The (Re)Introduction of Nubia and Ethiopia to Europe During the Crusading Era, c.1100-c.1400

By

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A thesis submitted to the
University of Lancaster for the
partial fulfilment for the degree
of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Lancaster University

March 2019

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted in substantially the same form for the award of a higher degree elsewhere.

I declare that the word length of the thesis is 79987 words.

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March 2019

Abstract

This thesis analyses the exchange of knowledge regarding the African kingdoms of Nubia and Ethiopia between the wider Eastern Mediterranean and Europe. Whilst employing a varied linguistic (Latin, French, Italian, Spanish, Greek, Old Nubian, Arabic, and Gəʿəz) and theoretical (e.g. Network Analysis) approach, this thesis traces how such knowledge circulated and was, in turn, utilised for specific purposes. It argues that the onset of the Crusades formed the catalyst for the subsequent expansion of geographical knowledge following a period of centuries-long stagnation despite the expansive knowledge networks of Late Antiquity. Section One (Chs. I, II, III) (re)introduces Ethiopians and Nubians into European thought following their period of anonymity in the latter centuries of the first millennium, tracing the foundations of ancient knowledge at the beginning of the millennium and how this differed to that known during the early crusading years at the turn of the twelfth century. With the creation of the Crusader States, Section Two (Chs. IV, V, VI) analyses the development of knowledge as a result of increased undocumented dissemination, principally via undocumented networks and communal knowledge in the Holy Land. Finally, Section Three (Chs. VII, VIII) explores how this new information was utilised, particularly in the search for allies in the defence of the Holy Land. Through the growing early information of Prester John, which this thesis argues developed distinctly between the African Prester Johns of Nubia and Ethiopia, Europeans actively sought to communicate with the kingdoms. Ultimately, Europeans hoped for a military alliance and both kingdoms found themselves in varying crusade treatises following the fall of the Crusader States. Above all, this thesis argues that the post-1402 interactions between Ethiopia and Europe were actually founded upon earlier

notions of Nubia, which following the kingdom's demise in the fourteenth century,

forced European attentions to turn to Ethiopia instead.

Acknowledgements

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Table of Maps and Figures

Abbreviations

IV Congresso Etiopici – E. Cerulli, ed., *IV Congresso Internazionale di Studi Etiopici (Roma, 10-15 Aprile 1972)*, 2 vols. (Rome, 1974).

Álvarez – Francisco Álvarez, *Verdadeira informação das terra do Preste João das Índias*, ed. L. de Albuquerque (Lisbon, 1989).

AOrLatin – *Archives de l'Orient latin*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1881-4).

BSOAS – *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*.

CAMAPSET – *Centre d'archéologie méditerranéenne de l'Académie polonaise des sciences. Études et travaux.*

Cerulli, *Etiopi* – E. Cerulli, *Etiopi in Palestina. Storia della comunità etiopica di Gerusalemme*, 2 vols. (Rome, 1943-7).

DBMNT – *Database for Medieval Nubian Texts*, available at http://www.dbmnt.uw.edu.pl/.

Dotawo – *Dotawo. A Journal of Nubian Studies*.

EA – *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, eds. S. Uhlig and A. Bausi, 5 vols. (Wiesbaden, 2003-14).

East and West I, II, III – K. Ciggaar, A. Davids, and H. Teule, eds., *East and West in the Crusader States. Context, Contacts, Confrontations*, 3 vols. (Leuven, 1996-2003).

FHN – *Fontes Historiae Nubiorum. Textual Sources for the History of the Middle Nile Region Between the Eighth Century BC and the Sixth Century AD*, eds. T. Eide, T. Hägg, R. H. Pierce, and L. Török, 4 vols. (Bergen, 1994-2000).

Golubovich, *Biblioteca* – G. Golubovich, *Biblioteca bio-bibliografia della Terra Santa e dell'Oriente,* 5 vols. (Florence, 1906-27).

Gregory VII, *Register* – *Das Register Gregors VII*, ed. E. Caspar, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1920-3).

HGM – *Historici Graeci Minores*, ed. L. Dindorf, vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1870).

HotC – M. W. Baldwin, H. W. Hazard, K. M. Setton, R. L. Wolff, and N. P. Zacour, eds., *A History of the Crusades*, 6 vols. (Madison, 1969-89).

HPEC – *History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church, Known as the History of the Holy Church, by Sawirus ibn al-Mukaffaʿ, Bishop of al-Asmunin*, eds. various authors, 4 vols. (Cairo, 1943-74).

IBWA – D. Bindman and H. L. Gates, eds., *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, 10 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 2010).

IJAHS – *International Journal of African Historical Studies*.

JAH – *Journal of African History*.

JAOS – *Journal of the American Oriental Society*.

JES – *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*.

JLA – *Journal of Late Antiquity*.

JMH – *Journal of Medieval History*.

JOAS – *Journal of Oriental and African Studies*.

JRAS – *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*.

JSS – *Journal of Semitic Studies*.

JWH – *Journal of World History*.

LP – *Liber Peregrinationis di Jacopo da Verona*, ed. U. Monneret de Villard (Rome, 1950).

Marino, *Libro* – N. F. Marino, *El libro del conoscimiento de todos los reinos = The Book of Knowledge of All Kingdoms* (Madrid, 1999).

MCAA – *Monumenta Cartographica Africae et Aegypti*, ed. Y. Kamel, 5 vols. (Cairo, 1926-51).

MGH Auct. Ant. – *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Auctores antiquissimi*, 15 vols. (Berlin, 1877-1919).

MGH Dt. Chron. – *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Deutsche Chroniken*, 6 vols. (Hannover/ Leipzig, 1895-9).

MGH SrG ns – *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores rerum Germanicarum, Nova series*, 24 vols. (Berlin/Hannover, 1922-2009).

MGH SS – *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores*, 39 vols. (Hannover, 1826-2009).

MGH SS RGUS – *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatism editi*, 78+ vols. (Hannover, 1871-).

MP – Matthaei Parisiensis, *Chronica majora*, ed. H. R. Luard, 7 vols. (London, 1872-83).

OSCN – G. Vantini, *Oriental Sources Concerning Nubia* (Heidelberg, 1975).

PG – *Patrologia Graecae*, ed. J.-P. Migne, 162 vols. (Paris, 1857-86).

PL – *Patrologia Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, 221 vols. (Paris, 1844-91).

Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* – Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, eds. and trans. H. Rackham, W. H. S. Jones, and D. E. Eichholz, 10 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1967-71).

Polo – Marco Polo, *The Description of the World*, eds. and trans. A.-C. Moule and P. Pelliot, 2 vols. (London, 1938).

NP – Niccolò da Poggibonsi, *Libro d'oltramare*, ed. A. Bacchi della Lega, 2 vols. (Bologna, 1968).

RHC Doc. Arm. – *Recueil Historiens des Croisades. Documents arméniens*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1869-1906).

RHC HOr – *Recueil Historiens des Croisades. Historiens occidentaux*, 5 vols. (Paris, 1844-95).

RHC HOcc – *Recueil Historiens des Croisades. Historiens orientaux*, 5 vols. (Paris, 1872-1906).

RHC Lois – *Recueil Historiens des Croisades. Lois*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1841-3).

RIE – E. Bernand, A. J. Drewes, and R. Schneider, *Recueil des inscriptions de l'Éthiopie des périodes pré-axoumite et axoumite*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1991-2000).

RRH – *Regesta Regni Hierosolymitani (1097-1291)*, ed. R. Röhricht (Innsbruck, 1904).

RSE – *Rassegna di Studi Etiopici*.

Strabo, *Geography* – Strabo, *Geography*, ed. and trans. H. L. Jones, 8 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1917-32).

TCAMAPS – *Travaux du Centre d'archéologie méditerranéenne de l'Académie Polonaise des Sciences*.

Trasmissione dei testi latini – P. Chiesa and L. Castaldi, eds., *La trasmissione dei testi latini del medioevo. Mediaeval Latin Texts and Their Transmission. Te. Tra.*, 5 vols. (Florence, 2004-13).

UNESCO II – G. Mokhtar, ed., *UNESCO General History of Africa Volume II. Ancient Civilizations of Africa* (Paris, 2000).

UNESCO III – M. Elfasi and I. Hrbek, eds., *UNESCO General History of Africa Volume III. Africa from the Seventh to the Eleventh Century* (Paris, 2000).

UNESCO IV – D. T. Niane, ed., *UNESCO General History of Africa Volume IV. Africa from the Twelfth to the Sixteenth Century* (Paris, 2000).

William Adam, *Defeat – How to Defeat the Saracens/ Guillelmus Ade, Tractatus quomodo Sarraceni sunt expugnandi*, ed. and trans. G. Constable (Washington D.C., 2012).

WT – Willelmi Tyrensis Archiepiscopi, *Chronicon*, ed. R. B. C. Huygens, 2 vols. (Turnhout, 1986).

Map 1: Nubia, Ethiopia, and the Crusader States (Twelfth Century)
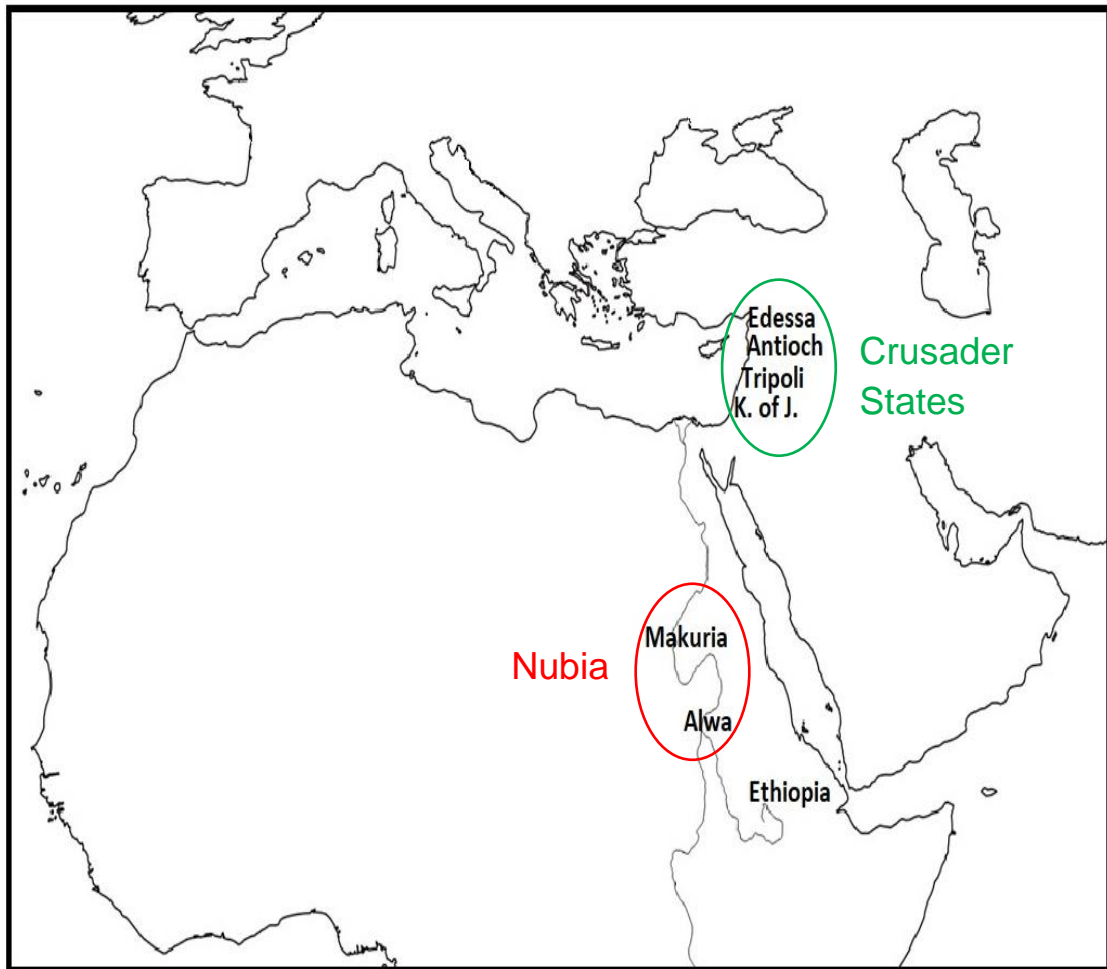
Map 2: Significant Places Discussed in the Thesis
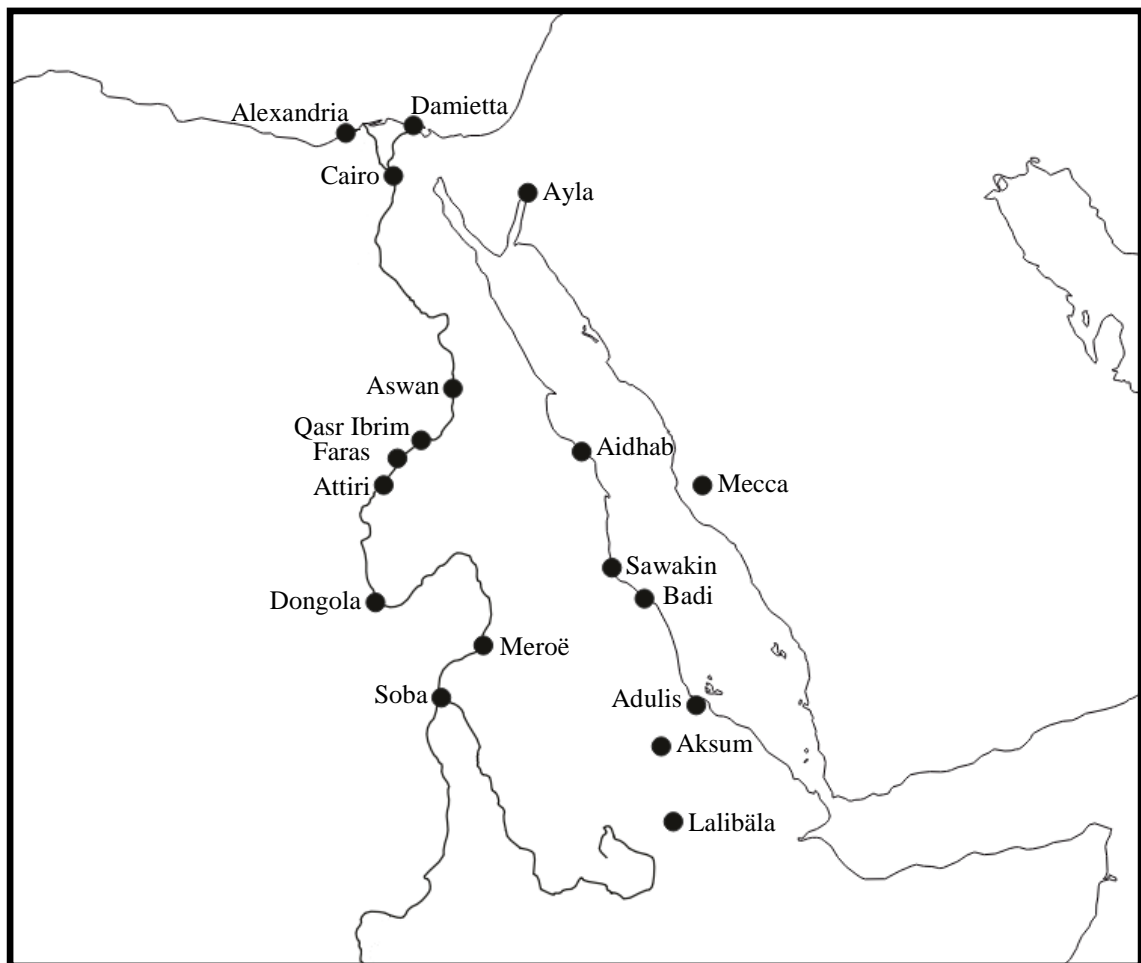
Introduction

Medieval Jerusalem housed many Eastern Christians, including: Greeks, Armenians, Syrians, Bulgarians, Georgians, Russians, Indians, Copts, Ethiopians, Nubians, and others known more broadly as Jacobites, Christians of the Church of the East, and Maronites. Studies of the Crusades and the settlement of Western Europeans in the Eastern Mediterranean have increasingly explored the Crusaders' relationship with the many large populations of indigenous Christians in the region, often finding evidence of varying degrees of shared co-operation between societies rather than of competitive hostility between neighbours.[1] What is less understood, however, is the greater effect that the Crusades specifically had on the wider world of North-East Africa – particularly upon the Christian kingdoms of Nubia and Ethiopia. How present were Nubia and Ethiopia in Western mentality and how different was this from Western attitudes towards other Eastern Christians?[2] Moreover, how well-known were these Nubian and Ethiopian Christians to medieval Europeans?

