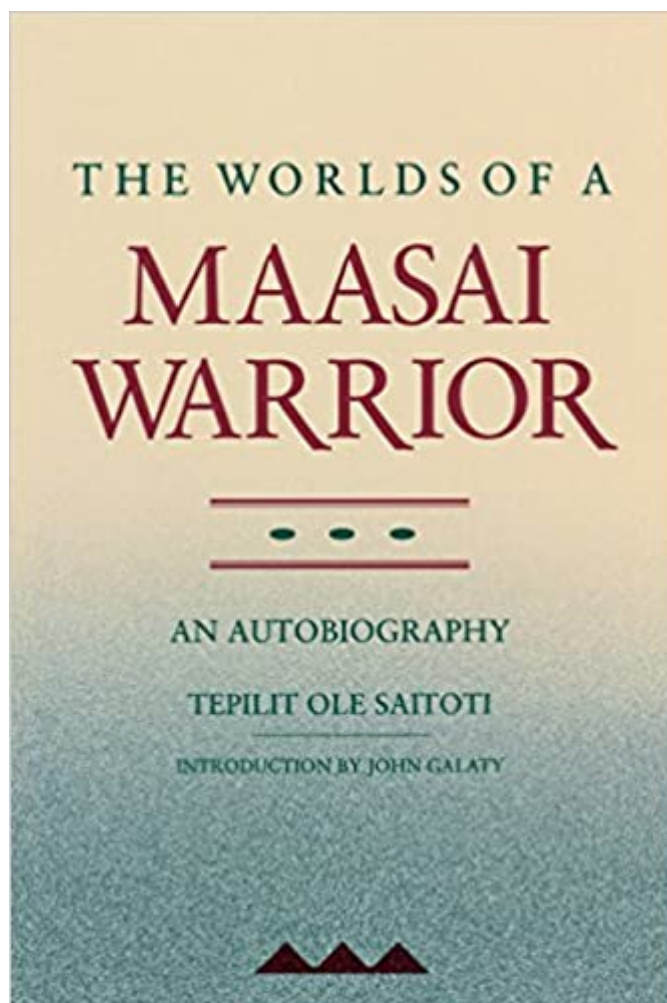


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# The Worlds Of A Maasai Warrior: An Autobiography



## Synopsis

An autobiographical memoir revealing the traditional childhood, adolescence, and coming of age in Maasailand also documents the author's life on the plains of the Serengeti and his education and experiences as he journeyed to Europe and America

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The author of *Maasai* (LJ 10/15/80) now offers his life story: from his birth into a traditional society in Tanzania in 1949, through his youth, education in a mission school, and initiation as a warrior, to his career as a game park guide and ranger (subject of a National Geographic film, *Man of the Serengeti*); to his studies in Munich and Boston and at the University of Michigan (where he received an M.S. in natural resources), to his return home, to be received back ritually into his family. Although Masai life has been much described, this personal view is particularly interesting. Accessibly presented, this is recommended for area collections and any library where there is interest in culture contact or the black experience. Elizabeth A. Widenmann, Columbia Univ. Libs. Copyright 1985 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

"The author of *Maasai* (LJ 10/15/80) now offers his life story: from his birth into a traditional society in Tanzania in 1949, through his youth, education in a mission school, and initiation as a warrior, to his career as a game park guide and ranger (subject of a National Geographic film, *Man of the Serengeti*); to his studies in Munich and Boston and at the University of Michigan (where he received an M.S. in natural resources), to his return home, to be received back ritually into his

family. Although Masai life has been much described, this personal view is particularly interesting. Accessibly presented, this is recommended for area collections and any library where there is interest in culture contact or the black experience."--Elizabeth A. Widenmann, Columbia Univ. Libs. Copyright 1985 Reed Business Information, Inc. "An autobiography of a young man whose life to date has spanned the African veldt, the old world of Europe, and the hectic cities of America. We have already run across Saitoti, both in print (as author of *Maasai*) and on TV (as "the man from Serengeti" in the National Geographic documentary of the same name). In both efforts, the author documented the vanishing cultures of the people who inhabit the Great Rift Valley between Kenya and Tanzania. Now, Saitoti tells how he personally faced the challenges brought on by exposure to new ways and cultures. After a slow start, the author picks up the pace as he describes his feelings upon being sent away by his father to school--the only member of his family to be so chosen. . . . All in all, Saitoti's book is as interesting for what it tells us about ourselves as about him. Saitoti is no great writer, but the rare glimpse into a fabled tribe and a collision of cultures is worth enduring craft deficiencies."--Kirkus

