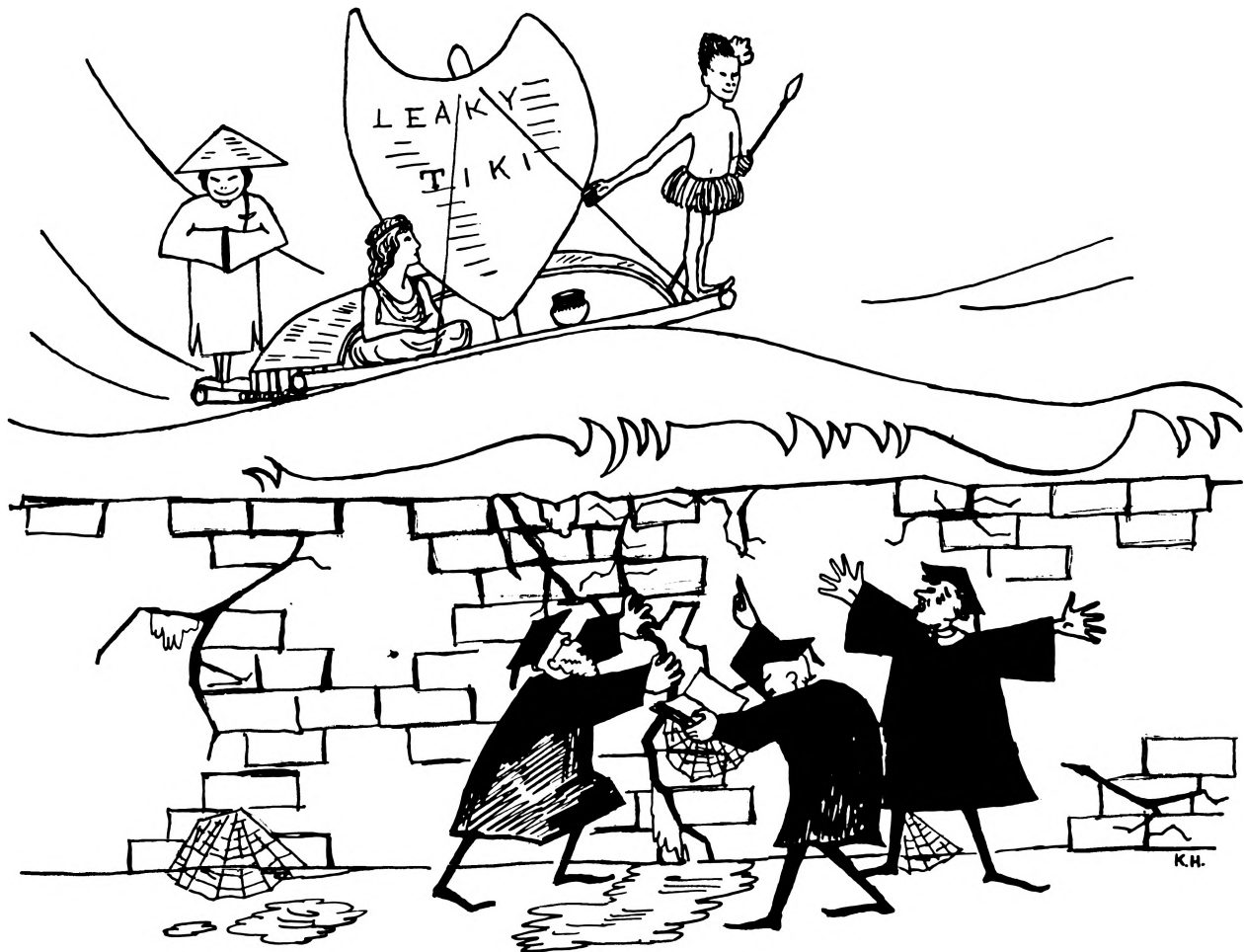
The debate received new impetus in 1947, however, when Harold S. Gladwin published his Men Out of Asia, and again in 1950, when Thor Heyerdahl followed with Kon Tiki--works arguing anew the possibility of ancient trans-Pacific migrations. Although the migrations they suggested went in opposite directions, both rammed the dike of independent inventionism and the fight was on. The flood-waters of trans-Pacific diffusionism have not yet engulfed Gladwin's "Dr. Phuddy Duddy," (see cartoon by Kristine Hansen on page 2,) but a new generation of Americanists is taking a second look at the theory of independent invention and seriously considering diffusion not only via the Bering Strait but across the Pacific as well.