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[1] See, for example: V. P. Goss, ed., *The Meeting of Two Worlds. Cultural Exchange Between East and West During the Period of the Crusades* (Kalamazoo, MI, 1986); R. B. Rose, 'The Native Christians of Jerusalem, 1187-1260', in *Horns of Hattin. Proceedings of the Second Conference of the Society for the study of the Crusades and the Latin East, Jerusalem and Haifa 2-6 July, 1987*, ed. B. Z. Kedar (Jerusalem, 1992), pp. 239-49; Ellenblum, *Frankish Rural Settlement*, pp. 119-44; B. Z. Kedar, 'Latins and Oriental Christians in the Frankish Levant, 1099-1291', in *Sharing the Sacred. Religious Contacts and Conflicts in the Holy Land*, eds. A. Kofsky and G. G. Stroumsa (Jerusalem, 1998), pp. 209-22; B. Z. Kedar, 'Convergences of Oriental Christian, Muslim, and Frankish Worshippers: The Case of Saydnaya', in *De Sion exibit lex et verbum domini de Hierusalem. Essays on Medieval Law, Liturgy, and Literature in Honour of Amnon Linder*, ed. Y. Hen (Turnhout, 2001), pp. 59-70; R. Ellenblum, *Frankish Rural Settlement in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge, 2002); C. MacEvitt, *The Crusades and the Christian World of the East. Rough Tolerance* (Philadelphia, 2008); C. Kostick, ed., *The Crusades and the Near East. Cultural Histories* (Abingdon, 2011); K. S. Parker, *The Indigenous Christians of the Arabic Middle East in an Age of Crusaders, Mongols, and Mamlūks (1244-1366)* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of London, 2012); A. Murray, 'Franks and Indigenous Communities in Palestine and Syria (1099-1187): A Hierarchical Model of Social Interaction in the Principalities of Outremer', in *East Meets West in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times. Transcultural Experiences in the Premodern World*, ed. A. Classen (Berlin, 2013), pp. 291-309; B. D. Boehm and M. Holcomb, 'Pluralism in the Holy City' and J. Folda, 'Sharing the Church of the Holy Sepulchre During the Crusader Period', in *Jerusalem 1000-1400. Every People Under Heaven*, eds. B. D. Boehm and M. Holcomb (New Haven, 2016), pp. 65-76, 131-3.

[2] All Eastern Christian groups were distinguishable to Crusaders in both confession and culture. See: J. Pahlitzsch and D. Weltecke, 'Konflikte zwischen den nicht-lateinischen Kirchen im Königreich

Above all, this thesis will determine whether statements, such as the following regarding Nubia by Derek Welsby, are true. In 2002 Welsby stated that:

> There is very little evidence for any contact between, or even direct knowledge of, the Crusaders by the Christian Nubians… Any cooperation between the Crusaders and the Nubians is inherently unlikely. The Crusaders were just as hostile to other non-Catholic branches of the Church as they were to Muslims…[3]

Whilst it is true that, due to source survival, the direct pieces of evidence for interactions and connectivity presented in this thesis are primarily from Europeans, rather than Nubians or Ethiopians themselves, to suggest that any Crusader-African co-operation was inherently unlikely is too sweeping. For example, if we take Ethiopia, was there any historical background to Emperor Tēwōdrōs II's (r. 1855-68) proactive approach to using the rhetoric of the Crusades, as if part of Ethiopia's history, during the nineteenth century?[4] Were Nubia and Ethiopia indeed connected to the wider Crusading world and, if so, by how much? Attempts to answer these questions begin with analysing the extent of medieval European knowledge regarding both kingdoms throughout the crusading centuries.

Jerusalem', in Jerusalem im Hoch- und Spätmittelalter. Konflikte und Konfliktbewältigung – Vorstellungen und Vergegenwärtigungen, eds. D. Bauer, K. Herbers, and N. Jaspert (Frankfurt am Main, 2001), pp. 119-45.

[3] D. A. Welsby, *Medieval Kingdoms of Nubia. Pagans, Christians and Muslims in the Middle Nile* (London, 2002), pp. 76-7.

[4] A. Knobler, 'Holy Wars, Empires, and the Portability of the Past: The Modern Uses of Medieval Crusades', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 48.2 (2006), pp. 306-7. This Ethiopian Crusading image presented itself in the thoughts of foreigners too. See, for example: 'Wednesday 23rd August, 1843', *Queen Victoria's Journal, Volume 16, August to December 1843*, Royal Archives, Windsor, England, pp. 30-1.

Most of all, this thesis will connect the current studies of the relations of late antiquity and of the early modern period, thus serving to highlight the continued connectivity throughout the centuries of Africa and Europe. Its principal focus, the Crusades, will be the fulcrum of the thesis as they acted as a catalyst for the (re)introduction of Nubians and Ethiopians into European awareness. I use the formulation '(re)introduction' because the Crusading period was not the first period of interaction between Nubians, Ethiopians, and Europeans.[5] Yet, this prior awareness was not built upon by medieval writers and knowledge regarding the African kingdoms is instead best described as being rediscovered rather than discovered, or, reintroduced rather than introduced.

'Knowledge' in medieval Europe was not universal across the continent. One might say that there were two registers of knowledge: 'academic' knowledge which was transmitted within a closed circle of elite discourse in Europe, and the 'practical knowledge' of those with direct first-hand experience, such as pilgrims or traders. These were not, of course, mutually exclusive, but whereas the former, relatively removed from direct observation and tending to rely on authority and a genealogy of knowledge, was textual in form, the latter entered textual discourse only incidentally. This thesis will show the relationship between a European presence in the East and the development of geographical knowledge.

Moreover, the thesis aims to bridge the gap in the current knowledge of historical interactions between the continents of Africa, Europe, and Asia, specifically centred on the Holy Land. For the purpose of this thesis, to describe the Holy Land as a land

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[5] Or, indeed, '(re)discovery' to counter Charles de la Roncière's 1920s seminal discussion involving the whole of the African continent: C. M. de la Roncière, *La découverte de l'Afrique au moyen âge. Cartographes et explorateurs*, 3 vols. (1924-7).

of Christians, Jews, and Muslims is too simplistic. Within each group there were many different groups and sects. Each experienced varying degrees of Western prejudice and conflict, especially Greek and Syrian Orthodox Christians who wore Muslim clothes and spoke Arabic, thus resembling the enemy. Many Eastern Christians were often viewed as heretics, opportunists, and betrayers.[6] In reality, however, the Franks in the Crusader States only inhabited small areas of land, with some estimates suggesting that Franks only made up between 15-25% of the population in the Holy Land.[7] Therefore, they were vastly outnumbered and many diverse societies emerged where degrees of tolerance had to be observed, with both other Christians and non-Christians. Furthermore, archaeological evidence, when taken alongside textual evidence, attests to a working relationship.[8] Following the First Crusade, Europeans increasingly noted not only the existence of the Christian kingdoms of Nubia and Ethiopia, but also the presence of their inhabitants in the Holy Land. Nubians and Ethiopians did, indeed, interact with, and were known to, a range of medieval Europeans. Yet, despite sharing the Holy Land and there being many references of Crusader-Nubian and Crusader-Ethiopian contacts in religious, diplomatic, and religious contexts, there has yet to be an in-depth study of this relationship.

As such, the primary period examined here will be between the eleventh to fourteenth centuries, a period which has been labelled as an era of expansion for Europe by historians, notably by John Phillips.[9] This geographic and military expansion greatly

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[6] For example, see: A. Jotischky, 'Ethnographic Attitudes in the Crusader States', in *East and West III*, pp. 1-20.

[7] Ellenblum, *Frankish Rural Settlement*, 9.

[8] Ibid., pp. 3-40, 119-44.

[9] F. Fernández-Armesto, *Before Columbus. Exploration and Colonisation from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic, 1229-1492* (London, 1987); R. Bartlett, *The Making of Europe. Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change, 950-1350* (Princeton, 1993); J. R. S. Phillips, *The Medieval Expansion of Europe* (Oxford, 1998); J. H. Parry, *The Age of Reconnaissance. Discovery, Exploration and Settlement, 1450-1650* (London, 2000).

impacted upon European knowledge of the wider world. I will argue that the First

Crusade (1096-99) was a turning point in relations, culminating in the subjugation of

Nubia by the Mamluks before the rise of Ethiopia in the European imagination,

particularly in the fifteenth century. Moreover, this thesis should also be situated

within the growing literature on the 'Global Middle Ages'.[10] This burgeoning field

situates the medieval world as one of extensive networks, mobility, mediation,

interaction, and of human agency across great distances, too often minimised in

historiography.[11] This thesis does not, however, argue that Nubians and Ethiopians

were Crusaders, or *Crucesignati*, in any form, but only seeks to place them within the

wider *global* context of the Crusades. Additionally, it will also add to the broader

literature on medieval Africa and transcontinental relations before the modern era.

Importantly, it should be remembered that Africa and Europe have had a long-shared

history, a history that goes much further than beyond the scope of this thesis.

Defining the African kingdoms in question is important to avoid any vagueness or

confusion. For the purposes of this thesis, Nubia was the geographic area of two

kingdoms – Makuria and Alwa (or Alodia) (See Map 1).[12] Makuria had annexed the

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[10] See, for example, the articles published in the recently launched journals *Medieval Worlds* (2015) and *The Medieval Globe* (2014), and also the special issue of *Past and Present*, 238.13 (2018).

[11] C. Holmes and N. Standen, 'Introduction: Towards a Global Midde Ages', *Past and Present*, 238.13 (2018), pp. 1-44.

[12] Here, Nubia is used in common with the kingdoms discussed in the primary works on medieval Nubia: U. Monneret de Villard, *Storia della Nubia cristiana* (Rome, 1938); U. Monneret de Villard, *La Nubia Medioevale*, 4 vols. (Cairo, 1935-57); Y. F. Ḥasan, *The Arabs and the Sudan from the Seventh to the Early Sixteenth Century* (Edinburgh, 1967); W. Y. Adams, *Nubia. Corridor to Africa* (Princeton, 1977); G. Vantini, *Il Cristianesimo nella Nubia antica* (Verona, 1985); J. Cuoq, *Islamisation de la Nubie chrétienne. VIIe-XVIe siècle* (Paris, 1986); S. Jakobielski, 'Christian Nubia at the Height of its Civilization', in UNESCO III, pp. 194-223; Welsby, *Medieval Kingdoms*; G. R. Ruffini, *Medieval Nubia. A Social and Economic History* (New York, 2012); P. L. Shinnie, *Ancient Nubia* (Abingdon, 2014). Short detailed overview supplementary histories of Nubia can be found in: W. Godlewski, 'The Kingdom of Makuria', in *The Fourth Cataract and Beyond*, eds. Anderson and Welsby, pp. 155-70; D. N. Edwards, 'Medieval Nobadia', in Ibid., pp. 171-82; D. A. Welsby, 'The Kingdom of Alwa', in Ibid., pp. 183-200. See also: D. N. Edwards, 'Medieval Settlement', in *The Archaeology of a Nubian Frontier. Survey on the Nile Third Cataract, Sudan*, eds. A. Osman and D. N. Edwards (Bristol, 2012),

northern kingdom of Nobadia in the early eighth century, so that during the Crusading period it covered the region between the First and Fifth Nile Cataracts, with its capital at Dongola. Alwa, the least known of the kingdoms, covered south of the Fifth Cataract to roughly 300km down the Blue Nile with its capital at Soba and contained the ancient city of Meroë, which was known to the Greeks and Romans. The minimum length of the overall territory of the Nubian kingdoms can be estimated to be roughly 1700km (between Aswan and Soba), but the full extent of their influences to the west and east of the Nile is unknown. To the Crusaders and other medieval Europeans – and hence throughout this thesis – 'Nubia' effectively only referred to Makuria.

In a Latin Christian context, Ethiopia is harder to define and has two meanings for this thesis. The first – 'Ethiopia' – was the embodiment of all the land south of Egypt, and sometimes encompassed lands west up to the Atlas Mountains inhabited by 'Ethiopians' in a broader sense.[13] The Kingdom of Ethiopia, on the other hand, was more specific, whether Zagʷé or Solomonid.[14] It was located within the area between Lake Tana and the Rift Valley in the Ethiopian Highlands. Precisely defined borders were not consistent throughout our period, but the kingdom always lay south-east of

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pp. 141-71; B. Żurawski, 'The Fourth Cataract in the Medieval Period', in *The Fourth Cataract and Beyond*, eds. Anderson and Welsby, pp. 135-54.

[13] A. Billault, 'Remarques sur l'origine des Éthiopiens dans la littérature antique', in *Origines Gentium*, eds. V. Fromentin and S. Gotteland (Bordeaux, 2001), pp. 347-54.

[14] Ethiopia is used in common with the kingdom discussed in the primary works on medieval Ethiopia, though the majority of current works do not deal fully with the period in question as a whole: J. Doresse, *L'empire du Prêtre-Jean*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1957); Sergew H. S., *Ancient and Medieval Ethiopian History to 1270* (Addis Ababa, 1972); Tadesse T., *Church and State in Ethiopia, 1270-1527* (Oxford, 1972); J. Cuoq, *Islam en Ethiopie des origines au XVI siècle* (Paris, 1981); G. W. B. Huntingford, *The Historical Geography of Ethiopia from the First Century AD to 1704* (Oxford, 1989); F. Anfray, *Les anciens Éthiopiens* (Paris, 1990); M.-L. Derat, *Le domaine des rois éthiopiens (1270-1527). Espace, pouvoir et monachisme* (Paris, 2003); F. Anfray, 'The Civilization of Aksum from the First to the Seventh Century', in UNESCO II, pp. 362-80; T. T. Mekouria, 'Christian Aksum', in UNESCO II, pp. 401-22; E. Cerulli, 'Ethiopia's Relations with the Muslim World', in UNESCO III, pp. 575-85; Tadesse T., 'The Horn of Africa: The Solomonids in Ethiopia and the States of the Horn of Africa', in UNESCO IV, pp. 423-54; D. W. Phillipson, *Foundations of an African Civilisation. Aksum and the Northern Horn 1000 BC-AD 1300* (Woodbridge, 2014).

the Nubian Kingdom of Alwa. As with its borders, its capitals are also difficult to describe with precision. For the first half of the period discussed, there were numerous capitals located within the northern province of Lasta. Following 1270 the new Solomonid dynasty often moved capitals between provincies.

Problematically for this thesis, ethnic groups were not necessarily reflective of 'national' boundaries and vice versa, and would be anachronistic in any case, hence the added inclusion of the separate term 'Ethiopians'. Moreover, 'Ethiopia' within the context of this thesis, as will be shown, without further accompanying topographical description, most often actually meant Nubia in European sources. It should also be made clear that neither Nubians nor Ethiopians appear in European texts in a similar ethnographical capacity as other groups. Unlike ethnic groups, such as the Irish, Slavs, Greeks, or Mongols, or religious and ethnic groups, such as Jews or Muslims, Nubians and Ethiopians were not discussed as a tool of self-reflective commentary or to distinguish between the 'human' and the 'monstrous'; races such as Troglodytes or Cynocephali are not discussed in relation to the kingdoms of Nubia or Ethiopia.[15]

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[15] On Medieval European ethnography, see generally: W. Pohl, 'Telling the Difference: Signs of Ethnic Difference', in *Strategies of Distinction. The Construction of Ethnic Communities, 300-800*, eds. W. Pohl and H. Reimitz (Leiden, 1998), pp. 17-69; A. Kaldellis, *Ethnography After Antiquity. Foreign Lands and Peoples in Byzantine Literature. Empire and After* (Philadelphia, 2013); S. A. Khanmohamadi, *In Light of Another's Word. European Ethnography in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia, 2014), esp. pp. 11-36. African identity is a particular problem in classical studies, both in terms of physical and ideological constructs, but has received little attention in Medieval Studies: F. M. Snowden, 'The Negro in Classical Italy', *American Journal of Philology*, 68 (1947), pp. 266-92; F. M. Snowden, 'The Negro in Ancient Greece', *American Anthropologist*, 50 (1948), pp. 31-44; F. M. Snowden, 'Some Greek and Roman Observations on the Ethiopians', *Traditio*, 16 (1960), pp. 19-38; G. H. Beardsley, *The Negro in Greek and Roman Civilization. A Study of the Ethiopian Type* (New York, 1967); J. Desanges, 'L'antiquité Gréco-romaine et l'homme noir', *Revue des études Latines*, 48 (1970), pp. 87-95; J. Y. Nadeau, 'Ethiopians', *Classical Quarterly*, 20.2 (1970), pp. 339-49; F. M. Snowden, *Blacks in Antiquity. Ethiopians in the Greco-Roman Experience* (Cambridge, Mass., 1970); E. Mveng (ed.), *Les sources grecques de l'histoire negro-africaine. depuis Homère jusqu'à Strabon* (Paris, 1972); L. Cracco Ruggini, 'Leggenda e realtà degli Etiopi nella culturatardoimperiale', in *IV congresso etiopici*, pp. I:141-93; J. Desanges, 'L'Afrique noire et le monde méditerranéen dans l'Antiquité (Éthiopiens et Gréco-Romains)', *Revue francaise d'histoire d'outre-mer*, 62 (1975), pp. 391-414; J. F. Gardner, 'Blameless Ethiopians and Others', *Greece and Rome*, 24 (1977), pp. 185-93; L. Cracco Ruggini, 'Il negro buono e il negro malvagio nel mondo classico', in *Conoscenze etniche e rapport*, ed. M. Sordi (Milan, 1979), pp. 108-35; R. Lonis, 'Les trois approches de l'Ethiopien par l'opinion gréco-

Nubians and Ethiopians were unique in Africa, after all, in that they had been known to be have been Christian for centuries, further isolating them from European anti-pagan (or non-Christian) ethnographic thought.