Since I was travelling to Tanzania I wanted to familiarize myself with the culture of one of the largest and strongest tribes in the area. This book did not disappoint. I was even reading it while being in the exact places he described - it was an amazing experience. The book is written well, the story and culture are very interesting, and very true. When I met people of the Maasai tribe, I felt I understood them much better having read this book before hand.

I read Tepilit Ole Saitoti's *The Worlds of a Maasai Warrior* because I was so impressed with several books I read on the life of pygmies. The Maasai is another proud race that is disappearing, trampled by the march of so-called civilization. How other people live in the arms of nature while I'm snug and hidden in my man-made home with my store-bought food amazes me. Tepilit grew up on the African Serengeti, drinking milk for breakfast, herding cows all day, and feeling lucky to have food for dinner. He was happy-content. He didn't feel put upon or less than the city folk in their cars and clothes. He led what we would call a simple life, one which he considered complete, filled with the natural wonder of nature's flora and fauna. Somehow, hard to say how it happened, but he grew to love learning. This passion for education led him to the western world and a Bachelors, then a Masters. I'm not sure if they made him happier-I think not-or if he just changed, became more civilized in a Western sense, with no negative connotations to that observation. The books ends with his plea, "The only key that can now open locked doors is education. The Maasai once resisted

education, afraid of losing their children. Now... the Maasai have come to accept it."I didn't realize the Maasai had a reputation as warriors until I read Tepilit's autobiography. When their youth grow to adulthood, they aspire to the warrior class. Not because they fight the enemy anymore, or enter in battle with their foe, but for the same reasons many of our youth join the military. The uniform of a warrior marks the individual as strong and competent, which is a worthy designation for mature males. Overall, I would recommend this to anyone wishing to understand how to be happy in life. Tepilit makes it clear that it's not our western culture or anything that rhymes with 'money' that brings happiness. Rather, it's an intrinsic quality within us, a pride in who we are and from where we came. I wonder how many of us are as lucky as Tepilit Ole Saitoti.

Very interesting story of a unique personal journey, with insightful glimpses into Masai culture and thinking along the way. The conclusion left me hanging a bit, though. The author does a great job of delineating the problem, i.e., the need for Masai culture to better adapt to the ever-advancing modernization of East Africa. Other than advocating generally for better education, though, he really does not offer much thought or attention to moving the ball forward. Still, an easy and worthwhile read that left me with greater respect and appreciation for the Masai and provoked further thinking about the challenges they face in the 21st century.

About a man and his people standing between two worlds! Truly thought provoking and Africa in microcosm! A tiger by the tail and that is no exaggeration!

Easy read that was suggested to me as my daughters were going to Tanzania and would spend some time with the Massai Warriors. They returned saying the people were so loving and lived simple lives and truly affected them. Seeing such a different culture gives you a way of thinking you've never had before and affects how you think about this life.

My daughter is going to Tanzania this summer. She is going with a group called Global Leadership Adventures. Since she is staying in Moshi near the Maasai tribe, the GLA people recommend that she read this book. She LOVED it! She was very intrigued by the life and customs of the people. She now feels like she is going to Tanzania much more informed than before!

Very interesting account of the day to day life of a Maasai warrior. The author gets a bit wrapped up in himself, but otherwise a very interesting read.

Excellent Autobiography. Gives you a good sense of what its like to be a Masai growing up in a traditional family, then trying to fit in the modern world

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