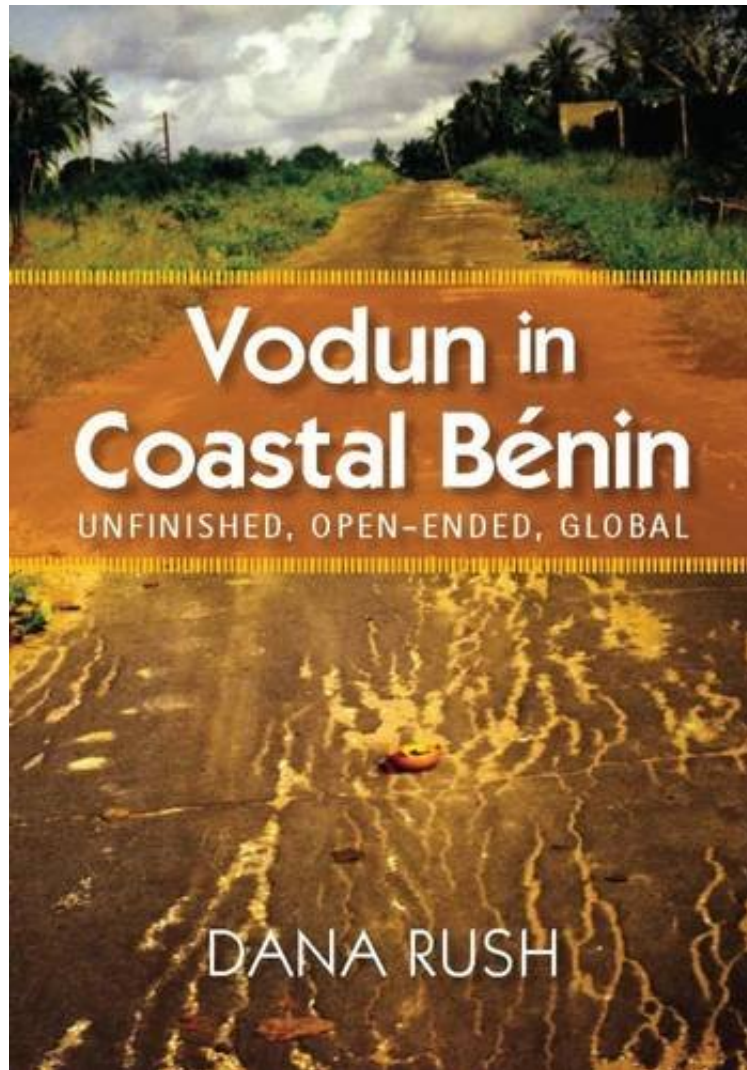


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## Vodun in Coastal Benin: Unfinished, Open-Ended, Global (Critical Investigations of the African Diaspora)

*Dana Rush*

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**Dana Rush : Vodun in Coastal Benin: Unfinished, Open-Ended, Global (Critical Investigations of the African Diaspora)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Vodun in Coastal Benin: Unfinished, Open-Ended, Global (Critical Investigations of the African Diaspora):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Ngozi Winif Appreciate the research, analysis clarity of the spirituality of the region. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Tasso Gadzanis excellent 9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. A terrific take on can't-sit-still cultural dynamism By Allen F.

Roberts Vodun is difficult to pin down long enough to describe, yet Dana Rush manages to do so without flattening the adaptive energies of these vital practices. Her work is based upon long and patient research in the Republic of Benin and Togo, and is fascinating for its insights into practices that flourish in coastal west Africa as well as throughout the Black Atlantic where they were introduced via the transatlantic slave trade. As valuable is Dr. Rush's innovative methodology that will be of distinct value to any who hope to conduct research or simply know how to approach dynamic religions anywhere in the world.

Centered on the former slaving port of Ouidah, Benin, Dana Rush's research extends through Togo to Ghana, a region where exchanges of histories, ideas, and belief systems are given material forms. This is a land where Shango, Jesus, and the Buddha are all gods of Vodun; where Hindu and Vodun deities co-exist in symbiosis; where the spirits of people enslaved 150 years ago are paid tribute by the children of their long-lost masters; and where Haitian, Brazilian, and Cuban images, artists, and spirits remain relevant to contemporary West African practices. The book is richly illustrated with color photographs of Vodun shrines, temple wall paintings, masquerades, and Hindu chromolithographs. This book is the first publication in a new series called "Critical Investigations of the African Diaspora." The series grows out of Issues in Critical Investigation, a Vanderbilt initiative to assist junior scholars through critical feedback from senior faculty, annual symposia, and prize competitions in the humanities and social sciences. Dana Rush's Vodun in Coastal Benin is the winner of the inaugural Anna Julia Cooper Prize in the Humanities.

"Highly recommended."--Choice "With her description and critical analyses of Vodun, Dana Rush reveals the art and philosophy of a religious culture that has become the dominant aesthetic for the Black Atlantic world, from Ouidah to Port-au-Prince to South Central L.A. Rush's book will become a standard reference on Vodun/Vodou/Voodoo".--Donald Cosentino, Professor, World Arts and Cultures, UCLA, and Curator, "In Extremis: Death and Life in 21st Century Haitian Art" "Rush constructs an elegant and convincing theoretical framework . . . supported by extensive ethnographic work in multiple sites. A rich and nuanced contribution to the literature on global Vodun in all its manifestations--from India to Brazil and the Caribbean, along with insights into slavery and its meanings in the Atlantic world--this book will be of great interest to students and practitioners of African-derived religions in Africa, the Caribbean, South America, and even North America. In this work Rush paradoxically moves us closer to understanding that which, she argues compellingly, cannot be understood".--Edna G. Bay, Professor of Interdisciplinary and African Studies, Emory University, and author of *Asen, Ancestors, and Vodun: Tracing Change in African Art* From the Inside Flap Understanding Vodun's cultural synthesis as an unfinished aesthetic that emphasizes process over product and efficacy over beauty About the Author Dana Rush, a Research Affiliate in the Center for African Studies at the University of Illinois, is a consulting editor for African Arts and serves on the advisory board of *Material Religion: The Journal of Objects, Art, and Belief*.