Another decade of study may or may not resolve the problem. Whatever the outcome, we still have a great deal more research ahead and without doubt a few surprises. The more recent studies seem to point to a compromise solution; namely, that both independent invention and trans-Pacific influence were factors in the origin of the American civilizations. They also support the possibility that ancient contacts by sea between the Americas and Asia or Oceania occurred in both directions. Some of these more recent studies are reviewed in the following pages of this newsletter. . . DFG

70.1 ANCIENT CHINESE-AMERICAN CONTACTS. Review of a series of articles in the Bulletin of the Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica, a Nationalist Chinese periodical, dealing with ancient cultural contacts between Asia and America and the islands of the Pacific. Reviewed by Ray T. Matheny.

The first of these recent Chinese studies is by Ling Shun-sheng, in Bulletin No. 1, March, 1956. Mr. Shun-sheng opens his discussion by pointing out the new interest taken by Americanists in the possibility of cultural connections between Asia and pre-Columbian America. He cites the 118th meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Section H (anthropology and archaeology), at Philadelphia, during which most of the papers dealt with the possibility of Asian and American trans-Pacific contacts. He notes, however, that most Americanists still maintain the theory of the complete cultural isolation of the New World before Columbus; hence his interest in early navigation and cultural diffusion in the Pacific.

This article is a detailed comparative description of Eastern (Asian) and Western (American) rafts. His sources are ancient Chinese records of rafts encountered at sea and raft-building, and reports of early Spanish sailors of sea-going rafts encountered in the Pacific. The basic construction of Eastern and Western rafts is remarkably similar. The use of the adjustable center-board for steering purposes is so unusual that it can hardly be considered an independent invention. The author states, "From the preliminary comparisons made above of the construction and function of the sailing raft in



East Asia and South America, we are able to state that the rafts in these two regions were derived from a common origin."

Mr. Shun-sheng then goes on to analyze the terminology for rafts in South America, Oceania, and China. Several similar terms for raft and sailing are found in Chinese and the languages of Oceania. The author feels that the terms originated in China because Chinese literature contains "the most ancient and important data." He quotes from Chinese records of the 5th century B. C., according to which military maneuvers were performed by rafts in the Yellow Sea at that early date.

In concluding his study the author stands by the theory that the raft had an Asiatic origin. He quotes from still more ancient Chinese literature, dating traditionally from the 33rd century B. C. to the 5th century B. C., recording sea movements by raft. Mr. Shun-sheng proposes that the ancient Chinese records answer the questions of Lothrop, Means, and Heyerdahl concerning the origin and diffusional problem of the raft in the Pacific. He believes that the raft was diffused by deep water routes rather than by coastal waters.

In a second article, entitled "Human Figures with Protruding Tongue Found in the Prefecture, Formosa, and their Affinities Found in Other Pacific Areas," Mr. Shun-sheng deals with certain wood and stone carvings found in China, New Zealand, the Pacific Northwest, and South America, all of which show human figures with protruding tongues and, in some cases, only three fingers on the hands. He believes that these carvings are therefore additional evidence for trans-Pacific diffusion.

Another article, "Rain Worship Among the Ancient Chinese and the Nahua-Maya Indians," is by Dennis Wing-sou Lou. In this study it is first noted that the principal Chinese rain deities were the horned dragon and the mysterious figure of Lei-kung or Lord of Thunder. Other rain deities were the frog, moon, and sun.

In ancient times the Chinese word for dragon was used interchangeably with snake and is found in the Oracle-bone Inscriptions dating to the 17th century B. C. In these oracles, sacrifices were made to the dragon or snake deity for rain. There is a legend of twin snake deities, Fu Hsi and Nu Wa, who were the creators of the Chinese. According to early literature most of the rulers were born of a dragon or under the

influence of it.

Four dragons were associated with the four quarters of the earth and the four seasons. One of these dragons represented spring and the east, and was the rain deity in power. This dragon was blue or green and was associated with wood. The southern dragon, or red dragon, represented summer and was related to fire. The autumn dragon was that of the west, it was related to the color white, and was associated with metal or gold. The winter dragon was under the leadership of the "mountain dragon" which was related to the earth and the color yellow.

