

history of queen amina

The Remarkable History of Queen Amina: Warrior Queen of Zazzau

history of queen amina is a fascinating journey into the life of one of Africa's most legendary figures. Known for her bravery, military prowess, and leadership, Queen Amina's story has inspired generations and continues to be a symbol of strength and empowerment. As a warrior queen from the Hausa city-state of Zazzau (modern-day Zaria in Nigeria), her legacy is deeply woven into West African history, culture, and folklore. Let's explore the captivating history of Queen Amina, her rise to power, her achievements, and why her story remains relevant today.

The Origins and Early Life of Queen Amina

Before diving into the remarkable achievements of Queen Amina, it's important to understand her background and the historical context of her era. Queen Amina was born in the 16th century into the royal family of Zazzau, one of the prominent Hausa city-states in what is now northern Nigeria. While exact dates of her birth and reign remain debated among historians, oral traditions and written records agree on her influential role in shaping the region's political and military landscape.

Amina was the daughter of King Nikatau, the ruler of Zazzau. From a young age, she displayed traits that set her apart—courage, intelligence, and a keen interest in matters of state and warfare. In a society where women were often relegated to domestic roles, Amina's ambitions and talents challenged conventions, paving the way for her eventual rise.

The Hausa Kingdom and Its Significance

To appreciate Queen Amina's impact, one must understand the Hausa Kingdom system. The Hausa

people were organized into several city-states, each ruled by a king or queen. These city-states, including Kano, Katsina, and Zazzau, were vibrant centers of commerce, culture, and political power. They played critical roles in trans-Saharan trade, connecting West Africa to North Africa and beyond.

Zazzau, Amina's domain, was particularly important due to its strategic location and military strength. It was a hub for trade in goods like leather, textiles, and kola nuts, and it maintained complex relationships with neighboring states. The need to protect these interests often placed leaders in constant conflict, creating an environment where military leadership was highly valued.

The Rise of Queen Amina: From Princess to Warrior Queen

Queen Amina's ascent to power is marked by her transformation from a princess into a formidable warrior and leader. According to legend, after the death of her brother, she took the throne, although some accounts suggest she initially served as a regent before becoming queen in her own right.

What sets the history of Queen Amina apart is her unique approach to leadership. Unlike many rulers who focused solely on governance, Amina personally led military campaigns, expanding her territory and influence. Her reign is often characterized by her strategic mind and fearless nature on the battlefield.

Military Innovations and Conquests

One of the most celebrated aspects of Queen Amina's history is her military exploits. She is credited with leading numerous successful campaigns that expanded the Zazzau kingdom's borders significantly. Under her command, the kingdom's army grew stronger and better organized.

Notably, Queen Amina is believed to have:

- Built defensive walls around Zazzau and other conquered cities to protect them from invasions, some of which still stand today as a testament to her legacy.
- Incorporated cavalry units into her army, which enhanced mobility and effectiveness in warfare.
- Extended trade routes, securing control over important commercial centers in the region.

Her conquests stretched across much of what is now northern Nigeria, and her military campaigns helped establish Zazzau as a dominant power among the Hausa city-states.

The Legend of Amina's Sword and Armor

Part of the allure surrounding Queen Amina comes from the vivid tales of her personal involvement in battles. Oral histories describe her wearing armor and wielding a sword, riding ahead of her troops into combat. This image of a warrior queen was rare for the time and region, making her a symbol of female strength and leadership.

Her sword, sometimes referred to as a symbol of justice and protection, has become emblematic of her courage. While it's uncertain whether the sword itself has been preserved, the stories continue to inspire cultural representations, including statues and artwork in Nigeria and beyond.

Queen Amina's Cultural and Political Legacy

The history of Queen Amina is not only about military might but also about her lasting influence on culture, governance, and gender roles in West Africa.

Impact on Women's Roles and Leadership

Queen Amina's reign challenged traditional gender norms, demonstrating that women could lead with strength and wisdom in male-dominated societies. Her legacy paved the way for greater recognition of women in leadership roles, both historically and in modern times.

