



The Sindbad Voyage

Tim Severin

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Perhaps the greatest fictional sailor of them all. But could his amazing voyages, recounted in the The Book of One Thousand and One Nights, be recreated in the modern world? Or were they just the stuff of legend? Tim Severin was determined to find out. After three years of research, he created a precise replica of an early Arab trading ship. Not a single nail was used in her construction - her planks were held together with 400 miles of coconut cord. With a crew of twenty, including eight Omani sailors, his ship Sohar (named after the town said to have been Sindbad's birthplace) completed a 6,000 mile journey by way of India, Sri Lanka, and across the Indian Ocean to Sumatra and Singapore, and finally through the China Sea to a tumultuous welcome in Canton. Along the way, the crew had to swim among sharks while repairing the rudder, catch rainwater to drink while becalmed in the doldrums, and endure the battering of violent seas off the coast of Vietnam.

'The Sindbad Voyage' is the remarkable story of that amazing journey. An enthralling saga of the 7 ½ month voyage, it is one of the most memorable sailing stories of modern times.

The Sindbad Voyage Details

Date : Published June 1st 1998 by Little Brown and Company (first published 1982)

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Author : Tim Severin

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From Reader Review The Sindbad Voyage for online ebook

Wayne Jordaan says

How much fact is there in the Thousand And One Nights? Did Arab sailors sail to China before the Western Europeans manage to circumnavigate around the South coast of Africa? In The Sindbad Voyage Tim Severin and a relatively small crew set out from Muscat (Oman) in a Boom (wooden sailing ship in which the planks are stitched together with coconut fibre). Yes, not a single nail was used. So is it just an old folks tale? I enjoyed finding out, who knows, so might you.

Joe White says

Review The Sinbad Voyage __ Tim Severin

0-399-12757-7

Started 9/27/13

Fin 9/30/13

4 star – personal preference

This book is an account of a historical ship building and expedition to sail it from Oman in the Arabian Gulf to Canton, China in 1980.

I think that the book is significant for at least 2 reasons: (1) It attempts to recreate the shipbuilding process for an Arabian Boom as authentically as possible in contemporary times, and sail it on a historical route in a fashion similar to what might have been experienced in 600 AD.

(2) The second reason for the book's significance is that I don't think that the experience of procuring materials, expertise, and labor with specialized skills could be duplicated today, 35 years later.

The expedition as designed was proposed to officials of Oman, who lent 100% support. In 1980 dollars this was a very expensive undertaking. The historical research which represented the foundation bases for performing the expedition were explained as the book progressed. Basically the objective was to recreate a trading voyage from Oman to Canton, China. The ship was to be an authentic type in use in 600 AD, which required a stitched hull using grooves, built hull first, framed secondly, with overlapping frame members. A Boom type vessel was selected as Tim Severin was able to find people who claimed that they had the knowledge to build the boat in the original manner, complete with proper stitching of choir coconut rope with coconut rope "caulking". The timbers were selected from a standing forest in India of a type of teak, and in such an immense size that trees of that size form an old growth forest might not exist there today. A narrative of the expedition to choose the timber, which provided the material for both the hull and spars was included, along with problems in the negotiations, such as the bureaucratic red tape, bribery as a way of business, and substitution of material sizes, amounts, and quality as a standard of doing business in India at that time.

Details of the shipbuilding were provided which included the methods, tools, work area, and time frame for completion. The specs of the ship were detailed in its finished form including hull, spar sizes, and sail fabric and sail inventory. The hull protective "paint" was a type of lard, that was measured against raw wood for its resistance to the teredo worms common to most warm oceans.

The shipbuilding technique was the most interesting aspect of the book for my purposes. Historically, we may know that that type ship existed and was used extensively for trade, but details of the economy required to supply those ships is less certain. Commerce between shipping route points occurred can be proven, but how difficult the actual route was with a load, and what it cost in manpower and resources is often harder to guess.

Scott Williams says

Having read and enjoyed Tim Severin's "The Jason Voyage" I was excited to find this one. It didn't disappoint. It was fascinating to live vicariously through these adventurous and extremely hard-working voyagers as they first build an ancient-style ship and then sail it from Oman to China.

Pavan Nayini says

Really great book that chronicles Tim Severin's retracing Sindbad voyage. Found it more interesting to read about the actual problems encountered during the voyage. Comparing the events in the arabian nights book to actual places was more intriguing. Read it after you read the seven voyages of Sindbad and be sure to learn about different parts of a ship before you read this as I had to google a lot of words including "Poop deck" :)

James Wheat says

Ripping and evocative, I could almost feel the boat beneath my feet as I read.

Buchdoktor says

Um die Erzählungen über Sindbad den Seefahrer nachzuerleben, plante Tim Severin den Nachbau einer arabischen Dhau aus jener Zeit für eine Reise von Oman nach China. Die früheste Erwähnung dieses Schiffstyps auf Chinareise findet sich bereits in chinesischen Urkunden des 8. Jahrhunderts. Die China-Route wurde von arabischen Kapitänen gefürchtet - und Severins Mannschaft wird am eigenen Leib die Gründe dafür erfahren. Wie in den Zeiten von Sindbads Seemansgarn soll das Boot ohne einen einzigen Nagel aus indischem Aini-Holz gebaut werden, zusammengehalten allein von Schnüren aus Kokosfasern. Der Schiffsbug wird nicht etwas gestrichen oder geölt, sondern mit erstaunlichem Erfolg durch eine Mischung aus Hammeltalg und Kalk vor Würmern geschützt. Die Sohar wird auf dieser Strecke wahrscheinlich das letzte Boot ihrer Art sein.