Distinguishing Approaches and the Sources

The presented texts do not discuss stereotypical cultural depictions of either Nubians or Ethiopians which in turn became representative throughout Europe. They remain factual, or with minor errors created through misunderstanding, and not conflicted by cultural bias. As Shirin Khanmohamadi has recently argued regarding Orientalism and medieval ethnography, 'dialogism [in texts] tests rather than serves unstated cultural assumptions' reflecting upon the oft-found European position of disempowerment in the East.[16] Europeans were rarely in a position of superiority, both politically and culturally, on which Orientalism operates. Moreover, the classical tradition in Europe was not overtly negative towards 'Ethiopians' either, giving no intellectual basis or

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romaine', *Ktema*, 6 (1981), pp. 69-87; F. M. Snowden, *Before Colour Prejudice. The Ancient View of Blacks* (Cambridge, Mass., 1983); L. A. Thompson, *Romans and Blacks* (Norman, 1989); M. M. Levine, 'The Use and Abuse of Black Athena', *American Historical Review*, 97 (1992), pp. 440-60; F. M. Snowden, 'Misconceptions About African Blacks in the Ancient Mediterranean World: Specialists and Afrocentrists', *Arion*, 4 (1997), pp. 28-50; E. Oréal, '"Noir parfait": un jeu de mot de l'égyptien au grec', *Revue des études grecques*, 111 (1998), pp. 551-65; A. Billault, 'Remarques sur l'origine des Éthiopiens dans la littérature antique', in *Origines Gentium*, eds. V. Fromentin and S. Gotteland (Bordeaux, 2001), pp. 347-54; M. van Wyk Smith, *The First Ethiopians. The Image of Africa and Africans in the Early Mediterranean World* (Johannesburg, 2009). For specific relation to Roman constructs in Africa, see: D. Whittaker, 'Ethnic Discourse on the Frontiers of Roman Africa', in *Ethnic Constructs in Antiquity. The Role of Power and Tradition*, eds. T. Derks and N. Roymans (Amsterdam, 2009), pp. 189-206. Additionally, the existence of multiple roaming ethnic populations consistently restricted European ethnographic understanding of medieval Nubians and Ethiopians:.J. Desanges, 'Le peuplement éthiopien à la lisière méridionale de l'Afrique du Nord d'après les temoignages textuels de l'Antiquité', in *Afrique Noire et monde méditerranéen dans l'Antiquité, Colloque de Dakar, 19-24 janvier 1976*, ed. R. Lonis (Dakar, 1978), pp. 29-53; V. Christides, 'Ethnic Movements in Southern Egypt and Northern Sudan: Blemmys-Beja in Late Antique and Early Arab Egypt Until 707 A.D.', *Listy Filologické*, 103.3 (1980), pp. 129-43; R. Fattovich, 'Remarks on the Peopling of the Northern Ethiopian-Sudanese Borderlands in Ancient Historical Times', *Rivista degli studi orientali*, 58 (1984), pp. 85-106; M. Bechhaus-Gerst and P. Behrens, '"Libyans" – "Nubians" Mutations of an Ethnonym', *Afrikanistische Arbeitspapiere*, 4 (1985), pp. 67-74; J. H. F. Dijkstra, 'Blemmyes, Noubades and the Eastern Desert in Late Antiquity: Reassessing the Written Sources', in *The History of the Peoples of the Eastern Desert*, eds. H. Barnard and K. Duistermaat (Los Angeles, 2012), pp. 238-47.
[16] Khanmohamadi, *In Light of Another's Word*, 146.

legacy for medieval Europeans to build upon to have Orientalist views. For instance, although writers, such as Strabo (wr. c.20-30 CE), wrote that 'Ethiopians' lived a harsh and desolate life because of their climate, they did not equate negative attributes to the 'Ethiopians' themselves. Indeed, Pliny (77 CE), seen by many to be the originator of the dissemination of the descriptions of monstrous men, actually describes 'Ethiopians' as wise because of the heat of the sun, as opposed to the savage Scandinavians with their cold climate.[17] The medieval sources used here do not refer negatively to either Nubians or Ethiopians. Neither does this thesis convey a Postcolonialist approach as relationships with the Africans remained a bigger prize for the Crusaders than relations with the Crusaders were, if at all, for the Africans.

Given the current state of surviving documentation from Ethiopia and Nubia, it is the principal use of European writings and non-European sources where they do survive – and the influence of sociological theories, such as a network theory – that helps to shed light on the Nubian and Ethiopian presence in the Holy Land during the Crusades. Current network theories, such as Actor-Network Theory, are inappropriate for the evidence that we have (for instance, we do not know the names of the agents of exchange). Instead, we need to think of undocumented networks which are only evidenced by the effect they have as sources for later writings. My use of the term 'network' should be seen in this regard rather than to any specific existing theory.

'Undocumented networks' and 'communal knowledge' are key to the theory of the dissemination of knowledge in Section Two, and, to a lesser extent, in Section One. Section One's discussion of the exchanges of peoples in late antiquity in the Red Sea

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[17] Strabo, *Geography*, 17.2.1, pp. VIII:140-3; Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, 2.80.189, pp. I:320-1. On the medieval monstrous races, see: J. B. Friedman, *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought* (Syracuse, 2000).

region can sometimes produce traceable networks, as there are recorded journeys by diplomats, traders, and travellers, but not ones that appear to have survived the following centuries. In this regard, Section One is better described as a display of the knowledge that ancient authors disseminated, based on the texts that they read, the information gained from informants, or from personal experience in order to establish a potential base corpus for later authors to use. Section Two, on the other hand, requires a further explanation of undocumented networks as, particularly for the twelfth century, very few texts discuss either Nubians or Ethiopians or how their creators came to learn the information that they wrote. As such, this thesis inverts conventional network theory to devise a new approach for tracing the existence of networks without observable agents.

Traders and other sources of knowledge were central to the development of European knowledge regarding Nubia and Ethiopia from the twelfth century onwards as the information recorded following this century is not sourced from earlier texts. Some, such as Roger of Howden, did write an itinerary of his journey throughout the Red Sea in the second half of the twelfth century, detailing the land of *Abissi*, suggesting an integrated knowledge of the region through experience or informants.[18] Undocumented diasporas, notably of traders, cannot be conclusively shown to have been agents of knowledge, yet their occupation would prescribe them to having a large corpus of geographic knowledge in which to exchange in goods from distant lands.

Equally, traders were most engaged in multilingualism; a key element for the exchange of local knowledge in particularly. As with any mixed society, a range of languages would have been heard in and around the Crusader States. The

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[18] *Du Yorkshire à l'Inde. Une «Géographie» urbaine et maritime de la fin du XIIe siècle (Roger de Howden?)*, ed. P. Gautier-Dalché (Geneva, 2005), De Viis Maris, Ch. 11, pp. 216-7.

multilingualism of the Holy Land cannot be understated. European learning of Arabic

is well-known, but other Eastern languages were also learnt in order to navigate trade

and social networks, thus enabling engagement wih a diverse knowledge corpus.[19] We

can also see that Europeans did exchange with Africans in the wider Holy Land as

both shared similar geographic spaces, both in terms of Christian shrines and trading

entrepôts, creating what may be called 'communal knowledge'. The application of this

theory has been specifically developed for this thesis and can be viewed as the

antithesis of Brian Stock's notion of 'textual communities'.[20] By which I mean that

instead of a community organising itself around a central text, or set of texts,

'communal knowledge' is the uncodified knowledge that informs non-textual

communities. A European society in the Holy Land or Egypt would naturally interact

with peoples that other communities would not, thus developing their own

undocumented knowledge that was specific to their group's experience.

Additionally, this is not a thesis which focuses solely on the European but one that

also emphasises the role that non-Europeans, particularly the Africans themselves, had

on the development and dissemination of knowledge regarding Nubians and

Ethiopians. Due to the nature of the available sources, in some cases, there is little

direct evidence of interaction, but accompanying evidence can be drawn together to

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[19] H. M. Attiya, 'Knowledge of Arabic in the Crusade States in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', JMH, 25.3 (1999), pp. 203-13. There is a much larger literature on medieval multilingualism than what is referenced here with only the most relevant for this particular study being listed. For an introduction to linguistic awareness, see: E.-M. Wagner and B. Beinhoff, 'Introduction', in *Merchants of Innovation. The Languages of Traders*, eds. E.-M. Wagner, B. Beinhoff, and B. Outhwaite (Berlin, 2017), pp. 3-16. More generally: K. A. Tuley, 'Multilingualism and Power in the Latin East', in *Multilingualism in the Middles Ages and Early Modern Age. Communication and Miscommunication in the Premodern World*, ed. A. Classen (Berlin, 2016), pp. 177-206. Also see: B. Bischoff, 'The Study of Foreign Languages in the Middle Ages', *Speculum*, 36.2 (1961), pp. 209-24; K. Ciggaar, 'Manuscripts as Intermediaries: The Crusader States and Literary Cross-Fertilization', in *East and West I*, pp. 131-51; A. Garcia, 'The Meeting of Two Cultures: Linguistic Awareness', *Iberoromania*, 37 (1993), pp. 1-27; J. Hsy, 'Mobile Language-Networks and Medieval Travel Writing', *Postmedieval. A Journal of Medieval Cultural Studies*, 4.2 (2014), pp. 177-91.

[20] B. Stock, *The Implications of Literacy. Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton, 1983).

reasonably suggest that interaction did occur. Where these circumstances are presented in the thesis, their appearance based on the balance of probabilities is explicitly stated. Analysing undocumented networks enables this thesis to view knowledge exchange as a constant phenomenon that was not restricted merely to the production of texts, of which very few give any indication of a contemporary informant despite clearly not adhering to their stated sources, such as noted in Chapter VI in the case of Richard of Poitiers (d.1174).

The absence of many Old Nubian and Gəʿəz documents supporting any interactions is problematic. Currently, few Old Nubian documents have been published in comparison to the number thus far discovered, not to mention those which may yet be uncovered with further fieldwork. Broadly speaking, the surviving corpus of Old Nubian documents principally contains fragments of religious texts or contracts for local economic exchange. Very few texts survive which would directly aid this thesis. Moreover, the later regime changes, such as the Funj Sultanate (1504-1821) and the Egyptian invasion (1820-1), over the centuries have inhibited the protection of such documentation. The absence of early Gəʿəz sources on the other hand, appears to be the result of numerous raids on important stores and libraries, most notably the invasions of Iman Ahmed (sixteenth century), the Oromo invasions (sixteenth-seventeenth centuries), and the destruction of the Gondar treasury in the eighteenth century.[21] Equally, Ethiopian manuscripts are continually being uncovered with only a portion of current medieval manuscripts currently evaluated; principally *gadlāt* and chronicles.[22] However, this does not explain the lack of Ethiopic documents outside of

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[21] See: Huntingford, *Historical Geography*, pp. 4-7.
[22] On surviving Ethiopian literature, see: E. Cerulli, *Storia della Letteratura Etiopica* (Milan, 1961); D. Nosnitsin, 'Ethiopian Manuscripts and Ethiopian Manuscript Studies. A brief Overview and Evaluation', *Gazette du livre médiéval*, 58 (2012), pp. 1-16.

Ethiopia, despite known contacts and habitations. The manuscripts held by the Ethiopian community in modern Jerusalem primarily date from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, though at least one manuscript dates to the fourteenth century and others to the fifteenth.[23] That said, the example of the new finds of Ethiopian manuscripts at the Monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai in Egypt (despite unfortunately not being relevant for this study), suggests there may be more mansucripts yet to be discovered even amongst established collections.[24] Likewise, much more fieldwork would additionally uncover more manuscripts kept currently in Ethiopian monasteries. Neither Nubia nor Ethiopia have available chronicles to utilise in this study either, no Nubian chronicles, if they ever were even produced, have survived, and Ethiopian chronicles only date from the fourteenth century onwards. Thus, African documentation is limited for various reasons.

My discussion will primarily make use of narrative and descriptive sources that describe and explain historical events or that testify to geographical understanding. I will prioritise sources that make direct reference to the kingdoms of Nubia and Ethiopia or the vague area of *Aethiopia* ('Ethiopia') within North-Eastern Africa below Egypt. I will therefore not include the many Biblical references to 'Ethiopia' that have no bearing on the development of its understanding. The extent of the development will be assessed alongside the knowledge found in other writings in the East, mainly works written in Arabic, Coptic, and Syriac. Importantly here, the

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[23] E. Isaac, 'Shelf List of Ethiopian Manuscripts in the Monasteries of the Ethiopian Patriarchate of Jerusalem', RSE, 30 (1984-6), pp. 53-80.

[24] Adding to the original 6 noted by Murad Kamil in 1957, 2 more were found in 1975, with a few more discovered recently: M. Kamil, 'Les manuscrits éthiopiens du Sinaï', *Annales d'Ethiopie*, 2 (1957), 86-90; B. Isaksson, 'The Monastery of St. Catherine and the New Find', in *Built on Solid Rock. Studies in Honour of Professor Ebbe Egede Knudsen on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday April 11th 1997*, ed. E. Wardini (Oslo, 1997), 136; C. Rapp, 'Secluded Place or Global Magnet? The Monastery of Saint Catherine in the Sinai and Its Manuscript Collection', in *Global Byzantium. Proceedings of the 50th Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, eds. L. Brubaker, R. Darley, and D. Reynolds (London, forthcoming).

sources concerning Nubia and Ethiopia for this period can be divided into four categories: those that reference Nubia directly; those that reference 'Ethiopia', though other details suggest that they mean Nubia; those that reference Ethiopia directly; and those that reference 'Ethiopia' but describe a vague region rather than a kingdom.

Attempts to collect external sources on the Nubian kingdoms have provided incomplete collections for a systematic study whilst also presenting issues of translation, though they have been extremely valuable for this thesis; there have been no comparable collections for Ethiopia to date.[25] There are, though, collections of European sources describing Africa more generally which can be built upon.[26] According to Bogdan Żurawski's list of sources detailing the Nubian capital of Dongola, only one European source is listed for the period discussed here: the *Libro del conoscimiento de todos los reinos* (c.1378-1402).[27] However, amongst other texts, one additional example would be the Italian monk Ristoro d'Arezzo's 1282 *La composizione del mondo* which references *Ducala*. The lack of awareness of the extent of European sources which discuss Nubia, let alone Ethiopia, epitomises current historiographical shortcomings.

The sources presented here do not, however, include those that reference 'India' or concern the figure of Prester John when they appear without a clear geographical African context. The inclusion of such references would only confuse the reader with

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[25] See: G. Vantini, *Oriental Sources Concerning Nubia* (Heidelberg, 1975), though it contains numerous errors and is far from complete. A comparative 'Occidental' collection has yet to be undertaken, although some attempts have been made, primarily: A. Kammerer, *Le mer Rouge, l'Abyssinie et l'Arabie depuis l'Antiquité, vol. 1* (Cairo, 1929); G. Vantini, *Christianity in the Sudan* (Bologna, 1981), pp. 123-44. Additionally, a combination of Western and Eastern sources detailing the Nubian capital covering our period has been collected in: B. Żurawski, 'Dongola, the City of the Makurians (Literary Sources to 1956)', in *Dongola-Studien. 35 Jahre polnischer Forschungen im Zentrum des makuritischen Reiches*, eds. S. Jakobielski and P. O. Scholz (Warsaw, 2001), pp. 75-94.
[26] Most importantly, see: MCAA.
[27] Żurawski, 'Dongola', pp. 89-90.

speculative geographies, especially as delineating 'Ethiopia' and 'India' is a thesis in itself. In order to combat this textual problem, all texts will be provided in translation, whether by me or from a published edition, with the ethnonyms or toponyms in discussion being presented in the original language of the text in order to highlight the wording of the analysis at hand and for any avoidance of doubt by the reader.

Current Historiography

The impact of the Crusades on both Nubia and Ethiopia is often underplayed in general histories of the kingdoms and almost never appears in Crusade histories.[28] That being said, literature on the role of Nubia and Ethiopia in the events of the Holy Land has been growing in recent decades. In relation to this study, generally speaking, it has been Nubiologists and Ethiopicists who have tended to focus on Nubian/Ethiopian-European relations much more than historians of the Crusades or medieval Europe. More often than not, discussion of the impact of the Crusades on Oriental Christians has usually meant Greeks, Armenians, Jacobites, and Melkites, with Nubians and Ethiopians being restricted to a few footnotes, if that. In Crusades historiography, Bernard Hamilton has been the principal historian to assess the role of North-East Africa in the crusading context and has noted how the Crusades resulted in

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[28] For Nubia, see: A. J. Arkell, *A History of the Sudan from the Earliest Times to 1821* (London, 1961); Vantini, *Christianity in the Sudan*; D. N. Edwards, *The Nubian Past. An Archaeology of the Sudan* (New York, 2004); P. M. Holt and M. W. Daly, *A History of the Sudan. From the Coming of Islam to the Present Day* (Oxon, 2011). For Ethiopia, see: J. S. Trimingham, *Islam in Ethiopia* (London, 1952); D. Buxton, *The Abyssinians* (London, 1970); R. Pankhurst, *A Social History of Ethiopia. The Northern and Central Highlands from Early Medieval Times to the Rise of Emperor Tewodros II* (Addis Ababa, 1990); P. B. Henze, *Layers of Time. A History of Ethiopia* (New York, 2000); D. Crummey, *Land and Society in the Christian Kingdom of Ethiopia. From the Thirteenth to the Twentieth Century* (Urbana, 2000); R. Pankhurst, *The Ethiopians. A History* (Bodmin, 2001); H. G. Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia* (Berkeley, 2002); N. Finneran, *The Archaeology of Ethiopia* (London, 2007); H. Erlich, *The Cross and the River. Ethiopia, Egypt and the Nile* (Boulder, 2014).

an expansion of European knowledge regarding Nubia and Ethiopia.[29] It is precisely the work of Hamilton that I intend to expand upon here. Increasingly, the broader African role has been the subject of scholarship in recent decades, epitomised by the collection of essays, the first of its kind, edited by Benjamin Weber, dedicated to Africa and the Crusades. The fact that not all entries reference Nubia and Ethiopia highlights the much-understudied topic of the vast interconnectivity between Africa and the Crusades.[30]

Following Giovanni Vantini's hypothesis, published in 1978, that the Second Council of Lyons in 1274 had a direct effect on the decline of Nubia, the history of Nubia and the Crusades have been entwined.[31] Since Vantini, significant discussions regarding Nubia and the Crusades, both arguing for and against Nubian-Crusader interaction, have been written by Peter Shinnie, Robin Seignobos, and Effie Zacharopoulou within Nubian historiography.[32] Nevertheless, across historiographical fields, studies of European-Nubian and European-Ethiopian relations have so far focused primarily on the period of late antiquity or the coming of the Jesuits in the sixteenth century.[33]

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[29] Most recently: B. Hamilton, 'The Lands of Prester John: Western Knowledge of Asia and Africa at the Time of the Crusades', *Haskins Society Journal*, 15 (2006), pp. 127-41; B. Hamilton, 'The Crusades and North-East Africa', in *Crusading and Warfare in the Middle Ages. Realities and Representations. Essays in Honour of John France*, eds. S. John and N. Morton (Farnham, 2014), pp. 167-80.

