

Mellichamp Global Studies Lecture



Who are Africa's middle classes? The sociocultural diversity of Kenya's middle-income strata

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Cultural Sociology, Yale**

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Conference Room 2135

Is it correct to talk about 'the' African middle class or are there many middle classes in different African contexts? Which structures and characteristics are significant when we examine middle classes in Africa? Research in different sociocultural milieus in urban Kenya shows there is not one homogenous middle class but several groups that differ fundamentally in their values, aims in life and consumption preferences. Ethnographic data show in depth which different social milieus inhabit the middle-income strata of urban Kenya, mainly in Nairobi. This offers a distinctive approach to understanding middle classes in Africa.

Dr Florian Stoll works at the Academy of Advanced African Studies at Bayreuth University, Germany in the Project 'Middle Classes on the Rise'. He is presently a postdoc scholar at the Center for Cultural Sociology, Yale University. He published a monograph on social milieus and stratification in urban Brazil (2012).