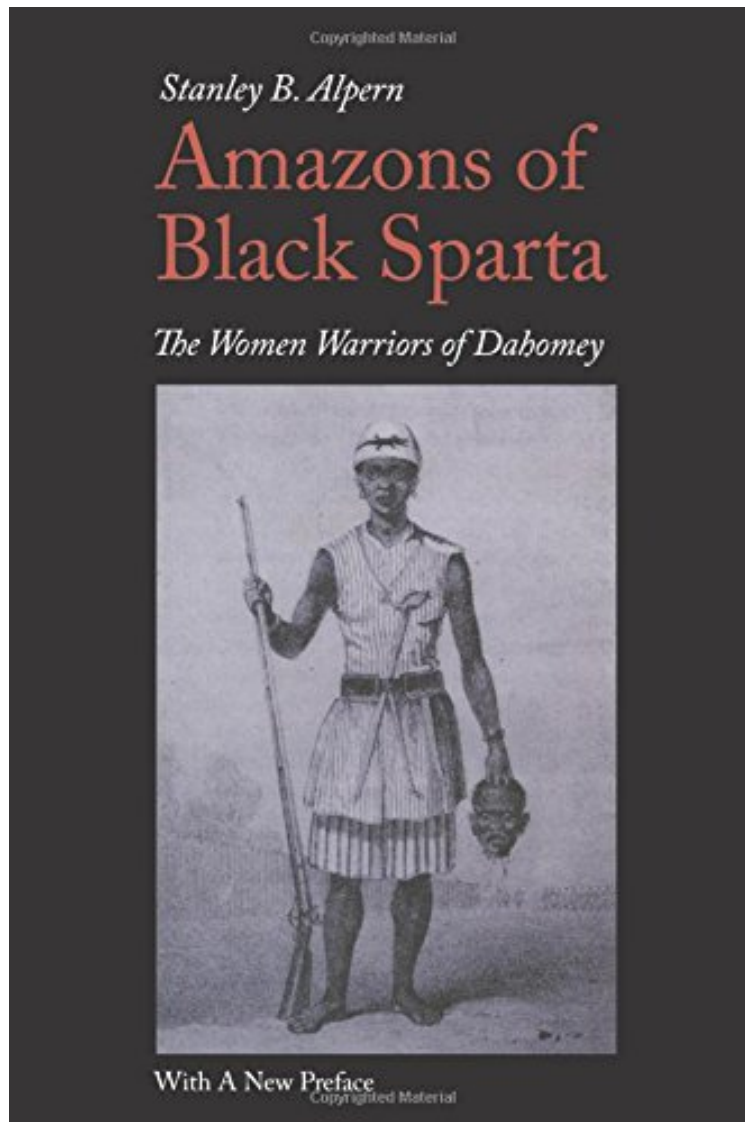


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Amazons of Black Sparta: The Women Warriors of Dahomey

Stanley B. Alpern

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Stanley B. Alpern : Amazons of Black Sparta: The Women Warriors of Dahomey before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Amazons of Black Sparta: The Women Warriors of Dahomey:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Inspiring and eye-opening By Customer I ordered this book to deepen my research on the s of the ancient African kingdom known as Dahomey. My earlier research barely scratched the surface of what this book reveals, and offers a look inside the lives of these women through the eyes of men who had

traveled through Dahomey as well as some oral traditions passed down through generations. These women were fierce: strong, merciless, and according to the sources, stronger and braver than the men! While some of the terms used may feel offensive to a modern day woman, the reader must keep in mind that the sources quoted are white men that lived in the 18th-19th centuries. Their views are prejudiced as well as sexist, but one must make allowances for the time in which these men existed. Most of them, while prejudiced, had to admit (even grudgingly) that these women were a force to be reckoned with. Some even called them 'beautiful' and awe-inspiring. I definitely gleaned more than enough from this book for my research and have become inspired by the strength of these women and the mark they made on history.

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. What A Pleasant Surprise
By Karen Tracie Newkirk
I've always been leery of ordering anything online. You know the usual fears of your private information being on the net or getting an item that's not up to par. However while visiting and surfing on , I found a book that I was just captivated by and had to purchase. The name of the book is: *Of Black Sparta, The Women Warriors Of Dahomey*. I find the subject matter in the book fascinating although the book itself reads a little bit like an encyclopedia. However the book consists of a lot of dates and historical facts that one might find interesting. And the history of African Women Warriors in a kingdom empire called Dahomey is a history that I know many people aren't familiar with. So for that alone this book is a little treasure. The book although slightly used arrived on time and in good condition and I am well pleased with those facts.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Disappointing
By Gene
I was expecting a much more insightful, engaging read than it is. It was a compilation of comments from people who observed these women without much real depth.

The only thoroughly documented Amazons in world history are the women warriors of Dahomey, an eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Western African kingdom. Once dubbed a small black Sparta, residents of Dahomey shared with the Spartans an intense militarism and sense of collectivism. Moreover, the women of both kingdoms prided themselves on bodies hardened from childhood by rigorous physical exercise. But Spartan women kept in shape to breed male warriors, Dahomean Amazons to kill them. Originally palace guards, the Amazons had evolved by the 1760s into professional troops armed mainly with muskets, machetes and clubs. By the 1840s their numbers had grown to 6,000. The Amazons served under female officers and had their own bands, flags and insignia: they outdrilled, outshot and outfought men, became frontline troops and fought tenaciously and with great valor till the kingdom's defeat by France in 1892. Updated with a new preface by the author, *Amazons of Black Sparta* is the product of meticulous archival research and Alpern's gift for narrative. It will stand as the most comprehensive and accessible account of the woman warriors of Dahomey.

Today they [the s] exist as no more than footnotes to history. Only one scholarly work has been written about these women, *s of Black Sparta* by Stanley B. Alpern and yet they made up a force that was the equal of every contemporary body of male elite soldiers from among the colonial powers. -Stieg Larsson, author of *The Girl Who Kicked the Hornets Nest*
Alpern does very well in assembling most of the evidence about these intimidating women whose courage impressed even the Foreign Legion. He produces a very detailed picture from a wide variety of European and African sources. -Richard Rathbone, *The Times*
About the Author
Stanley B. Alpern worked as a sub-editor for the *New York Herald Tribune* and then as a foreign service officer of the United States Information Agency for twenty-two years, two of which were spent in West Africa. He lives on the French Riviera.