[30] B. Weber, ed., *Les Croisades en Afrique* (Toulouse, 2019).

[31] G. Vantini, 'Sur l'eventualite de rapports entre le concile de Lyon (1274) et la Nubie', in *Études nubienne. Colloque de Chantilly, 2-6 Juillet 1975*, eds. J. Leclant and J. Vercoutter (Cairo, 1978), pp. 337-45.

[32] P. L. Shinnie, 'Christian Nubia and the Crusades', *Nubica*, I/II, (1990), pp. 603-9; R. Seignobos, 'L'autre Ethiopie: La Nubie et la Croisades (XIIᵉ-IVᵉ siècle)', *Annales d'Éthiopie*, 27 (2012), pp. 49-69; E. Zacharopoulou, 'Μια ερμηνευτικη προσεγγιση της σχεσησ της χριστιανικησ νουβιασ με τους σταυροφορουσ', *Ekklesiastikos Pharos N.S. 24*, 95 (2013), pp. 107-30; E. Zacharopoulou, 'Ο σουλτάνος Baybars και η Νουβία υπό το πρίσμα των σταυροφοριών: μια κριτική προσέγγιση', in *Greece, Rome, Byzantium and Africa. Studies presented to Benjamin Hendrickx on his Seventy-Fifth Birthday*, eds. W. J. Henderson and E. Zacharopoulou (Johannesburg, 2014), pp. 389-414. Nubia also features in the review of the Near East during the Crusading period by Peter Holt: P. M. Holt, *The Age of the Crusades. The Near East from the Eleventh Century to 1517* (London, 1986), pp. 130-7.

[33] For before the era of the Crusades, see: T. M. Jones, 'East African Influences Upon the Byzantine Empire', *Journal of Negro History*, 43.1 (1958), pp. 50-61; T. Papadopoulos, *Africanabyzantina. Byzantine Influences on Negro-Sudanese Cultur*es (Athens, 1966); W. H. C., Frend, 'Nubia as an Outpost of Byzantine Cultural Influence', *Byzantinoslavica*, 29 (1968), pp. 319-26; A. M. Demicheli, 'I

Most works also tend to focus primarily only on Ethiopia. Seldom are both Nubia and

Ethiopia considered together in a single study, with the principal exceptions of Ernest

Alfred Wallis Budge's general history and George Hatke's study of North-East

African late antiquity, which has hindered the production of such a holistic study that

this thesis is.[34] As the myth of Prester John has most often been associated with

Ethiopia it is probably no surprise that Ethiopian-European relations have been the

subject of more dedicated works than those on Nubia; though principally focusing on

the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, with a tendency to focus on the latter

period.[35] Instead, political relations have often been ignored, with the focus of

scholarship largely being on the presence of Africans in the Holy Land since Enrico

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regni cristiani di Nubia e I loro rapport col mondo bizantino', *Aegyptus*, 58.1-2 (1978), pp. 177-208; G. M. A. el-Tahir, *Βυζαντινο-Νουβικά, η συμβολή των Σουδανών στην άμυνα της βυζαντινής Αιγύπτου* (Ioannina, 1994); S. M. Burnstein, *Graeco-Africana. Studies in the Greek Relations with Egypt and Nubia* (New York, 1995); W. Godlewski, 'Nubia, Egypt and Byzantium', in *Perceptions of Byzantium and its Neighbors. 843-1261*, ed. O. Z. Pevny (New York, 2000), pp. 168-78; E. Zacharopoulou, *Νουβία και Βυζάντιο (6ος αι.-ca. 1500). Η πορεία του Χριστιανισμού της Νουβίας υπό το πρίσμα των εξελίξεων στη Βυζαντινή Αυτοκρατορία* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Johannesburg, 2011). As this thesis does not concern the period of the Jesuits, for references, see first: L. Cohen and A. Martínez d'Alòs-Moner, 'The Jesuit Mission in Ethiopia (16th-17th Centuries): An Analytical Bibliography', *Aethiopica*, 9 (2006), pp. 190-212.

[34] E. A. W. Budge, *A History of Ethiopia. Nubia and Abyssinia*, 2 vols. (London, 1928); G. Hatke, *Aksum and Nubia. Warfare, Commerce and Political Fictions in Ancient Northeast Africa* (New York, 2013).

[35] R. Lefevre, 'Riflessi etiopici nella cultura europea del medioevo e del rinascimento – parte seconda', *Annali Lateranensi*, 9 (1945), pp. 331-444; J. Richard, 'Les premiers missionaires latins en Éthiopie (XIIe–XIVe siècles)', in *Atti del convegno internazionale di studi etiopici, Roma 2-4 Aprile 1959* (Rome, 1960), pp. 323-9; Tadesse, *Church and State*, pp. 250-67; M. Abir, *Ethiopia and the Red Sea. The Rise and Decline of the Solomonic Dynasty and Muslim-European Rivalry in the Region* (London, 1980); C. F. Beckingham, 'Ethiopia and Europe 1200-1650', in *The European Outthrust and Encounter. The First Phase c.1400-c.1700. Essays in Tribute to David Beers Quinn on His 85th Birthday*, eds. C. H. Clough and P. E. H. Hair (Liverpool, 1994), pp. 77-96; W. Baum, *Äithiopien und der Westen im Mittelalter. Die Selbstbehauptung der christlichen Kultur am oberen Nil zwischen dem islamischen Orient und dem europäischen Kolonialismus* (Klagenfurt, 2001); M. Salvadore, 'The Ethiopian Age of Exploration: Prester John's Discovery of Europe, 1306–1458', JWH, 21 (2010), pp. 593-627; B. Weber, 'Vrais et faux Éthiopiens au XVe siècle en Occident? Du bon usage des connexions', *Annales d'Éthiopie*, 27 (2012), pp. 107-26; A. Kurt, 'The Search for Prester John, A Projected Crusade and the Eroding Prestige of Ethiopian Kings, c.1200-c.1540', JMH, 39.3 (2013), pp. 1-24; V. Krebs, *Windows onto the World. Culture Contact and Western Christian Art in Ethiopia, 1402-1543* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Konstanz University, 2014); M. Salvadore, *The African Prester John and the Birth of Ethiopian-European Relations, 1402-1555* (Abingdon, 2016); A. Knobler, *Mythology and Diplomacy in the Age of Exploration* (Leiden, 2017), pp. 30-56.

Cerulli's seminal two-volume work *Etiopi in Palestina* in the 1940s.[36] Discussion of

the presence of Africans in the Holy Land and the possible implications that the

Crusades had on the kingdoms has remained separate.

That said, some of the implications that such interaction had on European knowledge

have been a focus within historiography. Important works by Anna-Dorothee von den

Brincken and Camille Rouxpetel have reviewed how Europeans perceived Nubians

and Ethiopians in the East amongst other Eastern Christians, albeit within a

framework centred on European constructions of difference without focusing on the

process of the construction of knowledge.[37] Other works of note that highlight the

intellectual development within European discourse regarding North-East Africans are

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[36] Cerulli, *Etiopi*. The period in question here is discussed between: pp. I:8-199. Subsequent studies have tended to be more nuanced between focusing on either Nubians or Ethiopians. For Nubians, see: O. F. A. Meinardus, 'The Christian Kingdoms of Nubia', *Nubie – Cahiers d'Histoire Égyptienne*, 10 (1967), pp. 159-64; D. Ceccarelli Morolli, 'Le fonti occidentali medeivali sulla presenza nubiana in Gerusalemme', *Studia Orientalia Christiana: Collectanea*, 32 (1999), pp. 5-60; D. Ceccarelli Morolli, 'Richerche de ipotesi circa la 'Cappella Nubiana' in Gerusalemme', in *Acta Nubica. Proceedings of the Tenth International Conference of Nubian Studies*, eds. I. Caneva and A. Roccati (Rome, 2006), pp. 327-36. For Ethiopians, see: K. Petracek, 'Äthiopier in Jerusalem in den tschechischen Reisebeschreibungen des XV und XVI Jahrhunderts', *Archivi Orientalny*, 26.3 (1958), pp. 347-65; O. Meinardus, 'The Ethiopians in Jerusalem', *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, 76 (1965), pp. 112-22, 217-31; E. van Donzel, 'The Ethiopian Presence in Jerusalem Until 1517', in *The Third International Conference on Bilad al-Sham: Palestine 19-24 April 1980*, ed. Y. al-Yarmuk, 3 vols. (Amman, 1983-4), pp. I:93-104; A. O'Mahony, 'Between Islam and Christendom: The Ethiopian Community in Jerusalem Before 1517', *Medieval Encounters*, 2.2 (1996), pp. 140-54; E. van Donzel, 'Ethiopia's Lalibäla and the Fall of Jerusalem 1187', *Aethiopica*, 1 (1998), pp. 27-49; E. van Donzel, 'Were There Ethiopians in Jerusalem at the Time of Saladin's Conquest in 1187?', in *East and West II*, pp. 125-30; A. O'Mahony, 'Pilgrims, Politics and Holy Places: The Ethiopian Community in Jerusalem Until ca. 1650', in *Jerusalem. Its Sanctity and Centrality to Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, ed. L. I. Levine (New York, 2004), pp. 467-81; K. Stoffregen Pedersen, 'The Ethiopian Community in Jerusalem Under Mamluke Rule (1260-1516)', in *Ethiopian Studies at the End of the Second Millennium. Proceedings of the XIVth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies. November 6-11, 2000, Addis Ababa*, eds. B. Yimam, R. Pankhurst, D. Chapple, Y. Admassu, A. Pankhurst, and B. Teferra, 3 vols. (Addis Ababa, 2002), pp. I: 267-74; J. Pahlitzsch and D. Baraz, 'Christian Communities in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem (1099–1187 CE)', in *Christians and Christianity in the Holy Land. From the Origins to the Latin Kingdoms*, eds. O. Limor and G. G. Stroumsa (Turnhout, 2006), pp. 230-1; A. O'Mahony, '"Making Safe the Holy Way": Ethiopian Pilgrim and Monastic Presence in the 14th-16th Century Egypt and Jerusalem', *Aram: Society for Syro-Mesopotamian Studies*, 18-9 (2006-7), pp. 711-26;
[37] A.-D. von den Brincken, *Die 'Nationes christianorum orientalium' im Verständnis der lateinischen Historiographie. Von der Mitte des 12. bis in die zweite Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Cologne, 1973), pp. 243-86; C. Rouxpetel, '«Indiens, Éthiopiens et Nubiens» dans les récits de pèlerinage occidentaux: entre altérité constatée et altérité construite (XIIe-XIVe siècles)', *Annales d'Éthiopie*, 27 (2012), pp. 71-90; C. Rouxpetel, *L'Occident au miroir de l'Orient chrétien. Cilicie, Syrie, Palestine et Égypte (XIIe-XIVe siècle)* (Rome, 2015), pp. 104-6, 115-36.

by Bertrand Hirsch, Robin Seignobos, Emmanuelle Vagnon, and Mordechai Lewy which have analysed Europe's cartographic and conceptual attempts at locating Nubia and Ethiopia, all of whom have noted how European knowledge developed throughout the period; with these works complementing François de Medeiros' exploration of the development of Africa in cultural and intellectual European discourses more generally.[38] In turn, this thesis expands on these studies, along with the work of Bernard Hamilton, to highlight how these developments in knowledge regarding Nubians and Ethiopians were fostered and to further question what effect this then had on crusading discourse.

Currently, no study has analysed how a presence in the Holy Land could have then in turn developed the required knowledge that Europeans began to utilise in their search for an African ally and Prester John. This historiographical void will be filled by this thesis, which will show that with the fourteenth-century culmination of the replacement of Nubia by Ethiopia in European discourse, this development was only possible due to the processes of knowledge accumulation in the previous two centuries involving undocumented networks and communal knowledge in the Holy Land. Interactions between Europeans, Africans, and other groups disseminated knowledge which was then utilised by the Europeans for their own personal desires – namely to regain power in the Holy Land after 1187.

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[38] B. Hirsch, 'L'espace nubien et éthiopien sur les cartes portulans du XIVe siècle', *Médiévales*, 18 (1990), pp. 69-92; R. Seignobos, 'Nubia and Nubians in Medieval Latin Culture: The Evidence of Maps (12th-14th Century)', in *The Fourth Cataract and Beyond. Proceedings of the Twelfth International Conference for Nubian Studies*, eds. J. R. Anderson and D. A. Welsby (Leuven, 2014), pp. 989-1004; E. Vagnon, 'Comment localiser l'Éthiopie? La confrontation des sources antiques et des témoignages moders au XVe siècle', *Annales d'Éthiopie*, 27 (2012), pp. 21-48. Lewy does not necessarily distinguish between Ethiopians and Nubians, however: M. Lewy, *Der Apokalyptische Abessinier – Der Transfer eines Frühislamischen Motivs nach Europa. Eine eschatologische Deutung des Horns von Afrika in Mappae mundi des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Goethe-Universität zu Frankfurt am Main, 2017). For the more general relationship, see: F. de Medeiros, *L'Occident et l'Afrique (XIIIe-XVe siècle). Images et représentations* (Paris, 1985).

Section One outlines European knowledge of Nubia and Ethiopia throughout the first millennium prior to the period of stagnation in the seventh century. In fact, contemporary European knowledge of the Nubian and Ethiopian kingdoms appears limited, or possibly even non-existent, around the onset of the First Crusade. It is following this stagnation that the Crusades witnessed a (re)introduction of Nubia and Ethiopia into European discourse as knowledge did not, at first, rival knowledge of the pre-seventh century. Most importantly, this period of knowledge expansion coincided with the existence of intimate networks of Europeans, Nubians, Ethiopians, and other Eastern groups, both documented and undocumented, which enabled news and rumour to disseminate regarding the African kingdoms. Section Two outlines the potential regions most likely to have had such networks and how having a continued presence in these networks developed a communal knowledge amongst residents in the East. For example, the existence of the toponym of Abyssinia is evidence of a growing European understanding of highland Ethiopia as opposed to the historic 'Ethiopia' of Nubia. Interaction in the Holy Land enabled for the specific understand of both Nubia and Ethiopia separately.

Section Three argues that through the knowledge accumulated in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Europeans in turn utilised this knowledge for their own means. Not only were Nubia and Ethiopia new missionary targets, only possible due to the expansion of geographic knowledge regarding the kingdoms, but they were also viewed as potential crusading allies. This thesis argues that the relations between Europe and Ethiopia in the fifteenth century were only possible because of an earlier gathering of information and a mis-placed European faith on Nubia which had faded

by the mid-fourteenth century, which Ethiopia manipulated for its own gain. The replacement of Nubia by Ethiopia in European discourse can aptly be witnessed through the developing myth of Prester John, who initially was a Nubian before being viewed as an Ethiopian. The histories of Nubia, Ethiopia, and the Crusades are intertwined, both directly and indirectly, as this thesis will show.

Section One

Nubia and Ethiopia in the Latin *Orbis*

Christianorum

I: Navigating Amongst the 'Ethiopias'

Knowledge accumulated in the Crusader States resulted in increased knowledge of peoples and of kingdoms; the kingdoms of North-East Africa were no exception.[1] By no means was this new knowledge completely accurate, but the period clearly witnessed an epistomological development.[2] Before continuing, the definitions of Nubia, 'Ethiopia', and Ethiopia in medieval texts should be further explained. Specifically, this chapter will see how 'Ethiopia' came to be better defined, when and why Nubia and Abyssinia developed as separate toponyms, and how they were understood in order to lay the foundation for the remainder of the thesis.

What was 'Ethiopia'?

The region of 'Ethiopia', which was vaguely understood by medieval Europeans, has been the subject of various toponyms since the ancient Egyptians.[3] In fact, the word 'Ethiopia' (*ai-ti-jo-qo*) is first attested in Linear B and was subsequently transmitted to Latin via Greek.[4] North-East Africa and its peoples (by which I mean the region below Egypt), despite its employment in rhetoric to display distance, were relatively well-known. The primary problem with the majority of medieval European geographical references to 'Ethiopia' is the apparent vagueness of meaning: how far

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[1] Hamilton, 'Lands of Prester John'; Hamilton, 'Crusades and North-East Africa'.

[2] For example, see: A.-D. von den Brincken, 'Beobachtungen zum geographischen Berichtshorizont der lateinischen Weltchronistik', in *Julius Africanus und die christliche Weltchronik*, ed. M. Wallraff (Berlin, 2006), pp. 161-78.

