



Progress and Its Discontents



Teferi Mekonnen School. Source: Institute of Ethiopian Studies Library Photographic Collection, 1960s

Progressive Citizen Bodies: Sports and Modernity in Ethiopia 1920-1974

PD Dr Katrin Bromber

This project investigates the processes of producing the modern Ethiopian citizen through the lens of sports and physical culture during the period which is called Ethiopian modernity – *zämänawinnät*. In doing so, it studies the frames of thought in which relevant ideas about modern citizen bodies emerged and in which established attitudes and opinions were questioned. The project further looks into concrete institutionalising processes and the agents behind specific attempts to produce corporeal modernity in Ethiopia. The semiotic aspects of these developments are relevant since they resulted in the distinct, despite often contested, symbols of the progressive Ethiopian – the dress, the muscle, or the stadium. The project is situated within the growing research on sports and leisure in Africa. On the conceptual level it contributes to current debates about the history of ideas which argue for a more consistent integration of thought, practice and materiality. With its focus on Ethiopian towns during a period of their rapid growth, the study emphasises sports and physical culture as important elements in urbanisation processes.



A workshop session at the iceaddis innovation hub. Source: iceaddis, 2012

Accelerators of Progress? Entrepreneurship Training Programmes in Ethiopia

Julian Tadesse

Ethiopia has recently seen a rise in state sponsored as well as NGO-led initiatives to boost entrepreneurship in the country. This study examines such programmes as well as the overall policy framework that governs them. Special attention is paid to programmes that target students and graduates from technological faculties in the country. Thus rhetorical frameworks related to promises of technology and innovation as well as practical approaches to foster entrepreneurial spirit and knowledge among the recipients will be examined.

The study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of knowledge regimes intrinsic to the international development complex and techniques of governance associated with the “production of progress” in Ethiopia.



The well-known revolutionary and politician SC Bose with members of the Indian National Congress Volunteer Corps, 1929

The Corporeal Nation, Anthropogenesis and the Science of History in British India in the First Half of the 20th C.

Dr Franziska Roy

This project combines a *longue durée* study of the intellectual underpinnings of notions of progress seen through the lens of specific ideas of human evolution with concrete case studies of its popular (especially somatic) practices in British India. Concerns about human and societal progress/decline under the conditions of modernity following the *fin de siècle* were raised on a quasi-global scale in an increasingly interconnected world. This study traces the engagement of politicised South Asian circles with these debates by investigating the ubiquitous volunteer movements. The project inquires into the specific formation and phenotype of such groups and the *Zeitgeist* (i.e. a widely shared discourse spanning multiple societies and nation-state entities) regarding the interdependence of a supposedly inevitable human evolution and the advancement of “the Indian nation”. This question was especially urgent for the Muslim minority that had to define its prospective place within the political entity vis-à-vis the other communities. Therefore particular emphasis will be placed on following the volunteering Muslim activists as British India nears its partition.