These dragons were compounded and variable; they could represent a single deity or else four or five deities. The ability of the dragon to change its role and dimension indicates a central omnipotent deity over the entire Chinese pantheon.

The author points out the similarities between the dragon or serpent rain-god of the ancient Chinese and the serpent rain-god of the ancient peoples of Mexico and Central America. He quotes from Quiche-Mayan myths in which the serpent, the god of rain, thunder, and lightning, is involved as one of the creators of the earth. He also cites the Mixtec legend of the puma-snake and jaguar-snake deities who brought forth two sons, one of which took the form of an eagle, and the other the form of a flying serpent. Mr. Lou believes that the Mexican feathered serpent (often depicted in carvings and given the title Quetzalcoatl) is very similar to the Chinese dragon, except for the horns which the feathers replace. He says that the Mexican serpent represents a multiple god who was called "Lord of the Four Winds" or "Four-time Lord," which symbolizes the four elements; water, air, earth, and fire, and/or the four seasons.

In summary the author compares the similarities between the ancient Chinese dragon and the ancient Maya serpent. "Both the dragon and the serpent were the principal and most ancient deities of the two cultures. They were similar in form, and were both included in the legend of creation, in which they were regarded as creators or makers. The dragon and the serpent could both be a single deity, or four, or many. Moreover, both the dragon and the serpent were related to the four quarters and the four seasons. When they appeared as four in number, each of them was related to a particular element and was represented by a different color. Finally, the dragons and serpents of the four quarters seemed to be connected with a central force, which was possibly another important deity."

The most striking example of similarities are between the personified rain-god of the Chinese, called Lei-kung or Lord of Thunder, and the personified rain god of the Mayas most commonly known as Chac.

The Chinese rain deity was portrayed in various forms often associated with the dragon or snake. One peculiar form was a serpentine body with an elephant's head. The author says the term Lei-kung is a collective one for all the rain gods or gods of thunder. The Lord of Thunder was not a single deity, "but four or five, guarding the center and the four quarters of heaven." The Lord of Thunder was also associated with the four seasons, four elements, and four colors. "He was pictured as riding on dragons and was regarded as an agricultural god as well as an ancestor or creator." He was also shown "holding an ax, a chisel, or a torch-like thunderbolt."

The great rain god of the Mayas, Chac, is generally known as god B of the Codices. He is shown with a long nose, two curving fangs or tongues, a knotted headdress, and often "holds in his hand an ax, or a torch-like thunderbolt, or both. . . Chac was believed to have a human head with a serpentine body as well as an elephant's head with a serpentine body."

Chac was associated with the four quarters, had a different name and color for each quarter or cardinal direction, and ruled over the four elements of water, air, earth, and fire.

The author points out the similarities between Chac and the Feathered Serpent representing Kukulcan (Quetzalcoatl), and the fact that many scholars believe that Chac and Kukulcan are the same deity in different forms and under different names.

Another similarity is between the deities Lei-kung and Chac in their relationship to the "S" and "⊕" symbols. The Li people, who were worshipers of the thunder and snake god as their ancestor, used "S", "∞", or "∞", as a symbol for their god. Lou says, "This symbol is identical with the "2" of the Oracle-bone Inscriptions. . . and it is an early form of the modern Chinese word "申", which meant "god" in ancient times, and from this word "申", the modern word for god (示 申) is derived." He further says that the S-sign is closely connected with the cross sign "⊕" or "⊗". The modern Chinese words for thunder and lightning are derived from these symbols and include the symbol for god.

Mr. Lou says that the S-sign had great significance in the Americas, and quotes from Zelia Nuttall: "In the Dresden Codex, of Maya origin, there is an extremely important page on which the S-sign occurs in connection with twin deities, besides rain and cross symbols." The twin deities are identified as the Maya rain god Chac, in a rare dual form associated with the Kin sign or cross.

Next, Mr. Lou presents a strong argument that the ancient Chinese and the Maya and Nahua Indians had similar governmental institutions in which the lands, and even cities, were divided into four equal parts.