[3] F. Breyer, 'Äthiopisches in altägyptischen Quellen? Eine kritische Evaluation', in *Multidisciplinary Views on the Horn of Africa*, ed. Elliesie, pp. 3-23.

[4] On the linguistic development of the toponym of 'Ethiopia', see: D. Seldon, 'How the Ethiopian Changed his Skin', *Classical Antiquity*, 32.2 (2013), pp. 327-8.

did 'Ethiopia' actually extend?[5] Indeed, was there a common understanding of what 'Ethiopia' was? If so, what then caused such a perceived linguistical confusion in Europe? As will be argued here, 'Ethiopia' often meant Nubia (or Kush/Meroë); though that is not to ignore other equally vague terminology, including the use of 'India' to mean 'Ethiopia', or indeed Ethiopia proper, in classical writings.[6] There was, however, a difference between the factual and the mythical – the mythical does not concern this thesis. In antiquity, 'Ethiopia' had long been a recurring construct and feature of the edges of the known earth, yet East/North-East Africa was actually factually relatively well-known to writers such as Ptolemy.[7]

For a better understanding of the development of European toponyms for 'Ethiopia' we must first return to its ancient toponyms. 'Ethiopia' was said to have acquired its name because of its people: the Greek for its inhabitants literally meaning 'burnt-face' (αιθιω-ωψ). Medieval Europeans, such as the Englishman Gervase of Tilbury (wr. c.1209-14), also associated 'Ethiopia' with a form of darkness.[8] It is another line in his work, however, which is important for our distinctions. He also notes how 'Ethiopia' and Kush are one of the same (*Chus enim Ebraica lingua Ethiops interpretatur*),

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[5] H. G. H. Taboada, 'La extensión de Etiopía', *Inicio*, 6 (1988), pp. 135-47; W. James, 'A "Frontier Mosaic". Ethiopia's Western Edge', JES, 40.1/2 (2007), pp. 277-91, esp. 280-2.

[6] See: U. P. Arora, '"India" Vis-à-vis Egypt – Ethiopia in Classical Accounts', *Graeco-Arabica*, 1 (1982), pp. 131-40; M. van Wyk Smith, '"Waters Flowing from Darkness" The Two Ethiopias in the Early European Image of Africa', *Theoria: A Journal of Social and Political Theory*, 68 (1986), pp. 67-77; P. Mayerson, 'A Confusion of Indias: Asian India and African India in the Byzantine Sources', JAOS, 113.2 (1993), pp. 169-74; P. Schneider, *L'Ethiopie et l'Inde. Interférences et confusions aux extrémités du monde antique. VIIIe siècle avant J. C. - VIe siècle après J. C.* (Paris, 2004).

[7] J. S. Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought* (Princeton, 1992), pp. 45-60; K. Geus, 'Die Aithiopen und die afrikanische Ostküste in der *Geographie* des Ptolemaios: Ein Überblick', in *Multidisciplinary Views on the Horn of Africa. Festschrift in Honour of Rainer Voigt's 70th Birthday*, ed. H. Elliesie (Cologne, 2014), pp. 25-35. For the initial development of the classical understanding of Nubia, see: S. M. Burnstein, 'The Origins of the Napatan State in Classical Sources', in *Meroitica. Studien zum antiken Sudan*, ed. S. Wenig (Wiesbaden, 1999), pp. 118-24.

[8] Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia Imperialia. Recreation for an Emperor*, eds. and trans. S. E. Banks and J. W. Binns (Oxford, 2002), Book II Ch. 4, 214 (*Interpretatur autem Ethiopia 'tenebre'*). This explanation had been given as early as Homer.

reiterating what had earlier been written by Isidore of Seville.[9] Understanding that 'Ethiopia' was also the translation of the Hebrew word כוש (Kush) is important as early mistranslation began a dissemination which ultimately created such confusion. Kush should be centred on the Sudan with Egyptian sources recalling Kush ($K^3\check{s}$) as early as the Middle Kingdom (c. late second millennium BCE).[10] This became problematic when the Septuagint translated the Hebrew Old Testament in the third century BCE, with the word כוש being translated as Αἰθιοπία; ultimately becoming *Aethiopia* in Latin.[11]

The first 'scholarly' descriptions of Αἰθιοπία are found in the fifth-century BCE Greek *Histories* of Herodotus, though he uses the term for both a vague region and for Nubia.[12] Despite not detailing a specific Nubian land, he did mention the town of Μεροή – the epicentre of the ancient empire in Nubia – which is called the 'capital of all of Αἰθιόπων'.[13] The first surviving Latin references associating both Nubia and 'Ethiopia' directly appear in references to earlier writers by the first-century CE Roman writer Pliny the Elder in his *Naturalis Historia*. *Aethiopia* first appears whilst Pliny is discussing the lost works of the third century BCE Greek travellers Dalion, Aristocreon, Simonides the Younger, Bion, and Basilis. He wrote that not only had Dalion, Aristocreon, and Bion and Basilis sailed further down river than Meroë but

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[9] Ibid.

[10] For various examples, see: L. Török, *The Kingdom of Kush* (Leiden, 1997), pp. 1-3. The earliest example is given at: 1n4.

[11] For the origins and dating of this translation process, see: N. Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context. Introduction to the Greek Versions of the Bible*, trans. W. Watson (Leiden, 2000), pp. 3-105.

[12] Each historical use of Αἰθιοπία can be found in Herodotus, *Histories*, 2.29-30, 2.42.3-4, 2.137.1-4, 2.161.1, 3.17.1-26.1, 3.97, 3.114, 4.183.4, 4.197, 7.69-70, in Herodotus, *Histories*, ed. and trans. A. D. Godley, 4 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1920-5), pp. I:306-11, 326-7, 440-3, 474-5, II:24-35, 124-5, 140-1, 386-7, 398-401, III:380-3. However, the first use of the term in a Greek context is found earlier in Homer's *Iliad* (1.423 and 23.206) and *Odyssey* (1.22-23, 4.84 and 5.282-7): Homer, *Iliad*, ed. and trans. A. T. Murray and W. F. Wyatt, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1999), pp. I:44-5, II:506-9; Homer, *Odyssey*, ed. and trans. A. T. Murray and G. E. Dimock, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1995), pp. I:14-5, 124-5, 202-3.

[13] Herodotus, *Histories*, ed. and trans. Godley, 2.29-30, pp. I:306-11.

that Simonides the Younger had stayed in Meroë for five years whilst writing his account of *Aethiopia*.[14] Simonides' account does not survive, but his 'Ethiopia' was specifically associated with Nubia. The inter-changing of 'Ethiopia' in relation to Nubia is repeated again in Pliny. For example, whilst referencing Aristocreon, Pliny makes note of the *Nubaei Aethiopes*.[15] Aksum, however, tended to be described as such by classical authors and not as 'Ethiopia', with primarily modern scholars seeing a confusion. Philostorgius appears to be the first writer to relate Aksum to 'Ethiopia', possibly using Theophilus' mission as source, but his 'Ethiopia' was a region in which Aksum was in, not the kingdom itself.[16] This understanding of 'Ethiopia', either as Nubia directly or as a vague region adjacent to Egypt, was the 'Ethiopia' that influenced the early Crusade historians.

An important aspect of medieval European understanding of 'Ethiopia' was drawn from its appearance in the Bible. Theology consistently played a role in defining 'Ethiopia' in medieval writings throughout the Crusades with Biblical exegesis being the foundation of many historical works, thus further emphasising the association

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[14] Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, 6.35.183, pp. II:474-5.

[15] Ibid., 6.35.191-192, pp. II:480-1. Nubia also survives as an independent toponym during the same time in Strabo's Greek *Geography*, where, upon referencing the third-century BCE writer Eratosthenes, he wrote of the Νοῦβαι: Strabo, *Geography*, 17.1.2-3, pp. VIII:2-9.

[16] Philostorgius, *Kirchengeschichte*, ed. J. Bidez (Berlin, 1981), pp. 35-6; R. Schneider, 'Notes on the Royal Aksumite Inscriptions', in *Languages and Cultures of Eastern Christianity. Ethiopian*, ed. A. Bausi (Farnham, 2012), pp. 46-8. Equally, the text of the Acts of Saint Arethas does not necessarily equate Aksum with being *the* city of Ethiopia or Kālēb as *the* king of Ethiopia and can be read in the same light as Philostorgius: *Le martyre de saint Aréthas et de ses compagnons*, eds. and trans. M. Detoraki and J. Beaucamp (Paris, 2007), Ch. 1, pp. 183-5: τότε τῆς Αἰθιόπων χώρας ἐβασίλευσεν Ἐλεσβαὰς ὁ δικαιότατος ἐν Αὐξουμῇ τῇ πόλει τῆς αὐτῆς Αἰθιόπων. Joëlle Beaucamp translated χώρας explicitly as 'country' (*pays*) rather than the alternative 'land' which would instead situate Ethiopia more vaguely as a region and thus conform to the hypothesis forwarded by this thesis. Even writers who do appear to link 'Ethiopia' to Ethiopia, such as Procopius and Photius I, felt the need to clearly define their 'Ethiopia' as encompassing Aksum rather than presuming an understanding by their readers, suggesting that 'Ethiopia' remained more commonly understood to be a region rather than specifically the kingdom in highland Ethiopia, including when Photius describes Aksum as the 'metropolis of all Αἰθιοπίας' in his summation of Nonnosus, which instead reflects Aksum's influence in north-east Africa more generally: Procopius, *History of the Wars*, ed. and trans. H. B. Dewing, 5 vols. (Cambridge, Ma, 1914-28), Book I, Chs. 19-20, pp. I:178-95; Photius, *Bibliothèque*, ed. and trans. R. Henry, 9 vols. (Paris, 1959-91), pp. I:5-7.

between Kush (Nubia) and 'Ethiopia'.[17] 'The primary association of 'Ethiopia' was with the River Gehon (Nile), one of the four Rivers of Paradise, and the Nile was consistenly placed in relation to *Aethiopia*, for instance by Hermannus Augiensis in the early eleventh century.[18] The Gehon itself was first attributed to the Nile by Josephus in the first century CE and was soon adopted by Christian writers, notably Isidore of Seville.[19] This Biblical influence was also present in the chroniclers of the First Crusade. Fulcher of Chartres (wr. before c.1128) located the flow of the Nile through 'Ethiopia' because it was *ut legimus* (as we read [in Genesis]).[20] It is clear that 'Ethiopia' was a product of Biblical testimony, and that this influenced 'Ethiopia's' location rather than classical or late antique sources. Irrespective of whether the translation of Kush to *Aethiopia* had a significant effect on geographic understanding, the Nile itself was known to be located in North-East Africa; given its passage through Egypt, Nubia was understood to be the 'Ethiopia' it flowed through.

Only when texts clearly allow for the localising of 'Ethiopia' can we deduce any geographic attributes. Emmanuelle Vagnon has proposed that the 'Ethiopia' described by medieval authors cannot be accurately defined and remained more of a concept

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[17] de Medeiros, *L'Occident et l'Afrique*, pp. 107-35; H. de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis. The Four Senses of Scripture*, trans. M. Sebanc and E. M. Macierowski, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids, 1998-2009), pp. II:41-82. On references to 'Ethiopia' in the Bible, see: E. Ullendorff, *Ethiopians and the Bible* (London, 1968), pp. 5-15; J. A. Dyer, *The Ethiopian in the Bible* (New York, 1974).
[18] Hermanus Augiensis, 'De Utilitatibus Astrolabii', Book I Ch. 19, in PL 143.403. See: O. G. S. Crawford, 'Some Medieval Theories About the Nile', *The Geographical Journal*, 114.1/3 (1949), pp. 6-23; J.-M. Courtès, 'The Theme of "Ethiopia" and "Ethiopians" in Patristic Literature', in IBWA II.I, pp. 199-214.
[19] Flavius Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, ed. and trans. H. St. J. Thackeray, R. Marcus, and L. H. Feldman, 9 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1930-65), Book I Ch. 39, pp. I:18-20; *Isidori Hispalensis Etymologiarum*, ed. Lindsay, II: Book XIII Ch. 21.
[20] Fulcheri Cartonensis, *Historia Hierosolymitana (1095-1127). Mit Erläuterungen und einem Anhange*, ed. H. Hagenmeyer (Heidelberg, 1913), Book II Ch. 57, pp. 597-8; Fulcher of Chartres, *A History of the Expedition to Jerusalem, 1095-1127*, trans. F. R. Ryan with an introduction by H. S. Fink (Knoxville, 1969), pp. 216-7.

than a definitive location until the fifteenth century.[21] Whilst it is true that there was no unilateral medieval understanding of 'Ethiopia', it can somewhat be navigated.[22] Here, I propose that we can define 'Ethiopia', especially in relation to the kingdoms of Ethiopia and Nubia. Instead of viewing 'Ethiopia' merely as a concept, we can begin to view different 'Ethiopias' depending on the context of the author. For example, a vague encompassing term of 'Ethiopia' – usually described as 'Western Ethiopia' – may well be attributed to greater Africa, yet a localised 'Ethiopia' – or 'Eastern Ethiopia' – in north-east Africa may well be said, with reasonable assumption, to have meant Nubia, particularly before the turn of the fourteenth century.

Regrettably, there are no known examples of a Nubian self-identification with Psalm 68:31 or any other Biblical passage concerning a kingdom of 'Ethiopia'. This is exemplary of the lack of surviving Nubian evidence and limits our understanding of the existence of any Nubian self-awareness of being the Ethiopians of the Bible which could have further influenced European discourse. However, the Sahidic Coptic translation of the Bible translates Kush as both the vaguer ⲉⲑⲁⲩϣ and the more explicitly 'Nubian' ⲛⲉϭⲟⲟϣ, which Nubians may have used as a self-identification given their widespread use of Coptic.[23] It may be likely that Nubians continued to

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[21] Vagnon, 'Comment localiser l'Éthiopie?'. For the comparison of 'India', see: M. O'Doherty, *The Indies and the Medieval West. Thought, Report, Imagination* (Turnhout, 2013), pp. 241-95.
[22] For example, Vincent de Beauvais merely recycles the vague 'Ethiopia' of Isidore of Seville in his *Speculum historiale* (c.1234-64), whereas Bartholomaeus Anglicus in his *De proprietatibus rerum* (c.1240) restated the Western and Eastern 'Ethiopias': Vincent de Beauvais, 'Speculum historiale', in *Bibliotheca Mundi seu Speculi Maiores Vincentii Burgundi praesulis Bellovacensis*, ed. Benedictines of Douai (Douai, 1624), Book 1 Chs. 76-7, pp. 28-9; Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, ed. A. Koberger (Nuremberg, 1492), Book 15 Ch. 52. However, the eastern 'Ethiopia' can be identifiable with the area surrounding Nubia, with the western 'Ethiopia' clearly being a separate region which does not concern us here.
[23] Queen Candace is called the 'Kandake of the Nubians' (ⲕⲁⲛⲇⲁⲕⲏ ⲧⲣⲣⲱ ⲛⲛⲉϭⲟⲟϣ) in Acts 8:27 whilst the toponym is again used for Psalm 68:31 (67:32): ⲟⲩⲛ ϩⲉⲛϥⲁⲓϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲏⲩ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ϩⲛ ⲕⲏⲙⲉ ⲛⲉϭⲟⲟϣ ⲛⲁⲣϣⲟⲣⲡ ⲛϯ ⲛⲛⲉⲩϭⲓϫ ⲙⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ. For problems on Nubian uses of self-designation, see: G. Ochała, 'When Epigraphy Meets Art History: On St Phoibammon from Abdallah-n Irqi', in *Aegyptus et Nubia Christiana. The Włodzimierz Godlewski Jubilee Volume on the Occasion of his 70th*

view themselves as from Kush as the Meroites before them had done – Meroites previously described themselves as people from *Qes*, reflecting the Egyptian toponym of *K³š* – though there are no known references in Old Nubian documents to the toponym. If so, ˁĒzānā's fourth-century conquest of Kush (ħሰ) was accurately reflecting the toponym of Nubia, which may have continued to be understood, if not actively used, by Nubians themselves following their conversion to Christianity.[24] Nubians would have seemingly been aware that other Christians acknowledged them – Kush – as being the 'Ethiopia' of the Bible following historical associations. In fact, the fifth-century king of northern Nubia, Silko, did declare himself to be 'king of the Nobades and all of the Ethiopians' (Βασιλισκος Νουβαδον και ολων των Αιθιοπων).[25] His inscription highlights the association between Nubia and Ethiopia as he alludes to the land of Nubia being within the greater land of Ethiopia, suggesting a direct association between Nubia and 'Ethiopia' even before Nubia's official conversion. In any case, a Nubian association with 'Ethiopia' would also partially explain the adoption of Abyssinia as a new and separate toponym by Europeans to denote a separate kingdom from Nubia – their known 'Ethiopia'. Abyssinia was used by Europeans, not to distinguish it within 'Ethiopia', but from its neighbour: Nubia.

Birthday, eds. A. Łajtar, A. Obłuski, and I. Zych (Warsaw, 2016), pp. 516-7. Very little is known about Nubian self-identification. For example, note the use of 'ⲁⲩⲃⲓ' in the fourteenth century Coptic scrolls of Bishop Timotheos found at Qasr Ibrim and the alternative uses of 'ⲛⲩⲃⲓⲁⲥ', 'ⲍⲟⲙⲓⲧⲏⲥ (Aksum), and ⲑⲉⲟⲡⲓⲁⲥ (Ethiopia)' by two of the witnesses: J. M. Plumley, *The Scrolls of Bishop Timotheos. Two Documents from Medieval Nubia* (London, 1975), pp. 8-16 (text), 18-21 (trans.).

