



Africans in Global Migration: Searching for Promised Lands

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Four overarching themes underscore the essays in this book. These are the creation of African diaspora community and institutional structures; the structured and shared relationships among African immigrants, host, and homeland societies; the construction and negotiation of diaspora spaces, and domains (racial, ethnic, class consciousness, including identity politics; and finally African migrant economic integration, occupational, and labor force roles and statuses and impact on host societies. Each of the thematic themes has been chosen with one specific goal in mind: to depict and represent the critical components in the reconstitution of the African diaspora in international migration. We contextualized the themes in the African diaspora as a dynamic process involving what Paul Zeleza called the “diasporization” of African immigrant settlement communities in global transnational spaces. These themes also reflect the diversities inherent in the diaspora communities and call attention to the fluid and dynamic boundaries within which Africans create, diffuse, and engage host and home societies. In this context, the themes outlined in this book embody the diaspora tapestries woven by the immigrants to center African social and cultural forms in their host societies and communities. Collectively, the themes represent pathways for the elucidation of understanding African immigrant territorialization. Our purpose is to map out and identify the sources and sites for the contestations of the myriad of cultural manifestations of the new African diaspora and its depictions within the totality of the shared meanings and appropriations of the essences of African-ness or African blackness. The vulnerabilities, struggles, threats (internal or external to the immigrant community), and opportunities emanating from the diasporic relationships that these immigrants create are accentuated within the nexus of African global migrations. We view the African diaspora in terms of spatial and geographic constructions and propagations of African cultural identities and institutional forms in global domains whose boundaries are not static but rather dynamic, complex, and multidimensional. Simply stated, we approach the African diaspora from a perspective that incorporates the historical, as well as contemporary postmodern constructions of the Africa’s dispersed communities and their associated transnational identity forms.

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