The four parts represented the four quarters of the earth and were given symbols corresponding to the four cardinal points and elements. He maintains that these similarities are not merely accidental.

In conclusion the author believes that the parallels between the widely separated Chinese and Meso-american civilizations must have been brought about in one of the following ways: "1. The ancestors of the Maya, and possibly the Nahua as well, may have lived side by side with the rain-worshipping Chinese in ancient China. 2. The cultural traits adapted by the Maya and the Nahua may have been brought from Southeast Asia or China to America, not by a few individual traders or sailors who, through mishap, found their way to the New World, but by several large and possibly planned emigrations under effective leadership." Mr. Lou favors the second explanation, and discusses ancient Chinese ship-building and sea-faring activities and the possibility of a trans-Pacific migration. He assigns no definite date to such a migration, but suggests that it occurred in A. D. times, possibly around 500 A. D. The author does not propose to trace cultural flows or routes from Asia to America nor to establish the origin of the Nahua-Maya culture.

70.2 EARLY VOYAGINGS AMONG THE PACIFIC ISLANDS. A review of Ancient Voyagers in the Pacific, by Andrew Sharp, Penguin Books, 1957, 212 pages, \$ .85. Reviewed by Carl Hugh Jones.

Over the years there has been much speculation on the origin of the peoples of the Pacific Islands and how they became dispersed among the Islands. Andrew Sharp, a scholar and statesman of New Zealand, has in this book brought to the fore-front the theories of Cook and other early explorers and missionaries concerning ancient inter-island contact, followed by his own views as to the place of origin of the Polynesians and the nature of inter-island voyages.

The entire book supports the hypothesis that the spread of people among the Pacific Islands was the result of accidental voyages. The following additional conclusions are reached: 1, that the original starting point was in the west and that most of the movements were eastward, but that some voyagers were carried in other directions; 2, that the only planned voyages were made to islands of the same group or to those of neighboring groups--the main areas of inter-group contact being Fiji-Tonga-Samoa and Tahiti-Tuamotu; 3, that it was either canoes carrying members of both sexes on these off-shore cruises that were blown off course, or families of exiles who were carried to new islands and stayed to colonize them.

Sharp believes that the original voyagers found their way to the islands of western Polynesia by accident, and that the eastward movement was continued

by accidental voyages. After an island to the east was populated, accidental voyages continued between the original islands and new islands in both directions.

Below are two of Sharp's examples of accidental voyages of Pacific Islanders, taken from Gill, an early missionary. "The most significant of Gill's reports is the following, because it was from west to east and bridged the gap from the western islands to the Cooks. Fakafo is an island about 300 miles north of Samoa. In January 1858, says Gill, a numerous family was conveyed from Farafo in a westerly gale, coming eventually to Mangaia in the southern Cooks via the desert atolls of Nassau and Palmerston. This was a distance of 1,250 miles in which the east component was about 700 miles.

"Gill says that in 1862 he saw on Manua in the Samoa Group people who had been blown there accidentally from Moorea in the Tahiti Group, a distance of 1,250 miles, with no lives lost."

As to the possibility of deliberate voyages Sharp feels that they were limited to a few hundred miles because of the great difficulty of navigating without instruments. It is also apparent that planned off-shore voyages were made between groups where the winds and currents were most steady and predictable. The general procedure in these off-shore voyages is now to line up two landmarks on the home island that are said to point to the island one desires to reach. The start is made late in the afternoon so that when the home island is nearly out of sight the stars will be out and the pilot can guide his course by them. If it becomes stormy the pilot can only guide his craft by the direction of the wind and the waves, and he may soon be lost at sea and thus become one of the accidental voyagers who may or may not see land again. If on the other hand the weather holds good he may reach his destination in two or three days, and when the wind changes and blows towards his home island he may return.

Sharp's book is one of the best on Pacific voyagers, and provides a sound basis for the study of cultural diffusion in the Central Pacific.

70.3 POLYNESIAN-PERUVIAN CONTACTS: A review of Aku-Aku by Thor Heyerdahl, New York: Rand McNally & Co., 1958, 384 pages, \$4.95. Reviewed by Dee F. Green.

This Book of the Month Club selection is an account of the first scientific archaeological work ever done on Easter Island. Three American archaeologists accompanied the author on a fascinating expedition that combined archaeology, ethnology, and an extra dose of adventure.

