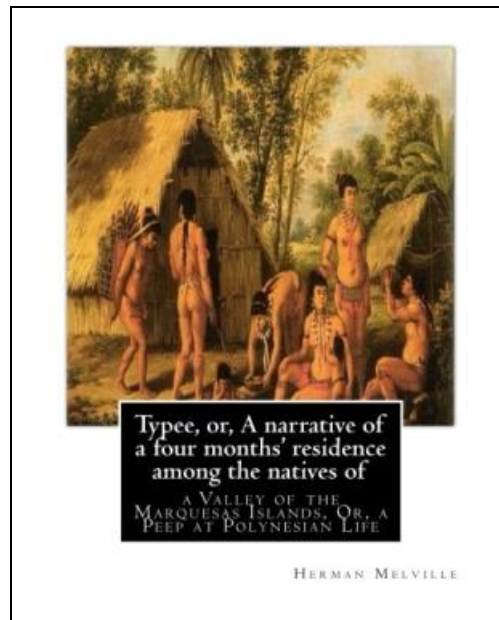


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Valley of the Marquesas Islands, Or, a Peep at Polynesian Life, by Herman
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Reviews

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TYPEE, OR, A NARRATIVE OF A FOUR MONTHS RESIDENCE AMONG THE NATIVES OF: VALLEY OF THE MARQUESAS ISLANDS, OR, A PEEP AT POLYNESIAN LIFE, BY HERMAN MELVILLE (TRAVEL LITERATURE) (PAPERBACK)

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Typee is in fact, neither literal autobiography nor pure fiction. Melville drew his material from his experiences, from his imagination, and from a variety of travel books when the memory of his experiences were inadequate. He departed from what actually happened in several ways, sometimes by extending factual incidents, sometimes by fabricating them, and sometimes by what one scholar calls outright lies. The actual one-month stay on which Typee is based is presented as four months in the narrative; there is no lake on the actual island on which Melville might have canoed with the lovely Fayaway, and the ridge which Melville describes climbing after escaping the ship he may actually have seen in an engraving. He drew extensively on contemporary accounts by Pacific explorers to add to what might otherwise have been a straightforward story of escape, capture, and re-escape. Most American reviewers accepted the story as authentic, though it provoked disbelief among some British readers. Two years after the novel's publication, many of the events described therein were corroborated by Melville's fellow castaway, Richard Tobias Toby Greene. Typee may have provided the writers Louis Becke, Jack London, and Robert Louis Stevenson with the themes and images of the Pacific experience: cannibalism, colonialism, cultural absorption, exoticism, natural plenty and beauty, and a perceived simplicity of native lifestyle, desires and motives. The inaugural book of the Library of America series, titled Typee, Omoo, Mardi (May 6, 1982), was a volume containing Typee: A Peep at Polynesian Life, its sequel Omoo: A Narrative of Adventures in the South Seas (1847), and Mardi, and a Voyage Thither (1849). Herman Melville (August 1, 1819 - September 28, 1891) was an American novelist, short story writer,...



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