Many African feminists and scholars cite Queen Amina as an early example of female empowerment, often using her story to encourage girls and women to pursue their ambitions regardless of societal constraints.

Architectural Contributions

The walls Queen Amina is said to have constructed around Zazzau's capital and other towns were more than just military fortifications. They symbolized order, protection, and the prosperity of the kingdom. The remnants of these walls, known as the "Amina Walls," still exist and attract historians and tourists alike, offering tangible links to the history of Queen Amina's reign.

Influence on Hausa Culture and Oral Tradition

Queen Amina's story is deeply embedded in Hausa oral tradition, passed down through generations by griots and storytellers. These narratives not only preserve her history but also serve as lessons on bravery, leadership, and justice.

Her legend has inspired numerous cultural expressions, including poetry, music, and festivals, ensuring that her memory remains alive within the community and beyond.

Modern Recognition and Celebration of Queen Amina

In recent years, the history of Queen Amina has gained renewed interest both in Africa and internationally. She is celebrated as a national heroine in Nigeria and recognized as a symbol of African pride and female empowerment.

Statues and Monuments

Several statues and monuments have been erected to honor Queen Amina's legacy. The most famous is the life-sized statue in Zaria, Nigeria, which depicts her in full battle attire, sword in hand. This monument serves as a powerful reminder of her contributions and inspires visitors to learn more about her story.

Representation in Media and Literature

Queen Amina's life has been the subject of books, documentaries, and films, each exploring different facets of her story. These works aim to bring her history to a wider audience and highlight her role in African history.

Educational programs in Nigeria and other parts of Africa often include lessons about Queen Amina, emphasizing her importance as a historical figure who defied the odds.

Inspiration for Contemporary Leadership

Today, Queen Amina's story is frequently invoked by leaders and activists advocating for gender equality and women's participation in politics and the military. Her example shows that leadership qualities transcend gender and that determination and skill can break barriers.

Understanding the Historical Context: Myths and Facts

While the history of Queen Amina is compelling, it's important to approach it with a critical eye, distinguishing between myth and documented history.

Challenges in Historical Documentation

Most of what we know about Queen Amina comes from oral traditions, which can sometimes blend fact with legend. Written records from the 16th century in the region are scarce, making it difficult to verify every detail.

Historians continue to research and debate aspects of her life, including the extent of her conquests and the exact timeline of her reign.

The Role of Oral Tradition in Preserving History

Despite the challenges, oral tradition remains a vital source of African history. It reflects the values and perspectives of the communities that keep these stories alive. Queen Amina's narrative has been preserved this way, ensuring that her legacy endures even in the absence of extensive written records.

Balancing Legend with Historical Analysis

Modern historians try to balance the legendary elements of Queen Amina's story with archaeological findings and comparative historical data. This balanced approach helps deepen our understanding of her significance and the era in which she lived.

Exploring the history of Queen Amina not only enriches our knowledge of African history but also

highlights the power of storytelling in shaping cultural identity.

Queen Amina's remarkable journey from a royal princess to a warrior queen encapsulates the spirit of resilience and leadership. Her story continues to inspire countless individuals, reminding us that history is full of extraordinary figures who defy expectations and leave lasting legacies.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who was Queen Amina?

Queen Amina was a 16th-century Hausa warrior queen of the city-state Zazzau (now Zaria) in present-day Nigeria, renowned for her military prowess and expansion of her kingdom.

When did Queen Amina rule Zazzau?

Queen Amina is believed to have ruled Zazzau during the mid-16th century, though exact dates vary among historians.

What is Queen Amina famous for in history?

Queen Amina is famous for her military leadership, expansion of the Zazzau kingdom, building fortified city walls, and promoting trade across West Africa.

How did Queen Amina contribute to the expansion of her kingdom?

Queen Amina led numerous military campaigns that expanded Zazzau's territory, extending its influence over several neighboring regions and establishing control over important trade routes.

What role did Queen Amina play in Hausa culture?

Queen Amina is celebrated as a symbol of strength and leadership in Hausa culture, inspiring many through her achievements as a female warrior and ruler.

Are there any historical monuments associated with Queen Amina?