[24] RIE 189. For example, a later fifth-century Meroitic inscription refers to the region as the land of Kush (*Qes*): FHN III, pp. 1104, 1107.

[25] O.G.I.S. n201, pp. I:303-10.

'Ethiopia' and 'India'

Before continuing, a brief medieval distinction of 'Ethiopia' from 'India' also needs to be made. It is often best to understand 'Ethiopia' as being a historical preoccupation, particularly in literary works in association with India, similarly to the modern use of the West Indies which is still present 500 years after Columbus' voyages named the Caribbean the 'West Indies', despite us now knowing that it is not connected to 'India'. Although this does not aid in understanding many references to 'Ethiopia', it does help explain the continuity of its usage despite the development of knowledge. This can also be seen in the confusion with India, too. As has been highlighted, medieval knowledge was hindered by the use of language, not necessarily through the lack of information. How then, can we distinguish between various similar toponyms such as those found in Hugh of St. Victor's *Descriptio Mappe Mundi* (c.1130) which has six distinct toponyms when discussing 'Ethiopia' and 'India': *Ethiopia*, *Ethiopica India*, *Ethiopica Egyptus*, *India que finem facit*, *India que mittit ad Medos*, *India que mittit ad Parthos*.[26] Hugh's text allows for a relatively clear distinction between the toponyms. This thesis agrees with Anne-Dorothee von den Brincken's conclusion that generally other toponyms, such as *India Aegypti* and *India Aethiopie*, can be seen to be placed within North-East/East Africa, whereas Indias *prima*, *secunda*, *tertia*, *superior*, and *inferior*, were placed within Asia.[27] The context in which the toponym is found in a text can often lead to the identification of the region in discussion.

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[26] *La «Descriptio Mappe Mundi» de Hugues de Saint-Victor*, ed. P. Gautier-Dalché (Paris, 1988): *Ethiopia*: Ch. 7, 139, Ch. 14, 146, Ch. 15, pp. 146-7, Ch. 16, pp. 147-8, Ch. 17, 150, Ch. 18, pp. 150-1; *Ethiopica India*: Ch. 9, pp. 140-1; *Ethiopica Egyptus*: Chs. 7, 138, Ch. 16, pp. 147-8. For the different Indias, see: Ch. 9, pp. 140-1.

[27] A.-D. von den Brincken, *Fines Terrae. Die Enden der Erde und der vierte Kontinent auf mittelalterlichen Weltkarten* (Hannover, 1992), 162.

The explanation of separate 'Ethiopias' could be similar to that which saw the distinction of Kush. Pierre Schneider has suggested how the Mesopotamian toponym of *Meluḫḫa* appears to have been the origin of multiple definitions for toponyms for northern India and the south of Egypt, though he acknowledges that this is unprovable.[28] As Schneider further highlights, this is important for the Hebrew use of כוש in the Old Testament which had similar confused definitions. Some translators came to misunderstand the various connotations of כוש, which could equally refer to the *Kȝš* of Nubia in Egyptian sources or the Kaššu who ruled Babylonia in the second half of the second millennium BCE in Cuneiform sources.[29] Though the Greek translators could wrongly confuse the nuances of '*Kush*', which most often did refer to Nubia in the Hebrew text, once translated it kept a specific meaning: Αἰθιοπία (Nubia) – כוש is only translated directly as Κους in one example (Gen 10:6-8), which resulted in later generations referring to 'Ethiopia' in some Biblical passages instead of northern India/Babylonia. It is notable how a similar confusion of Nubia does not appear to have taken hold as the synonymatic relationship witnessed between Ethiopia and India; it remained distinct. The designation of multiple 'Ethiopias', along with multiple 'Indias', possibly reflects this vaguer earlier confusion of toponyms.

There are numerous alternative possible reasons for this continued confusion despite, like North-East Africa, India having had a continuous relationship with Europe throughout the medieval period. Just as with Aksum, both Rome and Byzantium knew of the kingdoms of India and further afield in order to conduct trade and diplomacy. In

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[28] Schneider, *L'Éthiopie et l'Inde*, pp. 365-71. Also, see: S. H. Levitt, 'The Ancient Mesopotamian Place Name "Meluḫḫa"', *Studia Orientalia*, 107 (2009), pp. 135-76.

[29] Ibid., pp. 371-3. See: D. Neiman, 'Ethiopia and Kush: Biblical and Ancient Greek Geography', *Ancient World*, 3 (1980), pp. 35-42; P. Unseth, 'Hebrew Kush: Sudan, Ethiopia, or Where?', *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology*, 18.2 (1999), pp. 143-59; D. M. Goldenberg, *The Curse of Ham. Race and Slavery in Early Judaism, Christianity and Islam* (Princeton, 2005), pp. 17-25.

fact, some have argued that it was indeed this connection that was the root cause for the later confusion. For example, Enrico Cerulli posited that trade products were the cause of Roman confusion between 'Ethiopia' and 'India' as they arrived from lands that were too distant for many to comprehend.[30] As these products were transported through the same trade routes – notably Egypt – their interchangeable nature further fostered such confusion of origin. The origins of animals, in particular, were a cause for confusion in texts, too, as evidenced in numerous works and maps.[31] 'Ethiopia' and 'India' simultaneously remained synonymous, yet distinct.

Equally, it is possible, though admittedly least likely, that an African presence in Asia could have supported such confused identifications. First, the placing of 'Ethiopia' in Asia could represent remnants of the memory of the Aksumite presence in Arabia when an African 'Ethiopia' did exist across both sides of the Red Sea and also became an Asian/Indian 'Ethiopia'.[32] A less likely explanation for this continued misuse could have been the result of the Ethiopian diaspora in India, known from at least late antiquity.[33] Another, though equally unlikely, possibility is that in some European spheres there was a confused memory of the Aksumite Empire in Yemen combined with the contemporary twelfth-century Najahid Yemenite dynasty of Ethiopian slave descent.[34] The Najahids did establish a contemporary 'Ethiopian' presence in Arabia,

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[30] E. Cerulli, 'Perspectives on the History of Ethiopia', in *Languages and Cultures*, ed. Bausi, pp. 15-8.
[31] See: N. R. Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought* (Woodbridge, 2001), pp. 105-7; S. C. Akbari, *Idols in the East. European Representations of Islam and the Orient, 1100-1450* (Ithaca, 2009), pp. 68-75. For a comprehensive list of animals that were noted as both 'Ethiopian' and 'Indian' in classical sources, see: Schneider, *L'Éthiopie et L'Inde*, pp. 145-94.
[32] Sergew, *Ethiopian History*, pp. 123-58; G. Hatke, *Africans in Arabia Felix. Aksumite Relations with Himyar in the Sixth Century CE*, 2 vols. (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Princeton University, 2011); Bowersock, *Throne of Adulis*.
[33] R. Pankhurst, 'The Ethiopian Diaspora to India: The Role of Habshis and Sidis from Medieval Times to the End of the Eighteenth Century', in *The African Diaspora in the Indian Ocean*, eds. S. de Silva Jayasuriya and R. Pankhurst (Trenton, 2003), pp. 189-222. Also note the Indian influence in Nubia and Ethiopia: Schneider, *L'Éthiopie et l'Inde*, pp. 378-81.
[34] Little is known about the Najahids other than limited descriptions: ʿUmāra Ibn-ʿAlī al-Yamanī: *Yaman. Its Early Mediaeval History By Najm Ad-Din ʿOmārah Al-Ḥakami. Also the Abridged History*

albeit for only a very short period of time. They were not the cause of the separation of the toponyms, but their presence could have re-inforced such questionable distinctions.

Above all, however, I would be cautious in attributing the two toponyms as mere confusions and see them first and foremost as a literary device. Both 'Ethiopia' and 'India' were used as tropes for alterity and distance despite writers having the ability to correctly identify each region. Grant Parker has labelled this as the eastern or Indian Ocean paradigm.[35] To echo Pierre Schneider, the confusion between 'Ethiopia' and 'India' in antiquity (and I would add here into the medieval period) was not the result of an ignorance about both regions, but, rather, portrayed the presence of lacunas in the knowledge of individual authors.[36] Until the appearance of detailed travel accounts in the thirteenth century, both 'Ethiopia' and 'India' transformed from relatively well-known areas in late antiquity to becoming distant alterities which increasingly became removed from facts, largely as a result of cultural depictions such as through the Alexander romances (reproduced and translated repeatedly throughout the Mediterranean since the third century AD). Given that the acquisition of knowledge regarding these far-away lands was not a particular problem, the continued interchange of 'Ethiopia' and 'India' by some writers owed itself more to cultural norms and literary traditions, rather than to a misunderstanding of geography – though

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of its Dynasties By Ibn Khaldūn. And an Account of the Karmathians of Yaman By Abu ʿAbd Allah Baha Ad-Din Al-Janadi, ed. and trans. H. C. Kay (London, 1892), pp. ٦٠-٩٢ (text), 81-123 (trans.). Also see the brief note on the establishment of the dynasty by Ibn Khaldūn, pp. ١٠٦-٧ (text), 143-5 (trans.). For an overview of the wider context of Ethiopian-Yemeni relations, see: A. Abel, 'L'Ethiopie et ses rapports avec l'Arabie preislamique jusqu'à l'émigration de ca. 615', in *IV Congresso Etiopici*, pp. I:405-20; R. Pankhurst, 'Across the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden: Ethiopia's Historic Ties with Yaman', *Africa: Rivista trimestrale di studi e documentazione dell'Istituto italiano per l'Africae l'Oriente*, 57.3 (2002), pp. 393-419.
[35] On this development, see: G. Parker, *The Making of Roman India* (Cambridge, 2008). For the paradigm, see: pp. 141-2.
[36] Schneider, *L'Éthiopie et L'Inde*, pp. 233-8.

that is not to say that there was not also a lack of knowledge, too. Therefore, the subsequent role of literary texts such as the Alexander romances in reinforcing this literary device, which survives in some form in hundreds of manuscripts throughout the medieval period in both Latin and numerous European vernacular languages, offers a plausible explanation for the continued use and mis-use of 'Ethiopia' and 'India'.[37]

That said, when can 'Ethiopia' be fixed to a specific location other than Nubia? After all, a question for the Europeans in the Holy Land regarding 'Ethiopia' remained its Christianity. For example, who had Matthew's mission to 'Ethiopia' (a subject of one of the five figural sculptured capitals at the Crusader shrine of the Annunciation in Nazareth) converted?[38] 'Ethiopia' most often embodied Nubia, but when, then, can we say that 'Ethiopia' came to mean the Ethiopian kingdom?

Ethiopia and Abyssinia

The earlier primary association of 'Ethiopia' with Nubia is supported by the appearance of the term 'Abyssinia', particularly as it developed a specific meaning which 'Ethiopia' had not conveyed regarding highland Ethiopia.[39] Arguably, Ethiopia

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[37] For discussions of this influence, see the chapters in: D. Zuwiyya, eds., *A Companion to Alexander Literature in the Middle Ages* (Leiden, 2011).

[38] On the specific capital, see: J. Folda, *The Nazareth Capitals and the Crusader Shrine of the Annunciation* (University Park, 1986), pp. 31-43, esp. 41-2. The capitals also portray another 'Ethiopian' figure, the princess Efigenia, which further demonstrates their contextual understanding of the role of Africa in European Christian discourse. See: Folda, *The Nazareth Capitals*, pp. 41-2. For the origins of the saint, see: A. Carucci, 'La vergine Ifigenia negli "Acta" di San Matteo', *Rassegna storica salernitana*, 6 (1945), pp. 39-64.

[39] Compare: R. Voigt, 'Aithiopia', in EA: pp. 162-5, and 'Abyssinia', in EA: pp. I:59-65. Abyssinians were a specific peoples, see: R. Fattovich, *Aksum and the Habashat. State and Ethnicity in Ancient Northern Ethiopia and Eritrea* (Boston, 2000); W. G. C. Smidt, 'The Term Ḥabäša: An Ancient Ethnonym of the "Abyssinian" Highlanders and its Interpretations and Connotations', in *Multidisciplinary Views on the Horn of Africa*, ed. Elliesie, pp. 37-69.

only became the consistent European choice of toponym for the Ethiopian kingdom with the publication of Hiob Ludolf's *Historica Aethiopica*, published in 1681.[40] Abyssinians were a specific people, which the ethnonym 'Ethiopians' failed to adequately reflect previously. The change in association that Abyssinia was the 'true' Ethiopia was arguably instigated, or at least informed, by Ethiopia itself and can be seen most pertinently in the Ethiopian sources of the fourteenth century which coincided with the early consistent associations by Europeans. Importantly, this association was increasingly strengthened during the initial period of Nubian decline, enabling Ethiopia to replace Nubia as the 'Ethiopia' of choice for the Europeans.[41]

Ethiopians referred to their own kingdom with numerous titles: the land of the *Ḥabashat* (ሐበሠት), the land of the *Agʿāzi* (አገአዚ) (or *beḫēra geʾz* – the 'free'), and, lastly, *ʾItyoṗyā* (ኢትዮዽያ) itself. The arrival of Abyssinia and its variants in European writings has been seen as a corruption of the Arabic term for Ethiopia, the land of *al-Ḥabasha* (الحبشة), although it could have been a direct corruption from Ethiopia itself from the Ethiopic ethnonym of *Ḥabashat*.[42] Regardless of its origin, the toponym of Abyssinia has its roots in the European corruption of a Semitic toponym and emphasises a distinction from 'Ethiopia'.

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[40] Hiob Ludolf, *Historia Aethiopica* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1681). Though Ludolf is credited as the 'father of Ethiopian studies', an earlier account was written by the Spaniard Alonso de Sandoval, based on earlier Portuguese accounts, who also attached the toponym of Ethiopia to the kingdom: Alonso de Sandoval, *Naturaleza, policia sagrada i profana, costumbres i ritos, disciplina i catechismo evangelica de todos Etiopes* (Seville, 1623).

[41] Christian Makuria survived until the arrival of the Ottomans in the sixteenth century, possibly as the separate Kingdom of Dotawo, though the two kingdoms could have been independent. Alwa, on the other hand, appears to have been in ruins even before the arrival of the Turks. On Nubia's decline, see: Ḥasan, *Arabs and the Sudan*, pp. 124-34; Vantini, *Christianity in the Sudan*, pp. 199-207; L. Kropáček, 'Nubia from the Late 12th Century to the Funj Conquest in the Early 16th Century', in UNESCO IV, pp. 398-422; Welsby, *Medieval Kingdoms*, pp. 250-5; Ruffini, *Medieval Nubia*, pp. 254-7. For a study of the longer consequences, see: Y. F. Ḥasan, 'The Islamic Sudan and the Outside World, c. 1317-1821', in *The Fourth Cataract and Beyond*, eds. Anderson and Welsby, pp. 227-34. On the arrival of the Turks, see: J. Alexander, 'The Turks on the Middle Nile', *Archéologie du Nil Moyen*, 7 (1996), pp. 15-35.

[42] R. Voigt, 'Abyssinia', in EA, I:59-62.

When viewed alongside the first appearance of Ethiopia in Ethiopian evidence, the development of Ethiopia to mean the Ethiopian kingdom and replacing its meaning of Nubia in European discourse appears almost simultaneously. Daniel Selden has proposed that it was actually Aksum that tried to write itself into universal history, long before the rise of the Solomonids, by referring to itself as Ethiopia.[43] As such, inscriptions purposefully used Αἰθιοπία as a term to portray Aksumite power to outsiders in relation to a land using language that they – primarily a Greek speaking audience – would better understand.[44] However, ‘Ethiopia’ does not appear in any non-Greek Ethiopian inscription. The first Christian kings of Ethiopia did not utilise ‘Ethiopia’ as one might expect. ʿĒzānā, the fourth-century King of Aksum wrote in an inscription that he was the Βασιλεύς Ἀξωμιτῶν, not Αιθιοπια, and that he had conquered many peoples, including the Νωβα.[45] ʿĒzānā did not see himself as an Ethiopian. Importantly, Aksum did not internally adopt the toponym of Ethiopia in Gəʿəz and remained the kingdom of the *Ḥabashat*.

The evidence does not suggest any early internal use of ‘Ethiopia’ by Ethiopia and cannot be seen as a cultural continuity.[46] In fact, problematically, documents of Zagʷé origin, such as the *gadlat* (hagiographies) of kings, only survive in manuscripts dating from the Solomonid era, further highlighting the issue that the incorporation of

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[43] D. Selden, ‘How the Ethiopian Changed His Skin’, *Classical Antiquity*, 32.2 (2013), pp. 340-1.

[44] Particularly for the example of ʿĒzānā, see: C. Hoffman, ‘Ethnizität und Ethnogenesen am Horn von Afrika nach den Inschriften von König ʿEzānā’, in *Multidisciplinary Views on the Horn of Africa*, ed. Elliesie, pp. 217-51. On ʿĒzānā’s diplomatic methods, see: Z. Rubin, ‘Greek and Ge’ez in the Propaganda of King ‘Ezana of Axum: Religion and Diplomacy in Late Antiquity’, *Semitica et Classica*, 5 (2012), pp. 139-50. It should also be noted the similarity with Silko’s inscription for Nubia. Utilising Greek ethnonyms was not restricted to either kingdom.

[45] F. Anfray, A. Caquot, and P. Nautin, ‘Une nouvelle inscription grecque d’Ezana, roi d’Axoum’, *Journal des Savants* (1970), pp. 260-74.

