

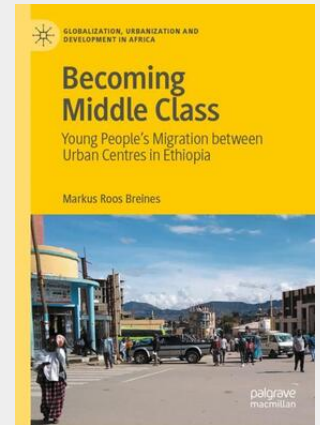
Breines

Becoming Middle Class

Young People's Migration between Urban Centres in Ethiopia

This book is an ethnography of urban-to-urban migration and its role in middle-class formation in Ethiopia. Through an examination of the intersections and tensions between physical movement and social mobility, it considers how young Tigrayan people's migration between urban centres made them distinct from both international migrants and non-migrants. Based on fieldwork in Adigrat and Addis Ababa, it focuses on these young people's notions of progress, experiences of higher education and ethnic tensions to demonstrate how their movements enabled them to enhance their economic, social and symbolic capital while their cultural capital remained largely unchanged. The book provides new insights into the opportunities and constraints for upward social mobility and argues that the emergence of shared characteristics among urban-to-urban migrants led to the formation of a group that can be described as a middle class in Ethiopia.

'This is a fascinating case study of the physical geography related to social upward mobility. It explores urban to urban migration in two Ethiopian cities, shaping distinct features of a lifestyle, thereby tracing the unconscious formation of a specific identity and social group. An important contribution to the current debate on African middle classes.'—Professor Henning Melber, University of Pretoria, University of the Free State and Nordic Africa Institute 'This is a richly informed, empirically grounded, sensitive and refreshingly innovative addition to our understanding of the nuanced complexities of being middle class in Africa, and of the importance of class in comprehending migration as a differential experience.'—Francis B. Nyamnjoh, Professor of Social Anthropology, University of Cape Town, South Africa This book is an ethnography of urban-to-urban migration and its role in middle-class formation in Ethiopia. Through an examination of the intersections and tensions between physical movement and social mobility, it considers how young Tigrayan people's migration between urban centres made them distinct from both international migrants and non-migrants. Based on fieldwork in Adigrat and Addis Ababa, it focuses on these young people's notions of progress, experiences of higher education and ethnic tensions to demonstrate how their movements enabled them to enhance their economic, social and symbolic capital while their cultural capital remained largely unchanged. The book provides new insights into the opportunities and constraints for upward social mobility and argues that the emergence of shared characteristics among urban-to-urban migrants led to the formation of a group that can be described as a middle class in Ethiopia.



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