Yes, several ancient city walls in Zaria, Nigeria, are attributed to Queen Amina's efforts to fortify her kingdom and protect it from invasions.

How is Queen Amina depicted in folklore and oral tradition?

In folklore, Queen Amina is often depicted as a fearless warrior queen who rode into battle, leading her troops and embodying bravery and strategic genius.

What impact did Queen Amina have on women's roles in leadership?

Queen Amina challenged traditional gender roles by becoming a powerful military leader and ruler, paving the way for recognition of women's capabilities in leadership within her society.

How is Queen Amina remembered today in modern Nigeria?

Queen Amina is remembered as a national heroine in Nigeria, celebrated in literature, art, and history for her contributions to the cultural heritage and history of the Hausa people.

Additional Resources

****The History of Queen Amina: Warrior, Leader, and Legend of Zazzau****

History of Queen Amina is a compelling narrative that intertwines the realms of myth, history, and African heritage. Revered as a warrior queen of the Hausa city-state of Zazzau (modern-day Zaria in Nigeria), Amina's legacy has transcended centuries, inspiring generations with her leadership, military prowess, and strategic acumen. This article delves into the historical context of Queen Amina, examining her role within the Hausa states, the socio-political climate of her era, and the enduring impact of her reign.

Origins and Historical Context of Queen Amina

Queen Amina's story is deeply rooted in the Hausa culture of West Africa, particularly in the 15th and 16th centuries. She was born into the royal family of Zazzau, one of the seven original Hausa city-states known for their trade networks and military strength. The Hausa states were strategically positioned along trans-Saharan trade routes, facilitating the exchange of goods like gold, salt, and textiles. This economic backdrop set the stage for political power struggles and territorial expansions.

Historical records about Queen Amina are sparse and often intertwined with oral traditions, making it challenging to separate fact from legend. However, most historical interpretations agree that her reign marked a period of territorial expansion and military innovation for Zazzau. She is credited with transforming the city-state into a dominant regional power, extending its influence over neighboring territories.

Queen Amina's Ascension and Governance

The pathway to Amina's leadership was unconventional for her time. Traditionally, Hausa leadership was male-dominated, but Amina emerged as a formidable figure who commanded respect and authority. She is believed to have ascended to power following the death of her father, King Bakwa Turunku. Unlike her predecessors, Amina was not content with passive rule; she actively engaged in military campaigns and administration.

Her governance is often described as a blend of diplomacy and military strategy. Amina fortified the city of Zazzau with walls, known as the Amina Walls, which later became symbolic of her reign. These fortifications not only protected the city but also demonstrated the strategic foresight and engineering capabilities under her leadership. Her ability to maintain control over a diverse and expanding territory speaks to her political acumen.

Military Achievements and Expansion

Queen Amina's military exploits are central to the history of Queen Amina and have cemented her status as one of Africa's most celebrated female warriors. She is said to have led numerous military expeditions to expand Zazzau's territory and influence. These campaigns extended the Hausa domain, incorporating regions that are now parts of Niger and other neighboring areas.

Her military strategies included the use of cavalry, advanced weaponry for the time, and the establishment of fortified outposts. This enabled Zazzau not only to defend its borders but also to project power effectively. The Amina Walls, stretching over 30 kilometers, were both a defensive measure and a symbol of this expansionist policy.

The Role of Women in Hausa Society and Amina's Unique Position

The history of Queen Amina cannot be examined without understanding the broader role of women in Hausa society. While women in the Hausa states were often involved in commerce and local governance, military leadership was rare. Amina's rise challenged social norms and demonstrated that leadership qualities transcended gender roles.

Her story has been celebrated as an example of female empowerment, illustrating how women could navigate and influence the male-dominated spheres of politics and warfare. This aspect of her legacy continues to resonate in contemporary discussions about gender roles in African history and leadership.

Legacy and Cultural Significance

Queen Amina's legacy is multifaceted, encompassing historical, cultural, and symbolic dimensions. The Amina Walls still stand as a testament to her reign and are considered one of the architectural

marvels of pre-colonial Africa. These walls not only protected Zazzau but also symbolize the strength and resilience of Hausa civilization.

