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DANSOU Oroncia
Miss Leadership Bénin 2019

PORTRAIT



Being a leader does not depend on age or gender and even less on skin color

Born on May 16, 1997 in Akassato (Benin), DAN-SOU Oroncia Tagnon Crainds-Dieu is a Catholic Christian. Student at the end of social assistance training and event planner, her career dream and woman leader is to work to improve the living conditions of the most vulnerable strata in general but especially women and girls in particular. His experience in the Miss Leadership competition can be summarized as follows: The Miss leadership competition was a great adventure for me. I have developed many qualities there, the most important of which are: perseverance, solidarity, courage and above all the aggressiveness to surpass yourself in order to succeed. I congratulate all the candidates, my loved ones, all those who supported me and the organizing committee of this competition.

The Amazon that I am is ready to face the challenges of this world and share my experience with other young women.

THE *Amazons of Dahomey*

The story of these incredible women.

In the ancient Kingdom of Dahomey, today Benin, an army of warriors defies all clichés about women. Stronger and more valiant than men, they stop at nothing. Neither the enemy nor death. They are called Mino, the colonists give them the name of Amazon.

Source: Jeune Afrique





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«Win or die» is their adage. Shaved head, wearing a white cap decorated with blue caimans, they have a virile gait and a black look. In a hand-to-hand combat, their area of excellence, no man can resist. They do not pretend to equal them, men, they surpass them. «They» are the «Mino» («our mothers» in Fon), nicknamed the «Amazons of Dahomey» by Europeans, in reference to the myth of warrior women of antiquity. An army of women unique in the world in the 18th century. Historians struggle to precisely date their origin, but it is especially from the nineteenth century, under the reign of King Géo, that the military is structured to become the elite female unit of the king, swearing loyalty to him until to death.

A whole life dedicated to the defense of the king
Educated in combat, they dedicate their entire lives to the defense of the king and his kingdom. No question, therefore, of getting pregnant or having intimate relationships. They take vows of virginity. Once trained, they are divided according to their specialties: there are fusiliers, archeries, mowers, - known for their «gigantic razor», artillerymen, and finally hunters, an elite commando whose members are selected from among best killers.

On duty every other day, the warriors undergo a very hard daily physical training. Able to resist pain, they excel in the handling of weapons: «While a Dahomean soldier takes an average of 50 seconds to reload his rifle after firing, an» Amazon «performs the operation in thirty seconds», reports the explorer J. Foa.



Early feminists

Considering themselves stronger and more courageous than men, they advocate a reversal of values and the division of labor, claiming a form of over-feminism before the hour:

MEN, MEN, STAY! LET THE MEN REMAIN! LET THEM GROW CORN AND GROW THE PALM TREES US, WE GO TO WAR.

Known for their legendary ferocity, they are bloodthirsty, not hesitating to brandish the heads or other freshly cut organs of their opponents. The first time French soldiers faced it, on October 26, 1892, they couldn't believe their eyes.

First meeting with the colonial army

France declared war on the Kingdom of Dahomey (Kingdom of Danhomè, in Fon language), two years earlier. The official casus belli is a diplomatic incident, with accusations of «incivility» on the part of the indigenous population (cannibalism, polygamy, etc.). In reality, France wishes above all to enlarge its colonial domination in French Equatorial Africa.

This October 26, 1892, French soldiers marched on the Kingdom of Danhomè. When they reach 50 km from Abomey, after having decimated the first ranks of the regular army sent by King Gèzo, they are blocked by an entirely different army, equipped with rifles and knives: an army of women .



We are creating to defend, danhomè, this jar of honey, object of conviosity, can the country where flower so much courage abandon its riches to foreigners? We are alive, well crazy the people, who will try to impose his law

The fighting lasted four hours, but the relentlessness of the warriors would not get the better of the french armament, which was clearly superior. «Lebel bullets,» a soldier reports, «injure explosive bullets. The largest trees could not even provide shelter for our enemies. « Warriors are losing their strength, but would rather die than give in to the enemy. Conditioning, stronger than prejudice

General alfred dodds, at the head of the 3,000 french soldiers, will describe this day as «the deadliest» of his campaign. On november 17, 1892, abomey was taken by the french. The dahomean defeat marks the end of the «amazons», and with them, the end of the kingdom.

