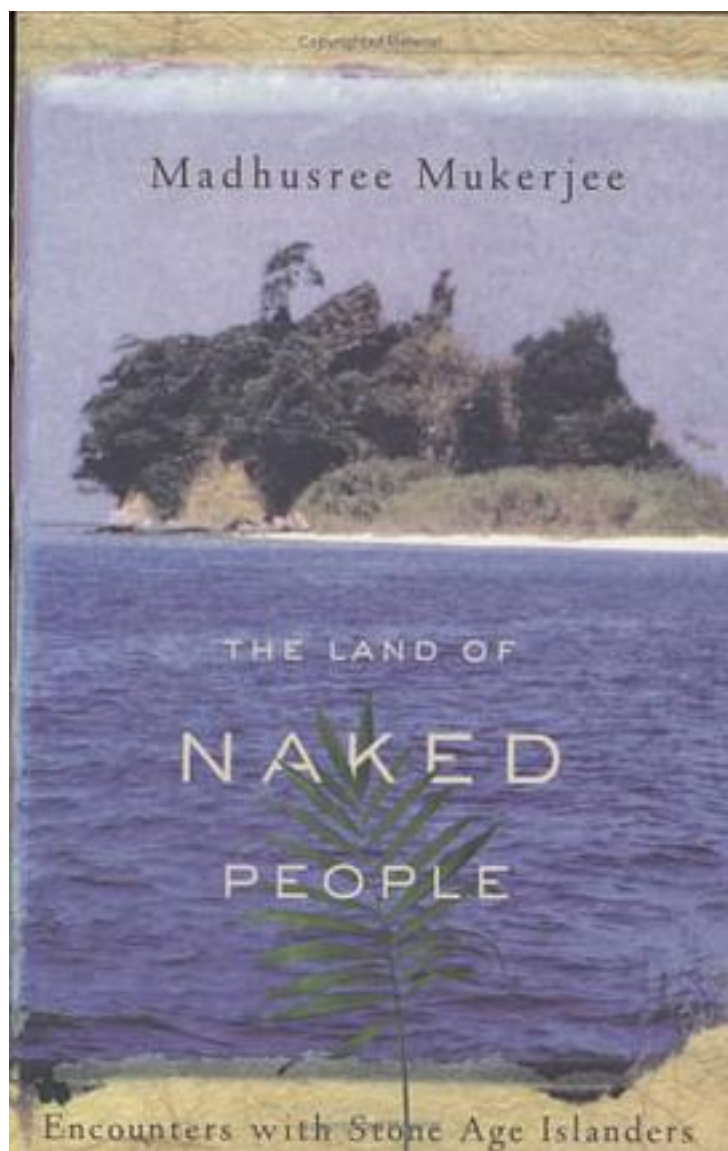


The Land of Naked People



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On a lush, remote island, modern civilization has recently made contact with what may be the last group of Stone Age people. The Sentinelese wear no clothes, do not know how to start a fire, and have fervently rejected the intrusion of outsiders. But that is changing, writes Madhusree Mukerjee, who has had exceptional access to that island and the others that make up the Andaman chain in the Bay of Bengal. Over seven years, Mukerjee found that other aboriginals on the islands have abandoned their ancient ways for enticements such as motorcycles and plastic toys. The price: outsiders have taken critical land, introduced serious diseases, and left the natives with a broken sense of self. This book offers unprecedented insights into the processes of colonization and modernization, the persistence of harmful myths about "savages," and the perennially fraught relationship between light- and dark-skinned peoples. Mukerjee gives us a fascinating look at a world nearly gone. Combining anthropological findings with historical accounts and personal travel stories, she lets us glimpse a primeval, disappearing humanity.

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