In Nigerian and broader African culture, Queen Amina is revered as a symbol of strength, courage, and leadership. Her story is taught in schools, celebrated in festivals, and depicted in various art forms. She has become a figure of national pride and a reminder of the rich history of African women leaders.

Historical Debates and Modern Interpretations

Despite her legendary status, historians debate the accuracy of various accounts surrounding Queen Amina. Some scholars argue that her story has been romanticized over time, blending facts with folklore. The paucity of contemporary written records from the period means much of what is known comes from oral histories and later chronicles.

Modern historians approach the history of Queen Amina with a critical eye, analyzing archaeological evidence, Hausa chronicles, and comparative historical methods. This approach helps to differentiate the probable historical facts from embellishments while acknowledging the importance of oral tradition in preserving her story.

Comparative Analysis: Queen Amina and Other Female Leaders

When placed in a broader African and global context, Queen Amina's story parallels other notable female leaders who broke gender barriers. For instance, her military leadership is reminiscent of figures like Nzinga of Ndongo and Matamba in Angola or the Dahomey Amazons of Benin. These women similarly combined governance with military prowess in male-dominated societies.

Comparing Queen Amina to these leaders highlights common themes of resilience, strategic innovation, and the ability to command loyalty in complex political environments. It also underscores

the diversity of female leadership models across Africa's rich history.

Queen Amina in Popular Culture and Education

Today, the history of Queen Amina is integral to Nigerian education and popular culture. Textbooks often highlight her as an exemplary leader, emphasizing her contributions to Hausa history and the broader narrative of African civilization. Documentaries, novels, and films have also portrayed her life, bringing her story to a global audience.

Her image is frequently used in campaigns promoting women's rights and leadership in Africa, illustrating how historical figures can inspire contemporary social movements. This ongoing cultural relevance ensures that Queen Amina's legacy remains vibrant and influential.

Preservation Efforts and Tourism

The physical remnants of Queen Amina's reign, particularly the Amina Walls, have become significant tourist attractions. Efforts to preserve these ancient structures are critical for cultural heritage and education. Preservation projects focus on maintaining the walls and promoting awareness about their historical significance.

Tourism linked to Queen Amina's legacy contributes to local economies and fosters a deeper appreciation of Nigeria's pre-colonial history. It also encourages scholarly research and international interest in African history.

The history of Queen Amina remains a dynamic field of study, blending legend with historical inquiry. Her life challenges traditional narratives, showcasing the complexity and richness of African leadership and gender roles in history. As new archaeological findings and scholarly research emerge, the story

of Queen Amina continues to evolve, offering valuable insights into the past and inspiration for future generations.

History Of Queen Amina

history of queen amina: IAM Queen Amina Amina Phelps, 2020-11-22 I Am Royalty a series created to tell the historical stories unheard, presents, I Am Queen Amina. Queen Amina of Zaria was the first woman to become the Queen in a male-dominated society. She expanded the territory of the Hausa people of north Africa to its largest borders in history.

history of queen amina: *Gifts for Queen Amina - African Songhay and Hausa Kingdoms* Lyn Reese, 1990-03-01

history of queen amina: Queen Latifah Amy Ruth, 2001-01-01 A biography of the young woman who rose from humble beginnings in New Jersey to become a popular rap singer, actress, and role model.

history of queen amina: **The Political Economy of Colonialism and Nation-Building in Nigeria** Samuel Ojo Oloruntoba, 2021-09-28 This book examines the ways in which colonialism continues to define the political economy of Nigeria sixty years after gaining political independence from the British. It also establishes a link between colonialism and the continued agitation for restructuring the political arrangement of the country. The contributions offer various perspectives on how the forceful amalgamation of disparate units and diverse nationalities have undermined the realization of the development potential of Nigeria. The book is divided into two parts. The first part interrogates the political economy of colonialism and the implications of this on economic development in contemporary Nigeria. The second part examines nation-building, governance, and development in a postcolonial state. The failure of the postcolonial political elites to ensure inclusive governance has continued to foster centrifugal and centripetal forces that question the legitimacy of the state. The forces have deepened calls for secession, accentuated conflicts and predispose the country to possible disintegration. A new government approach is required that would ensure equal representation, access to power and equitable distribution of resources.