«Born to serve the purposes of a free state, the organization of women soldiers does not survive the disappearance of freedom,» concludes hélène d'almeida-topor, author of les amazones, an army of women in the pre-colonial africa, devoted to this army of women. These heroines have not left a feminist heritage in beninese society, but their existence «demonstrates that in any context, in this case in a polygamous and patriarchal society, well-conducted conditioning prevails over all cultural and social prejudices », underlines the historian.

Miss leadership, in the footsteps of the Amazons

The Benin Miss Leadership project is organized by INOV AGENCE supported by the NGO theSPACE which is located in Cotonou in Benin in West Africa. Founded by a Hungarian. theSPACE is an incubator with offices and all the supplies that accompanies local startups and entrepreneurs. The Miss leadership project started in 2015 and is in its 5th edition. We recognize that the empowerment and meaningful participation of women in our communities could make the world a better place. Unfortunately, here as everywhere in the world women are marginalized and relegated to the role of housewife good to bear children and obey men. The major factor in this situation is that most women do not have access to information allowing them to know their rights and duties in society. Most young African women grow up in patriarchal families in which stereotypes that women are inferior to men are the norm.

This is why we saw fit to set up this project which trains young women, on leadership, entrepreneurship, sexual health, self-confidence etc. So that they become ambassadors to other women.

The reign of his exceptional women proves once again that women are by no means a weak link in society. We only need to respect the rights of every human being regardless of race, age or gender. Miss leadership Benin is clearly part of this fight which aims to create «Amazons» of modern times. young people who, as you will see in the testimonies below, are thirsty for learning and who are more than capable of playing their full role in our society.

Since the dawn of time, women have lived on the margins of society, very often locked into stereotypes or crushed by the patriarchal vision of a world which wants men to be superior to women when no science demonstrates this. , on the contrary, an experience like that of the “Amazons”, proves that women are capable of doing everything that a man can show.



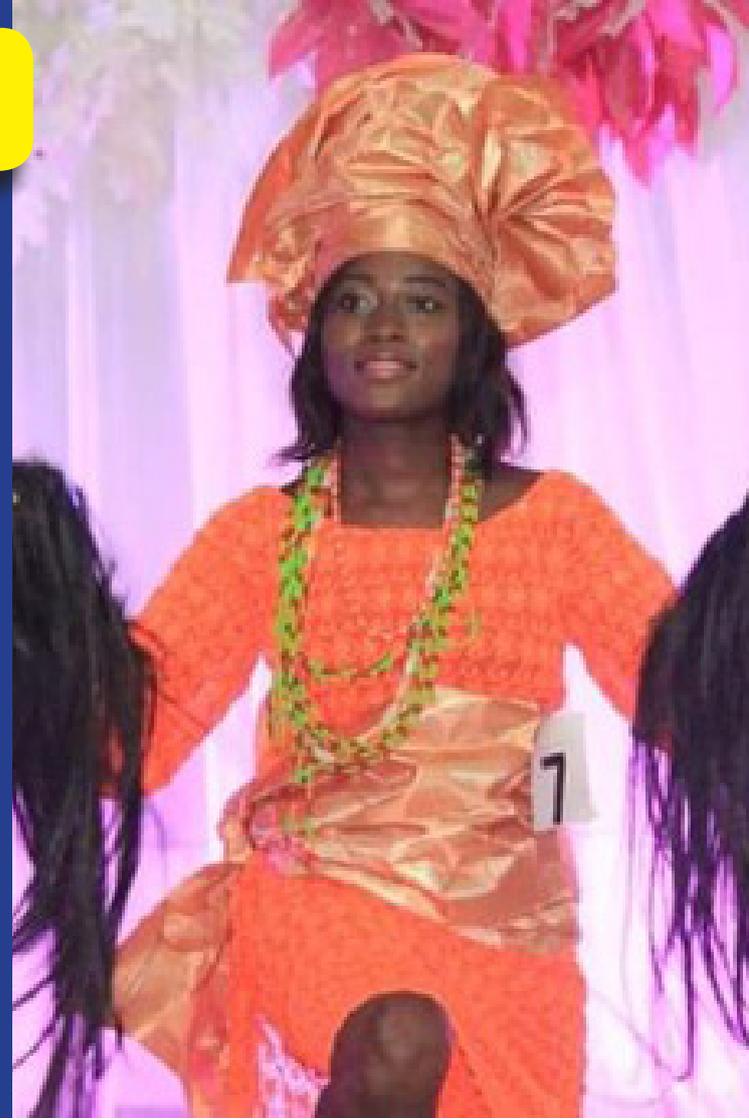
Miss leadership, in the footsteps of the Amazons

