



Dilemmas of Culture in African Schools: Youth, Nationalism, and the Transformation of Knowledge

Cati Coe

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In working to build a sense of nationhood, Ghana has focused on many social engineering projects, the most meaningful and fascinating of which has been the state's effort to create a national culture through its schools. As Cati Coe reveals in *Dilemmas of Culture in African Schools*, this effort has created an unusual paradox: while Ghana encourages its educators to teach about local cultural traditions, those traditions are transformed as they are taught in school classrooms. The state version of culture now taught by educators has become objectified and nationalized—vastly different from local traditions.

Coe identifies the state's limitations in teaching cultural knowledge and discusses how Ghanaians negotiate the tensions raised by the competing visions of modernity that nationalism and Christianity have created. She reveals how cultural curricula affect authority relations in local social organizations—between teachers and students, between Christians and national elite, and between children and elders—and raises several questions about educational processes, state-society relations, the production of knowledge, and the making of Ghana's citizenry.

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