Although written for the general reader, in the entertaining Heyerdahl style, the book contains much

of serious archaeological interest for both layman and scholar. Handsome photographs, all in color, add greatly to the interest of the narrative.

The volume is cleverly written and Heyerdahl, as the central figure, manages to participate in all the important action without making himself obnoxious to the reader. He succeeds in gaining the confidence of the natives to the point where they bring him sacred "cave stones" and finally admit him to some of their secret family caves.

Of particular interest are the close parallels with ancient Peru uncovered by the archaeologists' spade. Heyerdahl's east-to-west oceanic migration theory may now command a more respected place among Americanist scholars.

Although not a work destined for the standard reference shelf, it is a "must" on the reading list of scholar and layman. Its exciting pages demonstrate that archaeology is still a field of high adventure as well as a serious scientific discipline.

70.4 SUCCESS BOTH WAYS. A Review of From Raft to Raft, by Bengt Danielsson. Doubleday, 1960, 264 pages, \$4.50. Reviewed by Dee F. Green.

The author, an anthropologist now living in Polynesia, reports the adventures of the Tahiti Nui expedition as told him by Alain Brun, one of the expedition members.

Tahiti Nui was a bamboo raft constructed on the island of Tahiti by the expedition leader Eric de Bisschop. He felt that a possible sea route to the American continent between 30 and 40 degrees South latitude was used anciently despite the objections of some that the route was too stormy. The expedition left Tahiti on Nov. 8, 1956, but the raft sank off the coast of Chile on May 26, 1957. The crew was taken to the port of Constitución, Chile, by the Chilean freighter Baquedano where they made preparations for a return trip.

Tahiti Nui II was built of cypress logs and was ready for sailing on February 15, 1958. The expedition sailed up the Chilean coast to the port of Callao, from which the Kon Tiki also put out to sea, and then out into the Pacific. Tahiti Nui II drifted somewhat north of Heyerdahl's route and succeeded in traveling several hundred miles further into the Pacific islands than did the Kon Tiki.

The following quote explains de Bisschop's theory. "I quite agree with him (Thor Heyerdahl) that there are many identical artifacts and customs, not to say plants in South America and in the Polynesian islands. But when it comes to explaining these similarities we do not agree. According to Thor Heyerdahl they exist because the first immigrants into Polynesia were a fair-skinned people from Peru, who sailed across the

Pacific on Balsa rafts and settled in the islands about fifteen hundred years ago. I, on the contrary... have come to the conclusion that the similarities are due to the fact that Polynesian Sea-dogs repeatedly made the long voyage to South America and back in prehistoric times and thus both influenced and were influenced by different Indian tribes."

The most significant contributions of de Bisschop's expedition are: (1) he shows that, despite the storms, it is possible to reach South America from Polynesia between 30 and 40 degrees south latitude and (2) he demonstrates that a bamboo raft can float that far. Eric de Bisschop has answered two of the most serious objections to prehistoric ocean travel from Polynesia to the New World.

70.5 FURTHER ON NEW WORLD-POLYNESIAN CONTACTS. A review of Evidences of Cultural Contacts Between Polynesia and the Americas in Precolumbian Times, by John L. Sorenson. Master's Thesis, Department of Archaeology, BYU, 1952. Reviewed by Lawrence O. Anderson.

Mr. Sorenson's thesis of 165 pages is an excellent outline of the possible fields of research in the problem of trans-Pacific migration. The first section of the thesis outlines the development of the independent-inventionist school and that of the diffusionists regarding the origin of Polynesian culture. Of interest is the discussion, on page 7, of the recent rise of such contributions to the diffusionist school as Thor Heyerdahl's works.

Also found in the introductory portion is a statement setting forth the criteria for establishing culture contacts between the Americas and Polynesia. On page 11 the author points out a final caution in that "the relative incompleteness of the sources must necessarily limit the scope of our conclusions."

The bulk of the evidence presented for possible east-to-west contacts is based on certain cultural similarities correlated with lexical correspondences. One example is the tetrapod vessel. Present in ancient America, the same type of vessel in Polynesia bears the name kumete, which is also found--with modifications--in Maya, Nahuatl, and Hokan.