history of queen amina: **The Cambridge History of Africa** J. D. Fage, Roland Oliver, 1975

history of queen amina: **Patriarchy and Gender in Africa** Veronica Fynn Bruey, 2021-03-25 This timely and expansive multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary collection dissects precolonial, colonial, and post-independence issues of male dominance, power, and control over the female body in the legal, socio-cultural, and political contexts in Africa. Contributors focus on the historical, theoretical, and empirical narratives of intersecting perspectives of gender and patriarchy in at least ten countries across the major sub-regions of the African continent. In these well-researched chapters, authors provide a deeper understanding of patriarchy and gender inequality in identifying misogyny, resisting male supremacy, reforming discriminatory laws, embracing human-centered public policies, expanding academic scholarship on the continent, and more.

history of queen amina: *Queen of Zazzau* J.S. Emuakpor, 2018-11-20 African history as you've never read it before. A warrior queen. A capricious god. A kingdom hanging in the balance. As foreign invaders close in on her kingdom, Amina must prove herself worthy of the crown. She is the only thing standing between her people and their downfall. Caught in a web of prophecies and intrigue, she must defend Zazzau, but cannot do so if she wants to prevent the future that was foretold. Unwilling to be the plaything of gods or men and determined to take control of her own destiny, she seeks out the god of war himself. But is her future already written or can she choose her own fate? And can she protect her kingdom, no matter what price she must ultimately pay?

Captivating and sensual, *Queen of Zazzau* chronicles the journey of real-life West African queen, Amina of Zazzau. Through a rich tapestry of African history, folklore, myth, and magic, the story brings a legendary woman to life. Beloved of the gods or cursed by their attentions, Amina struggles not only to protect her people, but to maintain her humanity in the wake of destruction. To become the savior that her kingdom needs. If you enjoy epic adventures and strong female characters, *Queen of Zazzau* is a must-read. ☐☐Winner of the 2020 NC Author Project☐☐ Mature content

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history of queen amina: *Dictionary of African Biography* Emmanuel Kwaku Akyeampong, Professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr., 2012-02-02 From the Pharaohs to Fanon, *Dictionary of African Biography* provides a comprehensive overview of the lives of the men and women who shaped Africa's history. Unprecedented in scale, DAB covers the whole continent from Tunisia to South Africa, from Sierra Leone to Somalia. It also encompasses the full scope of history from Queen Hatsheput of Egypt (1490-1468 BC) and Hannibal, the military commander and strategist of Carthage (243-183 BC), to Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana (1909-1972), Miriam Makeba and Nelson Mandela of South Africa (1918 -).

history of queen amina: *1775 - Overlooked Heroines: Women Soldiers, Spies, and Humanitarians in the American Revolutionary War* Juanita Stellato Maldonado, 2023-07-11 About the Book *1775: Overlooked Heroines* focuses entirely on ordinary women who broke away from their social constraints to become soldiers, spies, and heroines in the American Revolutionary War. These women physically fought for America to be free from colonial imperialism, but yet society fails to recant their names. The historical narrative of women's involvement in the Revolutionary War must be corrected. This book will tell the heroic stories of women not commonly studied and remove the myth that women only maintained their domestic duties, organized fundraising, and protested the non-importation of British goods. *1775: Overlooked Heroines* fills in the gaps of history and places these women back into the historical narrative, whose names are less celebrated and are overshadowed or misattributed simply because they are women. About the Author Juanita Stellato Maldonado personally believes in community involvement. She involves her community in her life by having barbecues in her driveway every weekend during summertime. Her hobbies include collecting 17th- to 18th-century American Revolutionary War books and family genealogy; she can go back seven generations on her mother's side. Besides, the more family you have, the more chances you will be invited for dinner. Juanita was a single mother for fifteen years. She must have done something right, because one daughter is a deputy and the other is in the Air Force. Ten years ago, Juanita married a wonderful man who puts up with her sarcastic humor.

