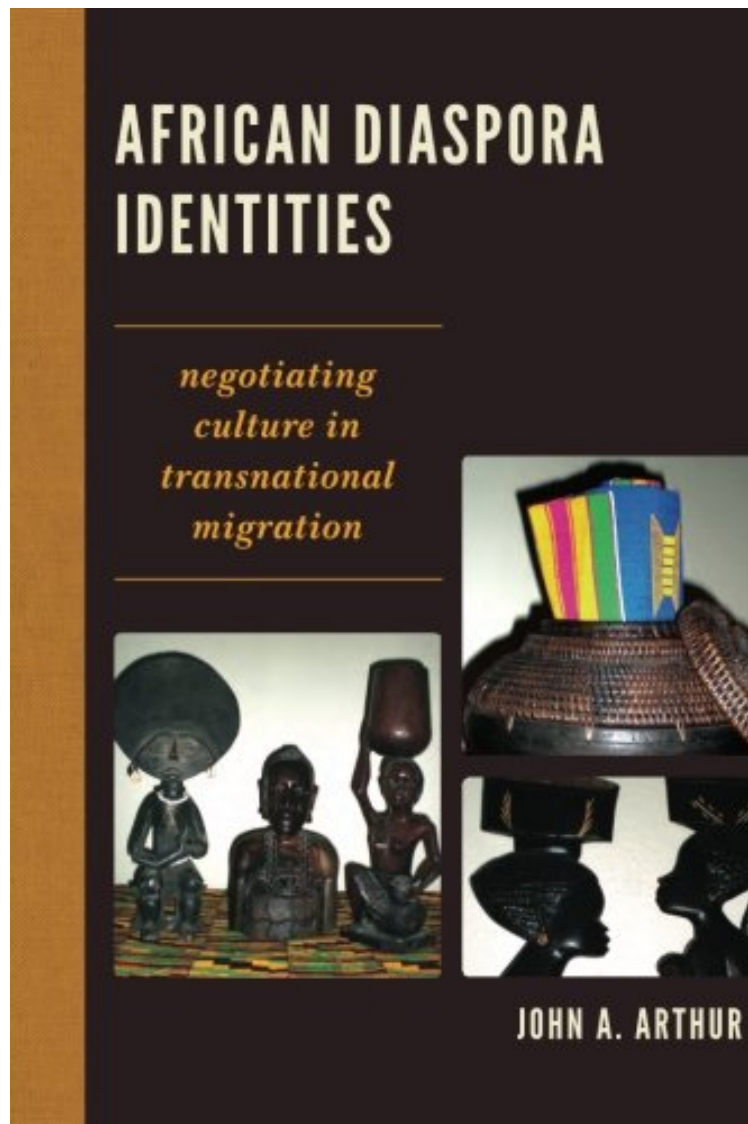


# African Diaspora Identities: Negotiating Culture in Transnational Migration

John A. Arthur

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**John A. Arthur : African Diaspora Identities: Negotiating Culture in Transnational Migration** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised African Diaspora Identities: Negotiating Culture in Transnational Migration:

African Diaspora Identities provides insights into the complex transnational processes involved in shaping the migratory identities of African immigrants. It seeks to understand the durability of these African transnational migrant identities and their impact on inter-minority group relationships. John A. Arthur demonstrates that the identities African immigrants construct often transcends country-specific cultures and normative belief systems. He illuminates the fact that these transnational migrant identities are an amalgamation of multiple identities formed in varied social transnational settings. The United States has become a site for the cultural formations, manifestations, and contestations of the newer identities that these immigrants seek to depict in cross-cultural and global settings. Relying mostly on their strong human capital resources (education and family), Africans are devising creative, encompassing, and robust ways to position and reposition their new identities. In combining their African cultural forms and identities with new roles, norms, and beliefs that they imbibe in the United States and everywhere else they have settled, Africans are redefining what it means to be black in a race, ethnicity, and color-conscious American society.

African Diaspora Identities: Negotiating Culture in Transnational Migration is a fascinating and groundbreaking discussion of contemporary African migration as one of the major challenges faced by postcolonial African states. Beyond the old and tired argument of grinding poverty and deprivation as major factors in African migration, Arthur links this phenomenon to other factors, including the new global economic system and the easy transferability of the educational credentials of many educated African immigrants that have spurred them to become important players in the global migration process. Indeed, the book not only explodes the myth of African immigrants as dependents of the welfare state, but as highly educated, highly motivated and hard working individuals determined to earn their rightful and respectful place in the United States and elsewhere while also using the benefits of their new environment to improve the socio-economic conditions of their less privileged family members back home. This is an absolute must-read for any student of migration. (Joseph Takougang, University of Cincinnati) This well-researched and well-written book provides a penetrating analysis of the formation of African immigrant cultural identities in the United States. It is an indispensable and timely contribution to the literature on the African immigrant experience. An essential reading for anyone interested in gaining a thorough understanding of the cultural, social, and economic factors and contexts that shape the formation of immigrant cultural identities in a new society. (Thomas Owusu, William Paterson University of New Jersey) Explaining complex identities and a variety of migration goals, grouped as "collective altruism," African Diaspora Identities demonstrates how Africans in a "transnationalized diaspora" develop their nations and change the image of Africa. In this study John Arthur turns traditional brain drain interpretations on their heads and brings a refreshingly new spin into the discussions and debates on the phenomenal late 20th and early 21st -centuries outflow of Africans and the repercussions for the continent, its peoples, and the host societies abroad. (Violet Showers Johnson, Agnes Scott College and author of *The Other Black Bostonians: West Indians in Boston*) Using responses from more than 1,000 immigrants from a dozen African countries who now live in the US, Canada, and the UK, sociologist Arthur (Minnesota) reveals the interplay between global structures (e.g., capitalism's need for a mobile global labor surplus, colonial and postcolonial experiences, economic and political crises, and human rights atrocities) and the desires of African immigrants for economic opportunities in Western countries where their human capital resources enable them to contend for agency.... Arthur's theoretical framework and methodology position him well relative to scholars such as Saskia Sassen (*Guests and Aliens*, 1999) and build on his substantial body of work on the African diaspora. Summing Up: Recommended (CHOICE) About the Author John A. Arthur is professor of sociology at University of Minnesota.