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## The Ice Museum: In Search of the Lost Land of Thule

*Joanna Kavenna*

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#1863278 in Books Viking Adult 2006-02-02 2006-02-02Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.46 x 1.07 x 5.76l, #File Name: 0670034738304 pages | File size: 73.Mb

**Joanna Kavenna : The Ice Museum: In Search of the Lost Land of Thule** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Ice Museum: In Search of the Lost Land of Thule:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful, Exciting journey into the World of ThuleBy David NoethenI loved this book from the first word to the last.An exciting adventure for all those seeking a new and different journey. A trip you will never forget.!0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Very well written and interesting book. We are traveling ...By Christel KollarVery well written and interesting book. We are traveling next

year to the arctic so the contend was very significant for us. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Well written but dense in spots  
By Robert Burgin  
Kavenna searches for the legendary land of Thule, first described by a 4th-century BC Greek explorer, who claimed that it lay six days north of Scotland. She follows the routes of previous explorers such as Fridtjof Nansen and Richard Burton and visits the Shetland Islands, Iceland, Greenland, and Svalbard, among others. Kavenna explores a number of topics, including the Nazis (who viewed Thule as a lost Aryan homeland), the Cold War (the United States maintains an airbase in Greenland called Thule), and man's impact on the fragile ecosystems of the Arctic. The book contains some beautiful descriptions of the harsh landscape as well as conveying the author's love of these northern lands. Unfortunately, there are no photos and so the reader has to rely on Kavenna's long, sometimes convoluted descriptions. Very well written but a bit dense in spots.

An amazing journey through myth and history in search of a lost world  
To the ancients, Thule was a land beyond the edge of the maps, a northerly dreamland. It was a mystery for thousands of years, long thought to be an icy Eden, a place of exquisite beauty and unequalled purity. The lost world of Thule captured the imagination of poets, artists, explorers, and, most recently, writer Joanna Kavenna, who set out on a harrowing and exhilarating voyage of discovery. Her journey took her to Shetland, Iceland, Norway, Estonia, Greenland, and Svalbard into the Arctic wilderness, over frozen seas and ice mountains in search of this most haunting of northern places. As she travels, Kavenna finds traces of earlier writers and seekers: Richard Francis Burton, William Morris, Anthony Trollope, and Norwegian explorer Fridtjof Nansen. But she comes to discover that a darkness also inhabits Thule. She finds ice-bound relics of the cold war. She unearths the story of the Thule Society, an offshoot of the Nazi party, devoted to the "purity" of the Nordic peoples. Part diary, part detective trail, *The Ice Museum* is a wonder voyage through landscape and myth, reminiscent of Lucy Jagos *The Northern Lights* and Barry Lopez's National Book Award-winning *Arctic Dreams*.

From Publishers Weekly  
The fourth-century B.C. Greek explorer Pytheas claimed to have sailed six days from Scotland and discovered a land he named Thule. From Pytheas's brief, oft-disputed account of a land of short winter days where the sea turned into a viscous mass sprang an entire mythology of a magical, northern realm hidden beyond the edges of civilization. Kavenna's discursive book takes a thoughtful stroll through the different myths of Thule, examining how it became symbolic of everything from the Victorians' lost Arcadia to a polluted fantasy of racial purity for the proto-Nazi Thule Society. Kavenna, who's written for the *Guardian* and other British papers, follows the mark of Thule from the beer halls of Munich to the imagined Thules of the Shetland Islands, Iceland, Greenland and beyond. While frequently rhapsodic in regard to the epic landscapes, Kavenna resists the urge to attach too much import to her travels, not forcing the mythological on the everyday (unlike many Thule hunters, including fantasist Richard Burton). Although Kavenna's voyages don't solve the mystery as such, they provide fodder for a bracing account of humankind's dream of exploration and of the explorers "determined to discover, to shade in the blanks on the maps." (Feb. 6) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.  
From *The New Yorker*  
In this historical travelogue, Kavenna sets out in search of the quasi-mythical land of Thule, which the Greek explorer Pytheas, in the fourth century B.C., claimed to have reached by sailing north for six days from Britain, then the boundary of the known world. In the following centuries, Arctic voyagers christened each successive discovery from Shetland and Norway to Svalbard Thule. But the word also became synonymous with the idea of the far north, a "blank white space" to be filled with fears and fantasies of the unknown. For the Romans, who believed that nothing was out of their reach, it was the farthest outpost of their empire; for the Victorians, it was Poe's "wild weird clime"; and for certain Nazis it was a lost Aryan homeland. As she travels, Kavenna ponders the two millennia in which the myth thrived, a time before the entire globe was mapped, and when "its edges were vague, falling into shadows." Copyright 2006 *The New Yorker*  
From Booklist \*Starred\*  
In a gorgeously written and unusual book, Kavenna chronicles her personal journey into the myth and reality of the legendary Arctic land of Thule. Kavenna grounds her mission in the words of those who came before her, beginning with the fourth-century Greek explorer Pytheas, whose record is the earliest mention of "a land near a frozen ocean, draped in mist." She then follows in the footsteps of Richard Burton, William Morris, and Anthony Trollope, and considers the political history of the Thule ideal, specifically how it attracted the Nazi Party, the contemporary dreams of the Estonian people, and the long-held convictions of explorer Fridtjof Nansen. Comparisons between *The Ice Museum* and Barry Lopez's *Arctic Dreams* (1986) are accurate and justified since both authors are clearly enraptured with the unique beauty of the North. But Kavenna's riveting retelling of Thule's history, and her understanding of how a missing land could hold the imaginations of so many different people, is purely due to her own impressive abilities. *The Ice Museum* transcends all genre description, and holds its own as a journey into a world that somehow vibrantly exists on paper and nowhere else. Colleen Mondor  
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