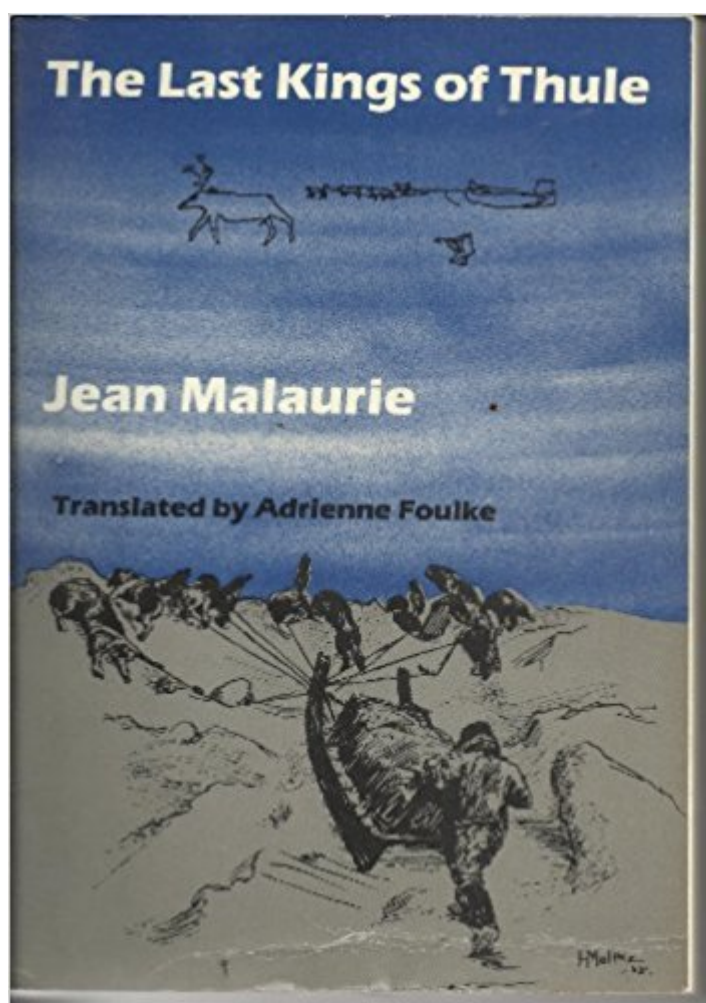


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The Last Kings Of Thule: With The Polar Eskimos, As They Face Their Destiny



Synopsis

After spending 1950-51 with an isolated group of Eskimos in northern Greenland, sharing their life on the very edge of survival, Jean Maurie returned with his companions to Thule village to find a U.S. airbase under construction: 'Men who lived by the harpoon found themselves in the atomic age.' When Maurie traveled back to the Arctic in 1972, the airbase had irreversibly transformed the Eskimo (Inuit) culture.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Text: English, French (translation)

THE LAST KINGS OF THULE A Year Among the Eskimos of Greenland This book was purchased for a young man whose heritage comes from these peoples. It was purchased from Powells of Chicago, was in excellent condition, arrived in a timely fashion, and was all that was expected. Excellent book.

Although the primary objectives of Maurie's work were cartographic and geological in nature, he became, by default, a primary voice in describing the Thule culture by recounting his personal experiences and lifestyle during the expedition. Surely, ethnography can never be a truly objective effort, but Maurie seems to appreciate this and relates cultural information through an admitted cultural filter. Rather than stifle his own reactions in his writing, Maurie has adequately described, with sensitivity, his personal paradigm shift as well as that of the culture he is inevitably impacting by

his very presence. It is inevitable that in any ethnographic description it will be found that something is amiss, lacking, due to the inevitable loss of information that occurs whenever information is transferred across cultural and linguistic lines. This work is one of the few that I have read that treats cultural interaction and exchange with dignity on behalf of the observed and the one observing. And, after all, these lines of distinction regarding observer and the observed shift and change radically during such a period of cultural interaction. Malaurie wonderfully describes this process.

Insightful and introspective account of the author's extended study of the Polar Inuit of the Thule district in Greenland. The most recent edition includes the author's bittersweet reflections many years later on modern incursions that threaten the survival of this indigenous culture.

Fantastic background to the area both from the antropological and geographical points of veiw. However, when I visited Qaanaaq in 1990 and mentioned this book I found that the local inhabitants were not impressed by their protrayal. Particularly concerning the more private aspects of their society.

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