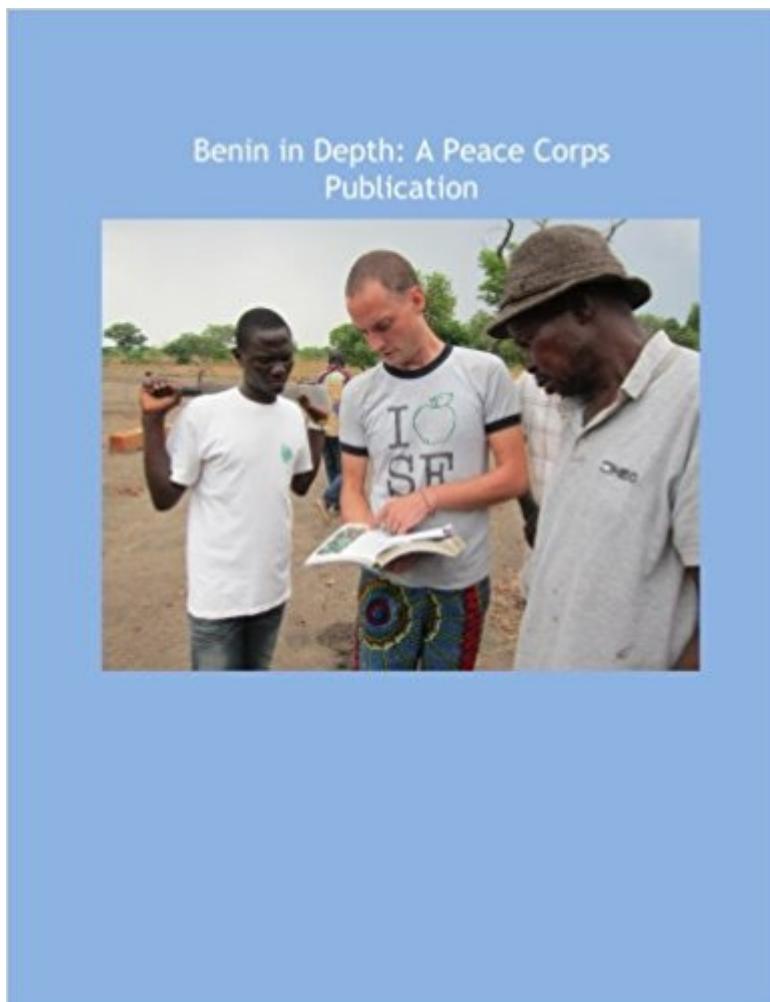


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Benin In Depth: A Peace Corps Publication



Synopsis

The history of Benin can be described as a succession of 12 kingdoms dating back from the early 1600s to approximately 1900. Following French and Portuguese rule, the territory was named the Colony of Dahomey and its Dependencies and was granted autonomy on June 22, 1894. Dahomey retained its autonomy until October 18, 1904, when it became part of French West Africa. On August 1, 1960, Dahomey became independent. This first independent government was ousted by a military coup on October 28, 1963. Dahomey experienced multiple coups between 1963 and 1972. The coup on October 26, 1972, marked the beginning of a 17-year Marxist-Leninist regime headed by Mathieu Kérékou, who proclaimed Dahomey the People's Republic of Benin in 1975. In 1990, Benin embarked on the process of democratization, and the country has made concerted efforts to implement more liberal political, economic, and administrative reforms.

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