Contrary to popular belief, feminism is not a fad. It is, on the contrary, a long-standing fight that arose from the fragrant violations of the rights of the female rim.

It is sometimes very complex to change the mentality of a mass of people. For this reason, this miss competition works to train a new generation of female leaders each year so that they become ambassadors for their communities.

They thus engage in social actions, awareness campaigns, etc.

As weapons: they have leadership potential, confidence in their abilities and understanding of the world around them.



HISTORY



The Miss Benin leadership competition was launched in 2015 and resumed in 2019 after a year of pause (2018).

2015	2016	2017	2019
8 candidates	9 candidates	10 candidates	10 candidates
255 spectators	285 spectators	+300 spectators	+155 spectators
5 universities	6 universities	6 universities	8 universities
6 partners	5 partners	10 partners	5 partners

TESTIMONY



I am deeply convinced that women remain one of the strong links in any successful society. Since the launch of this project in 2015, I have seen the arrival of many young women as strong as they are competent. This project highlights all the intellectual qualities of the participants while celebrating the beauty, diversity and African culture.

I learn every day from these young women leaders that I can proudly call Amazon 2.0.

**MONDE Bah Kevin
Organizer**



My name is DEGA Amandine, student in Master 1 Private Law. Being elected Miss Leadership Benin 2017 was one of my best experiences, one of the best days of my life. It allowed me to discover hidden capacities to make new experiences and to meet great people. As John Maxwell said: The courage of a great leader to achieve his vision comes from his passion, not his position. I would therefore like to send my sincere thanks to the organizer of the event for this wonderful initiative.

Leadership is a refined way of working as a team to achieve its objectives unfortunately it is rare to see women working without there being any problem which reduces not only their capacity but also the look that men have on them. I would like to urge women to have confidence in themselves to face challenges and thrive in society. Let's learn to work together to show how strong we are together.

Let's not forget: Woman is the mother of humanity.
Amandine DEGA - Miss leadership 2017-2018

INCREASE PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND IMPACT



The adventure of miss leadership is full of learning which allows our laureates and even the candidates to become models in their environment. Most of them embark on entrepreneurship and participate in social projects. Miss 2019 has launched an online awareness campaign on COVID-19 and organized a beach cleaning activity on International Women's Day. They work with our team to support new candidates for the competition by sharing their experience and the skills they have by taking part in the competition.

Transform a person in order to create a chain of impact, that is our mission !!

Each year we reach at least 100 young people when there is a lot to do. Due to lack of support our activities do not reach the initial objectives. We therefore aim to reach at least 500 young people with your support; this could increase the visibility of the competition and change mentalities in terms of the contribution of young people in general and young women in particular in creating jobs and setting up social projects.

Once our objectives have been reached, we will be able to set up a long-term support program for young women who invest in even more daring projects.



00229 66539257/66114426



inovagence229@gmail.com



Miss Leadership Benin