history of queen amina: *Nigeria, Nationalism, and Writing History* Toyin Falola, Saheed Aderinto, 2010 The second half of the 20th century saw the publication of massive amounts of literature on Nigeria by Nigerian and non-Nigerian historians. This volume reflects on that literature, focusing on those works by Nigerians in the context of the rise and the decline of African nationalist historiography.

history of queen amina: *The Routledge Companion to Black Women's Cultural Histories* Janell Hobson, 2021-03-16 In the social and cultural histories of women and feminism, Black women have long been overlooked or ignored. *The Routledge Companion to Black Women's Cultural Histories* is an impressive and comprehensive reference work for contemporary scholarship on the cultural histories of Black women across the diaspora spanning different eras from ancient times into the twenty-first century. Comprising over 30 chapters by a team of international contributors, the Companion is divided into five parts: A fragmented past, an inclusive future Contested histories, subversive memories Gendered lives, racial frameworks Cultural shifts, social change Black

identities, feminist formations Within these sections, a diverse range of women, places, and issues are explored, including ancient African queens, Black women in early modern European art and culture, enslaved Muslim women in the antebellum United States, Sally Hemings, Phillis Wheatley, Black women writers in early twentieth-century Paris, Black women, civil rights, South African apartheid, and sexual violence and resistance in the United States in recent history. The Routledge Companion to Black Women's Cultural Histories is essential reading for students and researchers in Gender Studies, History, Africana Studies, and Cultural Studies.

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history of queen amina: Studies in Islamic History and Civilization M. Sharon, 2023-09-29

history of queen amina: *Women Engaged in War in Literature for Youth* Hilary S. Crew, 2007 *Women at War* portrays books and other resources that feature girls, young women, and adult women actively involved in various ways in battles, wars, and war-time activities, including their roles as nurses, doctors, spies, soldiers, correspondents, photographers, as well as their roles on the home front. Fiction, picture books, nonfiction, biographies, autobiographies, collective biographies, oral narratives, reference books, journal and periodical articles, and non-print and electronic resources are included. Teachers and librarians will find this to be an excellent curriculum-planning resource.

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history of queen amina: *Literature, History and Identity in Northern Nigeria* Tsiga, Ismaila A., Bhadmus, M.O., 2016-02-22 This unique collection of articles on literature in northern Nigeria is in three parts. Part one presents an overview of the running theme, in which Na'Allah explores the theoretical relationship between literature, history and identity in northern Nigeria, using the proverbial story of the blind man who holds a lamp while walking alone in the night. Similarly, Tsiga undertakes in a long bibliographical essay, a notable survey of the relationship between literature, history and identity in northern Nigeria, chronicling the development of life writing in the region dating back three hundred years. Part two focuses on the relationship between literature and history in northern Nigeria and begins with the article in which Illah investigates the theme. He uses the image of the bus to underscore the point he makes concerning the uniqueness of northern Nigerian

literature, which continues its journey, even without a spare tyre. Equally in this part, Balogun discusses Yerima's Attahiru, Ameh Oboni: The Great as theatres of colonial resistance; just as Methuselah also examines the heroism celebrated in Ahmed Yerima's Attahiru. Adamu revisits the trans-fictional use of the Grimm Brothers' tale in the early published Hausa written narratives, while Yunusa and Malumfashi examine similar historical concerns in Abubakar Imam and Sa'adu Zungur, respectively. This part concludes with Garba assessing the transformation of the written Hausa prose narratives into radio broadcasts; while Abiodun examines in a historiographic survey the various forms and composition of Ilorin music. In what might have been the scholar's last conference article before his sudden death, Nasidi, in Part three, opens the debate on literature and identity in northern Nigeria, eloquently theorising on the relationship with Foucault, his favourite philosopher. AbdulRaheem illustrates how the literature of the people of Ilorin is their identity marker, while Kazaure investigates the split character in Labo Yari's Man of the Moment. Ibrahim explores identity in marriage between migrants and natives in Kanchana Ugbabe's Soul Mates, while Aondofa investigates globalisation and indigenous television. Using Tiv film typology, like Aondofa, Sulaiman examines the use of diction in characterisation in the film industry. The third of the contributors on the film industry, AbdulBaqi, uses films shown on DSTV's African Magic channels to investigate matrimonial harmony in North Central Nigeria. Jaji revisits the antecedents and prospects in the relationship between prose and identity in northern Nigeria. Giwa offers a detailed investigation of Zaynab Alkali's The Initiates on gender politics. Similarly, Muhammad and Muhammad are concerned with identity and the gender politics in Bilkisu Abubakar's To Live Again and The Woman in Me. The last article in the book, jointly written by Yusuf, Anwonmeh and Agulonye, offers the only viewpoint on children's literature in northern Nigeria.