Other related examples are his comparisons of the Polynesian god Hina or Sina and other religious traits with the Mesoamerican god Quetzalcóatl, Tree of Life symbols, wooden funerary statues, and the rite of "the turning of the mat."

Mr. Sorenson concludes that there are enough positive evidences to show that, "complex cultural and ethnic movements between Polynesia and the Americas have taken place in the eastern Pacific basin in the last few millennia." He continues: "Based on the view that diverse cultural influences would have

reached Polynesia from a center such as Ecuador, we propose that actual voyages . . . carried American physical types and cultural elements to eastern Polynesia. There the 'Polynesian' culture developed as a result of mixture between the new elements from America . . . many of which came from high cultures . . . and an old 'basic oceanic' population and culture. The differentiation between eastern and western Polynesian would perhaps be due to differing degrees and times of admixture, plus consequent regional developments.

"At least one more voyage from America seems necessary to complete the picture. This must reach Hawaii from North America. Possible sources for this voyage are the Northwest coast, south-central California, and the west coast of Mexico."

70.6 OTHER RECENT STUDIES. The following additional recent studies bearing upon the question of ancient trans-Pacific migration are listed here, to assist the student interested in further investigating this subject.

70.60 On evidence of ancient trans-Pacific migration from eastern Asia to America:

Gordon F. Ekholm, "Is American Indian Culture Asiatic?" Natural History, Vol. 59, No. 8 (October, 1950), pp. 344-351, 382.

Robert von Heine-Geldern and Gordon F. Ekholm, "Significant Parallels in the Symbolic Arts of Southern Asia and Middle America," in Sol Tax, ed., The Civilizations of Ancient America, Chicago, 1951, pp. 299-309.

George F. Carter, "Plants Across the Pacific," in Asia and North America, Transpacific Contacts (American Antiquity, Vol. 18, No. 3, Pt. 2, January, 1953), pp. 62-71.

Gordon F. Ekholm, "A Possible Focus of Asiatic Influence in the Late Classic Cultures of Mesoamerica," ibid., pp. 72-89.

Miguel Covarrubias, in id., The Eagle, the Jaguar, and the Serpent; Indian Art of the Americas, New York, 1954, pp. 23-68.

70.61 On evidence of ancient trans-oceanic migration from western Asia to America:

M. Wells Jakeman, The Complex "Tree-of-Life" Carving on Izapa Stela 5; a Reanalysis and Partial Interpretation (Brigham Young University, Publications in Archaeology and Early History, Mesoamerican Series, No. 4), Provo, Utah, 1958. (Several Near Eastern-like elements discovered in an ancient Mesoamerican sculpture.)

Thomas Stuart Ferguson, One Fold and One Shepherd, San Francisco, 1958. (Discussion of Near Eastern parallels in ancient Mesoamerican art and civilization.)

70.62 On evidence of ancient trans-Pacific migration from America to Polynesia:

Thor Heyerdahl, American Indians in the Pacific, London, 1952.

George F. Carter, "Plants Across the Pacific," 1953 (see above).

70.63 Other Interesting References.

David H. Kelly, "Our Brother Coyote." Unpb., Doctoral dissertation, Harvard University. (Contains a discussion of special relationships between Polynesia and Mesoamerica.)

David H. Kelly, "Calendar Animals and Deities." Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, Vol. 16, No. 3, Autumn, 1960, pp. 317-337. (A comparison of certain similarities in calendrical lists from Mesoamerica, Eurasia, and Polynesia.)

Clinton R. Edwards, "Sailing Rafts of Sechura: History and Problems of Origin." Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, Vol. 16, No. 3, Autumn, 1960, pp. 368-391. (Demonstrates the existence of present-day centerboard sailing rafts.)

Two interesting quotations from this article follow:

"The accounts of experienced seafaring men of the past three centuries and observations of the sailing qualities of the Sechura rafts have led to the conclusion that large centerboard sailing rafts were capable of long distance voyaging, and were not inherently limited as to direction by geographical factors of wind and current. Final proof of windward capability is manifest in the Sechura rafts, employing the ancient methods of centerboard navigation.

"We may also find, through further examination of the history of these rafts, that we have underrated the capability of ancient seafaring folk to make long voyages in such primitive craft."