Als der Staat Oman das Projekt zur nationalen Aufgabe erklärt, nimmt Severins Plan ein Eigenleben an. Neben der finanziellen und logistischen Unterstützung durch den Sultan von Oman kann Severin nun auch aus freiwilligen einheimischen Helfern mit exquisiten Kenntnissen im Bootsbau und in der Seefahrt auswählen. Der Bau des Segelschiffs wird an die begabtesten Bootsbauer der kleinen indischen Insel Minicoy vergeben, die alle schon Boote bauen, seit sie laufen und ein Werkzeug halten können. Severin kämpft gegen den indischen Schlendrian und wird so manches Mal beim Materialkauf übers Ohr gehauen. Später während der

Reise durch die "Sieben Meere" wird sich Tim Severins Einschätzung Indiens relativieren, als es der Crew gelingt mit der Hilfe indischer Fischer in einer konkurrenzlosen Gewaltaktion während weniger Tage eine komplette Ersatz-Besegelung für die Sohar zu nähen. Überall sonst auf der Welt hätte dieser Auftrag vier Monate gedauert.

Während sich gläubige Omanis mit Turban mit den Europäern an Bord zu einer Mannschaft zusammenraufen, rätselt man, wie die Araber damals wohl navigierten. Einzelne Etappen der Reise werden von Forschern begleitet, die z. B. die Dugongs in den Gewässern Ostasiens zählen wollen. Der Fotograf ist der einzige an Bord ohne jegliche Erfahrung im Segeln. Sein Talent wegen seiner abenteuerlichen Seilkonstruktionen für besondere Aufnahmestandorte mehrmals nur knapp dem Ertrinken zu entgehen, entwickelt sich an Bord zum Running Gag. Im Kontrast zu The Brendan Voyage in den sehr ruhigen Gewässern der Nordhalbkugel lauern für die Sohar auf ihrer Fahrt durch die Straße von Malakka Piraten, Taifune und Gefahren durch den starken Schiffsverkehr.

Tim Severin zeigte bei der Vorbereitung der siebeneinhalbmonatigen Fahrt wieder sein besonderes Geschick, eine Mannschaft mit vielseitigen Talenten zusammenzustellen, die jeder Herausforderung gewachsen ist und sich nur durch einen unfähigen Koch aus dem Gleichgewicht bringen lässt. Ein lesenswerter Abenteuerbericht.

Dennis Rutzou says

I was sad to finish this book. I savoured every page from start to finish and have already started recommending it to friends who I think would like it. I had only read two Tim Severin books up to this stage (Robinson Crusoe and Marco Polo) and although I had enjoyed them both, this surpasses them. I have now started downloading other Tim Severin books to my Kindle and as I am going on holidays for a couple weeks will probably be in trouble for wanting to read, rather than shop or go to the beach, although I could read and sun bake. I recommend this book to anyone who wants to read a fascinating account of a voyage from the past.

Omaima Shata says

Back to my childhood memories ... Love it <3

Daren says

Tim Severin has a formula for these books of his, and it is pretty successful. Start the first chapter mid voyage, with some exciting event, then go back to the start with the why and then the how. Build the boat, set off, complete the journey. Simple.

Nicely written, but seemed a bit lighter than the Brendan Voyage. Technically he didn't seem to go into the same level of detail as he did in Brendan with the leather boat. Regardless a good read. Read Sindbad first though.

Boris says

aangenaam en boeiend verslag, met weliswaar iets te weinig aandacht voor de literaire kant van de tocht.

Cath Smith says

Do I read travel books? No. Am I very interested in sailing and/boats? No. The, which did I read this book and give it four stars?

A friend introduced us to Tim Severin's accounts of his reconstructions of historic and mythical voyages. I read The Jason Voyage and The Brendan Voyage and became a fan.

This book tells of Tim Severin's voyage from Oman to China in the 'footsteps' of Sinbad. The boat is constructed using traditional methods, in original materials sourced from traditional sources. Fascinatingly, an Arab Boom is constructed from wooden planks sewn together with coconut rope. The first chapters tell of the construction of the boat and then the remainder of the book describes the journey. Well written and very informative. A little out of date now.

Yigal Zur says

i adore tim severin journeys, his courage, his writing. i read this book after my journey to Oman. i was intrigued by by the wooden boats i saw still made in the town of Sur. Severin manage to capture the magic of these journeys and omani sailors who went from india to africa. facinating

Jeff says

Recounting the tales of the legendary voyages of Sinbad from "Arabian Nights: 1001 nights", Author and sailor Tim Severin oversees the construction of an authentic Arabian ship from the period (that's sewn together) and sails the ship, retracing some of Sinbad's routes. A consummate storyteller, Tim Severin weaves a fascinating tale of travel, adventure, and some of the trials, challenges, and mishaps during the voyage. A real page turner!

Aman Raj says

dsad

Michael W. McFarland says

Great Book

Mind boggling considering the logistics needed to obtain material, labor and location to build this ship. This

was a daunting feat to build a ship of this design. I think this could have been proclaimed a success by just the successful construction. Now assemble a crew and successfully sail to China. Amazing! Wood, canvas, and men become as one. The story of sailors throughout history until present day.