[46] On the case for continuity within medieval Ethiopia generally, see: D. Phillipson, ‘The Aksumite Roots of Medieval Ethiopia’, *Azania*, 39.1 (2004), pp. 77-89; Phillipson, *Foundations*, pp. 209-23.

ኢትዮጵያ into Gəʿəz cannot be dated without question to before the fourteenth century.

For example, ኢትዮጵያ appears in the *Gadl* of Lalibäla (r. c. before 1204-after 1225),

but the surviving known manuscripts date no earlier than the fourteenth century.[47]

Equally, no contemporary Zagʷé inscription using ኢትዮጵያ exists. Instead, the

episcopate of Abba Salama IV (c.1348-88), known as 'the Translator', was epitomised

by laying the foundation for these later cultural projects.[48] References to being

'Ethiopia' by Ethiopians themselves flourish following this era. His long reign and the

desire to cement Solomonid power seemingly proved to be the initiators of the literary

creation of this new identity. Likewise, the mass translation project undertaken within

Ethiopia, notably in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, could similarly be seen in

the same light as to establish this new narrative and to support the claims of origin,

such as the collection of the *Maṣḥafa Aksūm* (መጽሐፈ፡አክሱም).

The fact that Aksum never did truly embrace itself as Ethiopia creates further

problems with the identifications in the Bible, particularly with Kush. Although the

Old Testament was translated into Gəʿəz no later than the seventh century, no

manuscripts survive prior to the fourteenth century.[49] Not only that, these later

manuscripts replace Kush with Ethiopia. That said, despite Greek being a source of

the earliest Gəʿəz translations suggesting that ኢትዮጵያ may be a possible

transliteration of Αἰθιοπία, there is the possibility that pre-Solomonid manuscripts

originally contained ኩሽ (Kush) similar to other Semitic languages, and that the

translation of Ethiopia (ኢትዮጵያ) only appeared with the Solomonid adoption of the

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[47] *Vie de Lalibela. Roi d'Éthiopie*, ed. and trans. J. Perruchon (Paris, 1892), xxx.
[48] On Salama IV, see: S. Munro-Hay, *Ethiopia and Alexandria II. The Metropolitan Episcopacy of Ethiopia from the Fourteenth Century to the Zemana Mesafint* (Warsaw, 2005), pp. 17-9.
[49] M. A. Knibb, *Translating the Bible. The Ethiopic Version of the Old Testament* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 14-9.

toponym. Notably, there is no known surviving element of Psalm 68:31 in any known Aksumite inscription, unlike numerous other psalms, suggesting that the later infamous passage which is most associated with Ethiopia, was not seen, at least primarily, as fundamental to Aksumite identity and gained its importance some time later – seemingly only during the Solomonid period when the earliest manuscripts survive.[50] In fact, ʿĒzānā's fourth-century inscription suggests that Kush was seen as a distinct region to that of Aksum and was to be placed in Nubia; suggesting that the postulation of a direct Ethiopic translation of Kush into Ethiopia would appear, at first, unsustainable.[51] Although it is true that following ʿĒzānā's conquest, except for a few isolated incidences, Kush was rarely referred to after the fourth century, there is no evidence that it was replaced by 'Ethiopia' within surviving Ethiopian discourse.[52] Importantly, Aksum did not try to become Kush, or 'Ethiopia', nor did classical authors assume Aksum was Kush. Instead, the Solomonids were the first dynasty to actively identify as Ethiopia following their succession in 1270; notably through the fourteenth-century Solomonid national epic the *Kəbrä nägäśt* (ክብረ፡ነገሥት).[53] The events of the sixth century and the relationship between Aksum and Byzantium, particularly their positive relations, remained important elements of Ethiopian history and have an important role in the *Kəbrä nägäśt*.[54] Yet, it is the use of Ethiopia

[50] Knibb, *Translating the Bible*, pp. 46-54; M. A. Knibb, 'The Ethiopic Translation of the Psalms', in *Der Septuaginta-Psalter und seine Tochterübersetzungen. Symposium in Göttingen 1997*, eds. A. Aejmelaeus and U. Quast (Göttingen, 2000), pp. 107-22.

[51] RIE nos. 189 (Gəʿəz), 190 (Pseudo-Sabaic), 271 (Greek). See also: Hatke, *Aksum and Nubia*, pp. 88-9, 92.

[52] Hatke, *Aksum and Nubia*, pp. 153-4n649. It appears amongst Kālēb's vassals in RIE no.191.

[53] The question of the sources of the *Kəbrä nägäśt* poses further questions regarding the potential origin of such an identification. However, no sources that pre-date the text survive and so such an hypothesis seems reasonable. On literary sources, see: M. Richelle, 'Les sources littéraires du *Kebra Nagast*', *Journal of Eastern Christian Studies*, 64.1-2 (2012), pp. 41-52.

[54] C. Bezold, 'Kebra Nagast. Die Herrlichkeit der Könige', *Abhandlungen der philosophisch-philologischen Klasse der königlichen Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, 23 (1909), Ch. 113, pp. 167-8 (text), 133-4 (trans.), Ch. 117, pp. 170-2 (text), 136-7 (trans.); *The Queen of Sheba and Her Only Son Menylik*, trans. E. A. W. Budge (London, 1922), Ch. 113, pp. 221-3, Ch. 117, pp. 225-8. On the role of the *Kəbrä nägäśt* as a prolonged Ethiopian response to the Council of Chalcedon, see: G. W. Bowersock, 'Helena's Bridle and the Chariot of Ethiopia', in *Antiquity in Antiquity. Jewish and*

(ኢትዮጵያ) that is notable in the text. There has been a debate whether the *Kəbrä nägäśt* is based on an earlier contemporary sixth-century original, but this has been argued to be inherently unlikely.[55] With that in mind, the insertion of ኢትዮጵያ should be specifically seen as a later addition.

The message of the *Kəbrä nägäśt* is clear; there was a clear attempt at legitimising the Solomonid dynasty, not only in terms of its Solomonic roots, but also through creating a connected universal past, particularly concerning relations with Byzantium in the sixth century.[56] In fact, Solomonid rulers soon adopted regnal names associated with Byzantium – particularly Constantine, both as recognised throne names and other titles. The most well-known kings to adopt this name were Zarʾa Yāʿqōb (r.1434-68) who was known as Qʷastāntīnōs I, along with his aptly-named wife Empress ʾElēni who had an influence on future rulers akin to her fourth-century namesake, and their son Ǝskəndər (r.1478-94) who was known as Constantine II; yet others, such as Dāwīt I (r.1382-1411), were also known as Constantine but do not appear in the regnal lists as such.[57] The *Kəbrä nägäśt* can be read with two image projections in mind: an internal and external projection. Here, the internal projection – the Solomonid

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Christian Pasts in the Greco-Roman World, eds. G. Gardner and K. L. Osterloh (Tübingen, 2008), pp. 383-93; Bevan, 'Ethiopian Apocalyptic and the End of Roman Rule'.

[55] See primarily: I. Shahid, 'The *Kebra Nagaśt* in the Light of Recent Research', in *Languages and Cultures*, ed. Bausi, pp. 253-98; D. W. Johnson, 'Dating the *Kebra Nagaśt*. Another Look', in Ibid., pp. 299-311; S. Munro-Hay, 'A Sixth Century Kebra Nagast?', in Ibid., pp. 313-28.

[56] R. Beylot, 'Du Kebra Nagast', *Aethiopica*, 7 (2004), pp. 74-83; P. Piovanelli, 'The Apocryphal Legitimation of a "Solomonic" Dynasty in the *Kebrä nägäst* – A Reappraisal', *Aethiopica*, 16 (2013), pp. 7-44. More broadly, see: W. Witakowski, 'Ethiopic Universal Chronography', in *Julius Africanus*, ed. Wallraff, pp. 285-302.

[57] O. Raineri, 'I doni della Serenissima al re Davide I d'Etiopia (ms Raineri 43 della Vaticana)', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 65 (1999), 367n20. For similar examples of imperial memory by the Solomonids, see: J.-F. Faü, 'De la sainteté de Kaleb Ǝlla Aṣbəḥa dans l'iconographie baroque portugaise', *Aethiopica*, 18 (2015), pp. 7-21; Getachew H., 'Emperor Zärʾa Yaʿqob to Augusta Helena, "Your Deed Followed You"', in *Essays in Ethiopian Manuscript Studies. Proceedings of the International Conference Manuscripts and Texts, Languages and Contexts. The Transmission of Knowledge in the Horn of Africa. Hamburg, 17-19 July 2014*, eds. A. Bausi, A. Gori, and D. Nosnitsin (Wiesbaden, 2015), pp. 97-108.

legitimisation within Ethiopia itself – needs not concern us with the focus instead being on the external projection of its adoption of Ethiopia. By utilising the foreign toponym of 'Ethiopia' for itself, unlike, for instance, *Ḥabashat*, it actively gave Ethiopia a place in universal Christian history.

Though no documented evidence exists for our period for Ethiopians declaring themselves to be Ethiopians in meetings with Europeans, this era does coincide with the appearance of the self-identification of Ethiopia in Ethiopian texts. For instance, altogether there are no less than 122 uses of ኢትዮጵያ in the *Kəbrä nägäśt*. Admittedly, some references appear to refer to Nubia, but this otherwise consistent self-identifying as Ethiopians, rather than, for example *Ḥabashat*, served to develop the association of the kingdom with Ethiopia in the eyes of the wider Christian world; notably to Latin Christians. Despite a colophon alleging that the work was originally composed in Coptic in 1225 and subsequently translated into Gəʿəz, via Arabic, sometime in the early fourteenth century, no earlier Coptic or Arabic manuscripts are known.[58] A Gəʿəz translation of الحبشة for ኢትዮጵያ, though making sense given the explicit nature of the text to the kingdom, becomes problematic once the Coptic role in the process is taken in to consideration. For example, one known example of a direct Arabic translation of Coptic in a biblical context appears in a multilingual Copto-Arabic Pentateuch dating to 1356, which has a direct accompanying Arabic translation of كوش for ⲉⲑⲁⲩ**ϣ** in Genesis 2:13 in relation to the River Gehon.[59] Additionally, ⲛⲉϭⲟⲟ**ϣ** is used in Acts 8:27 in relation to Queen Candace and Psalm 68:31, suggesting that if an explicit Arabic toponym was used for the translation of the Coptic, both نوبه (Nubia)

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[58] Bezold, 'Kebra Nagast', pp. 172-3 (text), 138 (trans.); Budge, *Queen of Sheba*, 199.
[59] BnF MS Copte 1, f.4a.

and الحبشة are equally likely to have been later changed in Gəʿəz. Furthermore, early Coptic transliterations of Αἰθιοπία (ⲉⲑⲟⲟⲡⲉ) also appear to refer to Nubia rather than Ethiopia too.[60] With this in mind in relation to the colophon, the Gəʿəz translation arguably either actively inserted ኢትዮጵያ to the text, which soon became the toponym of choice for the kingdom, or at least actively began to appropriate the toponym in their identification.

Problematically, this self-identification was seemingly not declared during official exchanges between Europe and Ethiopia during our period as far as evidence suggests, which, as far as the earlier European evidence is concerned, may merely be the result of applying their own knowledge onto what translators were telling them rather than writing directly what was being said. Ethiopians certainly expressed themselves to be Ethiopians by the time of the account of Francisco Álvarez, however, who noted how Queen Candace lived at Aksum and that it was there that they say that Psalm 68:31 was fulfilled during his visit in the 1520s.[61] Unfortunately, no Ethiopian sources detailing interactions with Europeans survive prior to the early sixteenth century to attest to an earlier active Ethiopian appropriation of ኢትዮጵያ in their encounters with Europeans despite the fourteenth-century suggestive evidence.[62] Nevertheless, the correlation between the appearance of ኢትዮጵያ in fourteenth-century Ethiopian

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[60] For example, see: W. E. Crum, 'La Nubie dans la textes coptes', *Recueil de Travaux relatifs à la Philologie et à l'Archéologie Egyptienne et Assyrienne*, 21 (1899), pp. 226-7.

[61] Álvarez, Ch. 37, 38. Contemporarily, according to a section of the *Maṣḥafa Aksūm* dating to the reign of Ləbnä Dəngəl, Aksum's first capital, Mazaber, was built by ላኢትዮጲስ, an otherwise unknown son of Cush, which is why they are called ላኢትዮጵያ: *Liber Axumae*, ed. and trans. C. Conti Rossini, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1909-10), Ch. I, pp. I:3, 6 (text); II:3, 6 (trans.). Equally, by 1540, the Ethiopian Ṣägga Zäʾab, the source for Damião de Góis, declared that his emperor should not be referred to as the emperor of *Abesynorum*, but of *Aethiopum*: Damião de Góis, *Fides, religio, moresque Aethiopum sub Imperio Preciosi Ioannis* (Leuven, 1540), 71.

[62] These are letters sent from Queen Regent Ǝleni and Emperor Ləbnä Dəngəl: Sergew H. S., 'The Ge'ez Letters of Queen Eleni and Libne Dingil to John, King of Portugal', in *IV Congresso Etiopici*, pp. I:554, 556, 558, 562.

sources and the contemporary increasingly consistent European identification of Ethiopia as such appears uncoincidental.

The contemporary decline of Nubia created a vacuum which the Solomonid adoption of 'Ethiopia' could fill. The mere existence of the toponym 'Abyssinia', which coincided with European developing knowledge of the region, suggests that Europeans did not immediately understand the kingdom in highland Ethiopia as Ethiopia prior to the Solomonid adoption. The confused designation of the King of the *Abissi* in the Prophecy of Hannan during the Fifth Crusade, as noted by Bernard Hamilton, would further suggest that the European understanding of the Kingdom of Ethiopia – directly known as Ethiopia – was almost non-existent at the beginning of the thirteenth century.[63] It was only following the onset of the fourteenth century that the association of *Ethiopie* with Abyssinia was made explicit.[64] Significantly, these misidentifications or vague descriptions presented in this thesis occur primarily before the rise of the Solomonids in 1270 with the more accurate texts being written later. It is within this context that the references to Nubia, 'Ethiopia', and Ethiopia need to be addressed.

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[63] B. Hamilton, 'Continental Drift: Prester John's Progress Through the Indies', in *Prester John, the Mongols and the Ten Lost Tribes*, eds. C. F. Beckingham and B. Hamilton (Aldershot, 1996), pp. 243-4.

[64] The first example appears in Giovanni da Carignano's map (c.1306-10) which labels '*Terra Abaise*'. The map was destroyed in WWII, but an image is preserved in A. E. Nordenskiöld, *Periplus. An Essay on the Early History of Charts and Sailing-Directions; With Numerous Reproductions of Old Charts and Maps*, trans. F. A. Bather (Stockholm, 1897), pl. IX.

II: Knowledge in the First Millennium

Many networks of traders, diplomats, and intellectuals, particularly between the Greek East and Latin West, existed and flourished, disseminating knowledge far and wide throughout the first millennium.[1] Yet, despite some classical texts remaining popular, European ignorance of Nubia and Ethiopia upon the launch of the First Crusade in 1095 appears as what one would expect following centuries of stagnation. Little awareness of the African kingdoms is initially shown by European authors, with the majority of early references portraying 'Ethiopians' as enemies of the Crusaders whilst not seemingly knowing much, if anything, about the Nubian and Ethiopian kingdoms. This chapter will highlight what little was known in Europe throughout the first millennium leading up to the First Crusade, whilst suggesting that the Crusades were launched following centuries of stagnating European knowledge regarding Nubia and Ethiopia which was reflected in early Crusade texts, thus enabling a (re)introduction to European discourse. This ignorance was not a feature in previous centuries due to vast documented and undocumented networks between Europeans and Africans that seemingly stalled, at least in the sources, after the seventh century until they were rekindled in the twelfth.

Prior to the Columbian Exchange in the fifteenth century, proto-globalisation – the pre-modern widespread inter-continental transfer of peoples and goods – had been a feature of world history for centuries, indeed millennia. Unsurprisingly, these exchanges developed the geographical understanding of ancient peoples of distant

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[1] On dissemination networks, see: S. Steckel, 'Networks of Learning in Byzantine East and Latin West: Methodological Considerations and Starting Points for Further Work', in *Networks of Learning. Perspectives on Scholars in Byzantine East and Latin West, c. 1000-1200*, eds. S. Steckel, N. Gaul, and M. Grünbart (Berlin, 2014), pp. 185-233.

lands.[2] Greek and Roman writers, notably important as the sources of many later medieval European authors, were no exception in documenting the results of such transactions.[3] Despite their limitations, writers of antiquity were aware of the importance of taking an emperical approach. For example, the detail given in Diodorus Siculus' (wr. c.56-30 BCE) account of the practices of 'Ethiopian' gold mining does suggest that he did either bare witness to some of the mines himself or was carefully informed by locals.[4] Moreover, Diodorus acknowleged the problem of many references to Αἰθιοπία by previous writers. He insisted on gaining direct knowledge, particularly from 'Ethiopians' themselves, in order to correct the prevalent 'false reports' given by earlier writers and those who invented certain tales, though he does not explicitly say which specific previous claims he was correcting.[5]

The extent of the presence of 'Ethiopian' travellers to utilise as sources for knowledge on their homeland can never be fully known.[6] This undocumented network of African informants influenced works from antiquity to the rise of increasingly documented networks of Africans in the early modern period. Such networks enabled a developed understanding of the external world by classical authors which later generations built

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[2] On proto-globalisation, see: N. Boivin, 'Proto-Globalisation and Biotic Exchange in the Old World', in *Human Dispersal and Species Movement. From Prehistory to the Present*, eds. N. Boivin, R. Crassard, and M. Petraglia (Cambridge, 2017), pp. 349-408. Pre-modern societies did not live in an intellectual vacuum regarding their neighbours. For example, see: K. A. Raaflaub and R. J. A. Talbert, eds., *Geography and Ethnography. Perceptions of the World in Pre-Modern Societies* (Malden, 2010); M. C. Howard, *Transnationalism in Ancient and Medieval Societies. The Role of Cross-Border Trade and Travel* (Jefferson, 2012), esp. pp. 7-26. Specifically for the globalisation of knowledge, see for example: S. Brentjes and J. Renn, eds., *Globalization of Knowledge in the Post-Antique Mediterranean, 700-1500* (Abingdon, 2016). However, note the limitations of supposed classical globalisation: N. Morley, *Trade in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 90-102.
[3] D. W. Roller, ed., *Ancient Geography. The Discovery of the World in Classical Greece and Rome* (London, 2015).
[4] Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History*, eds. and trans. various authors, 12 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1933-67), 3.12-14, pp. II:114-23.
[5] *Ibid.*, 3.11, pp. II:112-5.
[6] For example, see: R. A. Lobban, 'Was Aesop a Nubian Kummaji (Folkteller)?', *Northeast African Studies*, 9.1 (2002), pp. 11-31.

upon.[7] This was no different for later medieval authors. But, what exactly did their predecessors know and what corpus of knowledge did later writers have to build on by the twelfth century? This chapter outlines the state of knowledge prior to the coming of the First Crusade, which was launched following centuries of stagnation in codified knowledge about Africa, dating back to the seventh century.