history of queen amina: Women Leaders of Africa, Asia, Middle East, and Pacific Guida M. Jackson, Guida Myrl Jackson-Laufer, 2009 Women Leaders of Africa, Asia, Middle East, and Pacific presents biographical sketches of hundreds of women leaders from earliest recorded history down to the present time. It is the first of two volumes giving data on women leaders from every continent and island in the world; the second volume deals with Europe and countries of the Western Hemisphere. Each book is divided into two sections. Part I of this volume deals with African women leaders; Part II with Asian, Middle East and Pacific women. Within each section, which is introduced by an essay overview, entries are arranged alphabetically. Suggestions for further reading on the subject appear at the end of each entry. Not all entries are merely recitations of facts. Some women's lives do not lend themselves to being reduced to statistics. Many were much too colorful, or lusty, or bloodthirsty to fit into a neat categorical description. How do you easily characterize the rule of the African queen who hacked her servant to death after she was through using him as a chair just to intimidate her new Portuguese overlord? Who kept as many as thirty slaves as sexual partners, supposedly killing them off when she had finished with them? How do you gloss over the actions of the newly enthroned Persian queen who ordered her stepbrother strangled, then had gold and silver coins struck bearing her new title: Purity of the earthly world and of the faith? How do you describe nicely the actions of the Chinese queen who chopped off her own hand to make a point to a man she had just condemned to death? How do you ascribe feminine traits to a grandmother who tried to kill her own grandson to keep him from succeeding her on the throne she herself had stolen? On the other hand, how do you do justice to the Queen of Tonga without mention of her commanding size six feet two inches or her forty-seven-year devotion to matters far beyond mere governance but of more importance to her subjects: like establishing handicraft outlets to market the wares of her people? Or to the Queen of Thailand who acted as Regent while the King, a devout Buddhist, performed his meditations and duties as a monk? She directed much more than affairs of state; her concern for the common people led her to promote the export of hand-woven Thai silk and to establish a chain of shops selling native crafts. She also organized the Thai Red Cross for aid to refugees, orphans, wounded soldiers, and flood victims. These and dozens of stories like them make African, Asian, Middle East, and Pacific Women Leaders a unique treasure that is hard to put down. Although most of the entries in this volume deal with women rulers, a portion of

the book is devoted to women in leadership roles other than those of queen, empress, prime minister, or chieftainess. Of these additional entries, the majority deals with contemporary women judges, secretaries of state, cabinet members, or legislators of unusual influence and power.

history of queen amina: African Literature and the Politics of Culture James Tar Tsaaio, 2013-11-01 This book essentially negotiates African literature as a veritable site of artistic and cultural production and situates it within the dynamic of postcolonial cultural politics. It critically evaluates African literature as a contour of cultural contestation with the imperial politics of knowledge production about others and as an ideological strategy for knowing them. The book's main contribution to the critical discourse on African literature and culture inheres in the fact that politics constitutes the enduring concern of society as it re/shapes and over-determines discourses which have continued to remain crucial to societal engineering. It, however, imagines the discursive existence as necessary for the evolving of a dynamic African literary tradition with an abiding fidelity to the verities of history. The book is useful for literary scholars, historians, critics, experts and students of postcolonial/cultural studies as well as general readership interested in African studies.

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