

Life in a MAASAI VILLAGE



MAASAI VILLAGES ARE DOTTED THROUGHOUT KENYA AND TANZANIA. HERE YOU CAN SEE THE MAASAI PEOPLE, TENDING THEIR CATTLE AND TAKING PART IN THE MANY DIFFERENT TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS THAT ARE IMPORTANT IN MAASAI SOCIETY.

Cattle and land have always been important in Maasai life, and still are today. Even a typical Maasai greeting is 'I hope your cattle flourish'. Cattle supply the Maasai people with meat, milk and blood – and a man's wealth is measured by the number of cattle he has.

Of the many ceremonies in Maasai life, perhaps the best known is the blood-letting ceremony. This celebrates a boy becoming a young adult. At this ceremony, the blood of a young bull is collected in a special container. It is mixed with milk and then the young boy drinks it.

Lion hunting and cattle raiding once took place in Maasai society but this is not allowed any more. Instead, the young Maasai warriors hold spectacular mock battles using sticks and branches as their weapons.

1 Mount Kilimanjaro overlooks some of the Maasai villages. The Maasai settled on the plains around Kilimanjaro about 400 years ago. They depend on the land and their cattle to survive, so the Maasai look after both of them well.



WHAT A FANTASTIC VIEW OF THE MOUNTAIN!

2 Maasai parents encourage their children to learn how to herd cattle. The children pretend to be herdsman when they play.



YOU'RE A NATURAL WITH ANIMALS!

4 When childhood passes, the young men become moran (junior warriors). At this time, they grow and plait their hair and regularly smear red ochre (a type of clay) over their faces.



3 In a special blood-letting ceremony young boys drink the blood of cattle.



I THINK I'M GETTING THE HANG OF THIS.

5 When a boy enters the ranks of the moran he goes to live in a special camp called a manyatta. Here the new recruits discover what's expected of a Maasai warrior. After some time the junior warriors join the senior warriors.



LOOK! ONE OF THE SENIOR WARRIORS IS WATCHING US. DO YOU THINK WE'RE DOING OK?

AAAH! I REMEMBER COMING TO CAMP AT THEIR AGE - I COULDN'T WAIT TO SHOW THE OTHER WARRIORS WHAT A GOOD FIGHTER I WAS.



LET'S HOPE WE SELL HUNDREDS TOO. COME ON, IT'S TIME TO GO TO THE MARKET.

WE'VE MADE HUNDREDS OF NECKLACES THIS WEEK.

6 The Maasai women make very colourful beadwork necklaces to sell at the local market. Beaded necklaces are not just worn for decoration, the number of necklaces worn by a Maasai woman can show if she is married or has any children.

7 Maasai women renew the roof surfacing on Maasai huts with dung to protect the huts from harsh weather conditions.



HURRY! HURRY! LOOK AT THOSE GIANT THUNDERCLOUDS!

THIS WILL KEEP THE RAIN OUT.

9 At the end of the day, the moran often dance the adumu. This traditional dance is full of energetic jumping movements and is said to celebrate old battles and the deeds of brave men.

8 Although mock battles have now replaced real ones, the Maasai still wear traditional headdresses when they fight.



WOW! WHAT'S THE RECORD FOR THE HIGHEST JUMP?

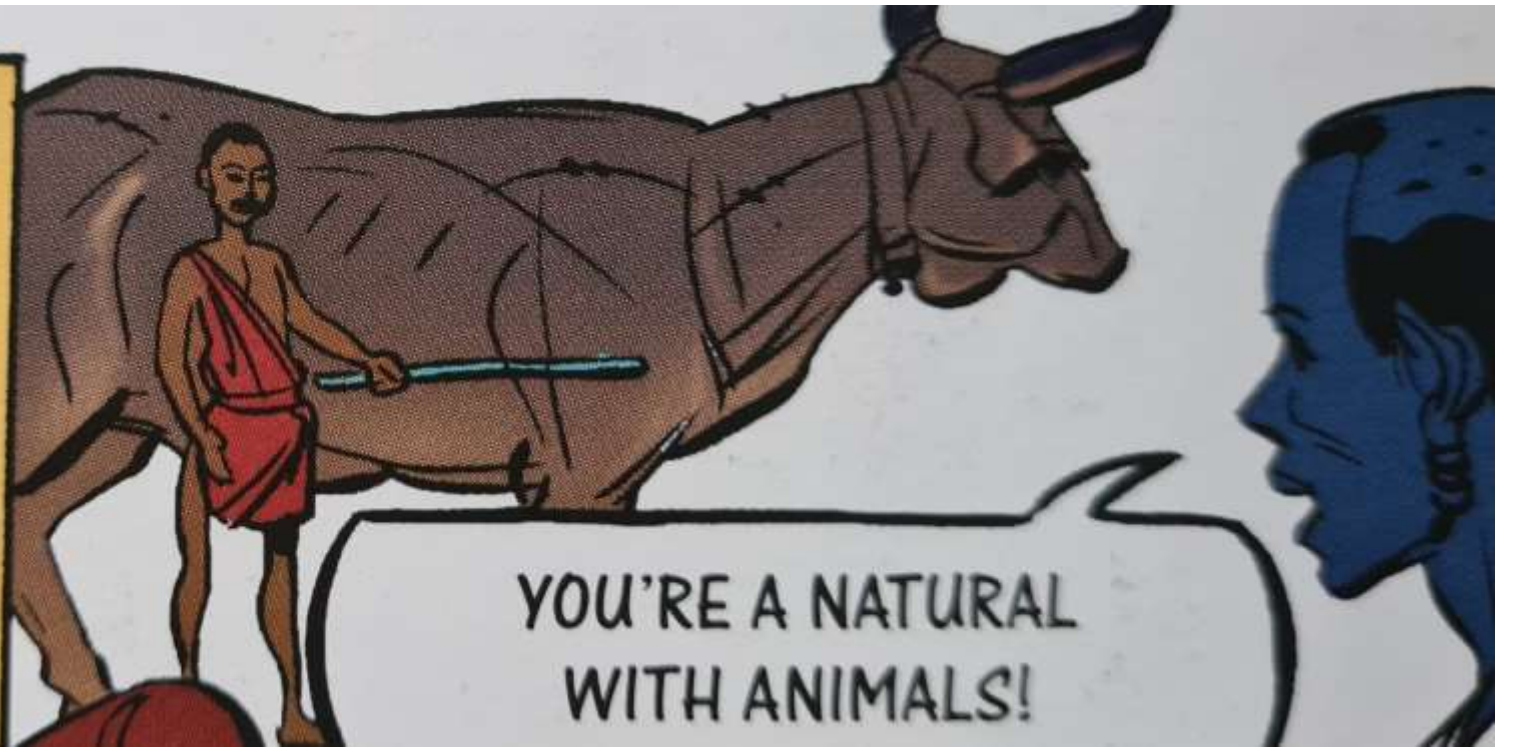
I DON'T KNOW, BUT I THINK HE'S JUST ABOUT TO BREAK IT!

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