With the empires of North-East Africa being important actors in global trade, particularly in silk and spices, such knowledge was able to develop and disseminate throughout various networks. Unlike during the initial Crusading period, however, many interactions with Africans were documented in late antiquity, enabling us to form a picture of the possible extent of both documented and undocumented networks. Most importantly, the neighbouring Red Sea was the crossroads for international trade and access was a prized asset for its neighbouring empires.[8] Moreover, Nubia and Ethiopia, highlighting their prestige in antiquity, attracted international merchants from across the known world, from Rome to China, as reflected in the first-century *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* of a Greek merchant and the eighth-century voyages of Du Huan as narrated in his *Jingxingji*, for example.[9] It was these expansive networks

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[7] L. Foxhall et al., 'Tracing Networks: Technological Knowledge, Cultural Contact, and Knowledge Exchange in the Ancient Mediterranean', in *New Worlds from Old Texts. Revisiting Ancient Space and Place*, eds. E. Barker, S. Bouzarovski, C. Pelling, and L. Isaksen (Oxford, 2015), pp. 281-300.

[8] D. G. Letsios, Βυζαντιο και Ερυθρα Φαλασσα. Σχεσεις με τη Νουβια, Αιθιοπια και Νοτια Αραβια ως την Αραβικη κατακτηση (Athens, 1988); T. Power, *The Red Sea from Byzantium to the Caliphate. AD 500-1000* (Cairo, 2012); G. W. Bowersock, *The Throne of Adulis. Red Sea Wars on the Eve of Islam* (Oxford, 2013).

[9] L. P. Kirwan, 'The International Position of Sudan in Roman and Medieval Times', *Sudan Notes and Records*, 40 (1959), pp. 23-37; L. Casson, 'Rome's Trade with the East: The Sea Voyage to Africa and India', *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, 110 (1980), pp. 21-36; S. Munro-Hay, 'The Foreign Trade of the Aksumite Port of Adulis', *Azania*, 17 (1982), pp. 107-25; S. Munro-Hay, *Aksum. An African Civilisation of Late Antiquity* (Edinburgh, 1991), pp. 52-60; S. Munro-Hay, 'Aksumite Overseas Interests', in *The Indian Ocean in Antiquity*, ed. J. Reade (London, 1996), pp. 403-16; R. B. Jackson, *At Empire's Edge. Exploring Rome's Egyptian Frontier* (New Haven, 2002), pp. 129-55; A. Manzo, 'Aksumite Trade and the Red Sea Exchange Network: A View from Bieta Giyorgis (Aksum)', in *People of the Red Sea. Proceedings of the Red Sea Project II, Held in the British Museum, October 2004*, ed. J. C. M. Starkey (Oxford, 2005), pp. 51-66; N. Finneran, 'Ethiopian Christian Material Culture: The International Context. Aksum, the Mediterranean and the Syriac Worlds in the

in and around North-East Africa, particularly those including Byzantium, which aided

the development of classical knowledge regarding the region, most notably in the

sixth century.[10] This accumulation of information, like most knowledge, was in turn

collected and stored in libraries throughout the Empire and also resulted in later

copying making a range of texts accessible for future generations.[11]

These future generations would ultimately become the medieval Latin audience. This

chapter has two primary aims: first, to assess how accurate knowledge was regarding

Nubia and Ethiopia in the early medieval period; and second, to examine how far the

previous generations' scholars' knowledge was disseminated to the medieval

audience. Here, the focus is not on who had access to this information, but, rather,

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Fifth to Seventh Centuries', in *Incipient Globalization? Long-Distance Contacts in the Sixth Century*, ed. A. Harris (Oxford, 2007), pp. 75-89; D. W. Phillipson, 'Aksum, the Entrepot, and Highland Ethiopia, 3rd-12th Centuries', in *Byzantine Trade, 4th-13th Centuries. The Archaeology of Local, Regional and International Exchange, Papers of the Thirty-Eighth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, St. John's College, University of Oxford, March 2004*, ed. M. M. Mango (Farnham, 2009), pp. 353-68. On Chinese contacts, see: W. G. C. Smidt, 'A Chinese in the Nubian and Abyssinian Kingdoms (8th Century). The Visit of Du Huan to Molin-guo and Laobosa', *Chroniques Yéménites*, 9 (2001), https://cy.revues.org/33; W. G. C. Smidt, 'An 8th Century Chinese Fragment on the Nubian and Abyssinian Kingdoms – Some Remarks', in *Afrikas Horn. Akten der Ersten Internationalen Littmann-Konferenz 2. bis 5. Mai 2002 in Müchen*, eds. W. Raunig and S. Wenig (Wiesbaden, 2005), pp. 124-36; S. Munro-Hay, 'A Chinese Source for Aksumite History in the 6th and 7th Centuries AD', *Annales d'Ethiopie*, 26.1 (2011), pp. 99-104. Perhaps no object opitimises Ethiopian international trade more than the influences upon the sixth-century Garima Gospels: J. S. McKenzie and F. Watson, *The Garima Gospels. Early illuminated Gospel Books from Ethiopia* (Oxford, 2016).
[10] K. R. Dark, 'Globalizing Late Antiquity: Models, Metaphors, and the Realities of Long-Distance Trade and Diplomacy', in *Incipient Globalization*, ed. Harris, pp. 3-14. On the expansive Red Sea and Indian Ocean networks with the potential for collecting and expanding knowledge, amongst others see: L. A. Thompson, 'Eastern Africa and the Graeco-Roman World (to A.D. 641)', in *Africa in Classical Antiquity*, eds. L. A. Thompson and J. Ferguson (Ibadan, Nigeria, 1969), pp. 26-61; M. Loewe, 'Spices and Silk: Aspects of World Trade in the First Seven Centuries of the Christian Era', JRAS, 2 (1971), pp. 166-79; S. E. Sidebotham, 'Roman Interests in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean', in *The Indian Ocean*, ed. Reade, pp. 287-308; H. P. Ray, ed., *Archaeology of Seafaring. The Indian Ocean in the Ancient Period* (Delhi, 1999); M.-F. Boussac and J.-F. Salles, eds., *A Gateway from the Eastern Mediterranean to India. The Red Sea in Antiquity* (Manohar, 2005); R. K. Pedersen, 'The Byzantine-Aksumite Period Shipwreck at Black Assarca Island, Eritrea', *Azania*, 43.1 (2008), pp. 77-94; A. Wilson, 'Saharan Trade in the Roman Period: Short-, Medium- and Long-distance Trade Networks', *Azania*, 47.4 (2012), pp. 409-49; E. H. Seland, 'Networks and Social Cohesion in Ancient Indian Ocean Trade: Geography, Ethnicity, Religion', *Journal of Global History*, 8 (2013), pp. 373-90; R. McLaughlin, *The Roman Empire and the Indian Ocean. The Ancient World Economy and the Kingdoms of Africa, Arabia and India* (Barnsley, 2014).
[11] On ancient libraries, see: L. Casson, *Libraries in the Ancient World* (New Haven, 2002), pp. 80-123. For an example of a translation from Greek (now lost) to Latin regarding Aksum in particular, see: J. Desanges, 'Une mention altérée d'Axoum dans l'Expositio totius mundi et gentium', *Annales d'Ethiopie*, 7 (1967), pp. 141-55.

which information survived at any one point in time. The whole corpus of first-millennium texts are not a primary concern of this present study. However, some will be highlighted to demonstrate the stagnating corpus of knowledge towards the end of the millennium, especially those in which the author details their own new evolving contemporary knowledge.

Throughout history, the Nile Valley has been a highway for agents of knowledge, thus facilitating numerous documented and undocumented networks.[12] Indeed, Nubia, in particular, has famously been described by William Adams as the 'corridor to Africa' as it held an important role in Nile Valley transmission between the Mediterranean and the African interior.[13] As such, knowledge exchange was natural. This dissemination and, thus, inclusion of knowledge between peoples and regions owes much to what Daniel Selden has analysed as 'text networks' in antiquity.[14] This is not to suppose that all known writers of the classical past were widely read, but that many texts evolved through place and time; texts transformed between languages. This chapter aims to evolve that approach by analysing how potential text and knowledge networks developed an understanding of each end of the networks – the African and the European (sometimes via Asian mediators) – prior to the Crusades.

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[12] Not least in a military capacity. On Africans in the Roman and Byzantine armies, see: B. Hendrickx, 'The Border Troops of the Roman-Byzantine Southern Egyptian *Limes*: Problems and Remarks on the Role of the African and 'Black' African Military Units', *Ekklesiastikos Pharos*, 93 (2012) (New Series 23), pp. 95-114.

[13] Adams, *Nubia*. However, compare with: J. Alexander, 'The Saharan Divide in the Nile Valley: The Evidence from Qasr Ibrim', *The African Archaeological Review*, 6 (1988), pp. 73-90; S. Adam and J. Vercoutter, 'The Importance of Nubia: A Link Between Central Africa and the Mediterranean', in UNESCO II, pp. 226-44. To suggest a specific example, similarly, though not explicitly, proceedings of a recent conference discuss the place of Qasr Ibrim between north and south: J. van der Vliet and J. L. Hagen, eds., *Qasr Ibrim, Between Egypt and Africa. Studies in Cultural Exchange (NINO Symposium, Leiden, 11–12 December 2009)* (Leiden, 2013).

[14] D. Selden, 'Text Networks', *Ancient Narrative*, 8 (2009), pp. 1-23. Also see, the concept of 'stationary and travelling texts' in: P. Bourgain, 'The Circulation of Texts in Manuscript Culture', in *The Medieval Manuscript Book. Cultural Approaches*, eds. M. Johnson and M. Van Dussen (Cambridge, 2015), pp. 140-2.

One instance of the appropriation of various aspects of a text is particularly witnessed in the various translations of the Gospels into new cultural spheres. A prime example, highlighted by Selden, is the various translations of the Song of Solomon 1:5. The Greek Septuagint has 'I am black καὶ (and) beautiful, O daughters of Jerusalem', whereas the Latin Vulgate has 'I am black *sed* (but) beautiful, O daughters of Jerusalem'. The Ethiopic, however, has 'black am I *wa-* (ወ-: and more) beautiful *ʾem-* (እም-: than) the daughters of Jerusalem'.[15] Various peoples incorporate their own understanding of texts and develop them into what better reflects their culture. This evolution of texts is not necessarily important for this thesis, but it serves to highlight the importance of the travelling of knowledge and ideas and how it can migrate between languages and cultures through direct contact and mediators. An Ethiopian, for example, does not necessarily have to meet a Latin in order to know anything about them, and vice versa, and these physical and metaphysical networks, both textual and of rumour, are key in the later medieval period of this thesis.

Nubian- and Ethiopian-European Relations before the Crusades

As well as the prolongued natural exposure between peoples, there are six noteworthy documented examples of close Nubian-European and Ethiopian-European exchange before 1095. It is no surprise that such exchanges facilitated knowledge exchange. Prior to the Christianisation of both African kingdoms, Rome had a physical presence in Lower Nubia before the withdrawal by Emperor Diocletian in 298, notably at Shellal, Qasr Ibrim, and Mirgissa.[16] The Roman Empire was heavily invested in north-

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[15] Selden, 'Text Networks', pp. 3-4.

[16] D. A. Welsby, 'Roman Military Installations Along the Nile South of the First Cataract', *Archéologie du Nil Moyen*, 8 (1998), pp. 157-82. Also see: M. P. Speidel, 'Nubia's Roman Garrison', in *Roman*

east Africa, which, in turn, developed significant knowledge, reflected in the texts of

contemporary writers. It should also not be forgotten that the conversions of both

Ethiopia and Nubia, in the fourth and sixth centuries respectively, were ultimately the

consequence of close relations with Byzantium, particularly shared political ties.[17]

Of one 'Ethiopian' embassy to Constantine in 336, Eusebius of Caesarea (c.324-5)

noted in his *Ecclesiastical History* how the 'Ethiopians' brought an array of gifts for

the Emperor as well as offering their services for an alliance between both peoples.[18]

Since the meaning of 'Αιφίοπας' cannot be accurately determined, the delegates could

have equally been Meroites or newly Christianised Aksumites. Significantly, during

this period embassies were being received by both kingdoms. A striking third-fourth

century Latin inscription at Musawwarat es-Sufra is dedicated to the Kandake (queen

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Army Studies, vol. 2, ed. M. P. Speidel (Stuttgart, 1992), pp. 240-74; J. H. F. Dijkstra, "'I, Silko, Came to Talmis and Taphis": Interactions Between the Peoples Beyond the Egyptian Frontier and Rome in Late Antiquity', in *Inside and Out. Interactions Between Rome and the Peoples on the Arabian and Egyptian Frontiers in Late Antiquity*, eds. J. H. F. Dijkstra and G. Fisher (Leuven, 2014), pp. 299-330; S. T. Smith, 'Desert and River: Consumption and Colonial Entanglements in Roman and Late Antique Nubia', in *Inside and Out*, eds. Dijkstra and Fisher, pp. 91-109. It should also be no surprise then to note the Romano-Nubian cemetery found at Karanòg in Nubia: C. L. Woolley, and D. Randall-MacIver, *Karanòg. The Romano-Nubian Cemetery* (Philadelphia, 1910). Comparatively, Nubians should be believed to have travelled throughout the Roman Empire, too. For example, isotope analysis of skeleton 3DRIF-26 from Roman York is suggestive of a likely origin from Nubia: R. Martiniano et al., 'Genomic Signals of Migration and Continuity in Britain Before the Anglo-Saxons', *Nature Communications*, 7.10326 (2016), available at https://www.nature.com/articles/ncomms10326#s1 [Accessed 10/05/2017]. See Supplementary Figure 5 and Supplementary Note 2, 1.3 for the authors' discussion and analysis.

[17] For example, see for Ethiopia: C. Haas, 'Mountain Constantines: The Christianization of Aksum and Iberia', JLA, 1.1 (2008), pp. 101-26; R. Zarzeczny, 'Greci, romani e aksumiti: prospettive e rapport alla soglia dell'epoca constantiniana', in *Constantino e l'Oriente*, ed. R. Zarzeczny (Rome, 2016), pp. 267-92. Concern for the corruption of these strong relations was reasoned for a letter to the Aksumite princes by Constantine regarding the presence of Bishop Frumentius in Aksum: Athanasius Alexandrinus, *Werke. Die 'Apologien' Apologia ad Constantium, Epistula ad Joannem et Antiochum, Epistula ad Palladium, Epistula ad Dracontium, Epistula ad Afros, Tomus ad Antiochenos, Epistula ad Jovianum, Epistula Joviani ad Athanasium, Petitiones Arianorum*, ed. H. C. Brennecke et al., vol. 2 (Berlin, 2006), Apologia ad Constantium, Chs. 29, 31, pp. 302-5. For Nubia: W. H. C. Frend, 'The Mission to Nubia: An Episode in the Struggle for Power in Sixth Century Byzantium', TCAMAPS, 16 Études et travaux VIII (1975), pp. 10-6; E. Zacharopoulou, 'Justinian and Theodora: Rivals or Partners in the Christianisation of Nubia? A Critical Approach to the Account of John of Ephesus', *Journal of Early Christian History*, 6.3 (2016), pp. 67-85.

[18] Eusebius, *Vita Constantine*, IV.vii, in Eusebius of Caesarea, *Vie de Constantin*, ed. F. Winkelmann and trans. M.-J. Rondeau (Paris, 2013), pp. 462-4.

or queen-mother) of Meroë.[19] The writer, a man called Acutis, was most likely from Italy, possibly Rome itself, as it was a common name there. It should be highlighted that Musawwarat es-Sufra is 180km north-east of modern Khartoum and is evidence of a deep penetrating Latin embassy into the Sudan, though this is the only evidence for a Latin initiated embassy.

With the split of the Roman Empire in the early fourth century, the Africans favoured the Eastern Empire, most likely due to its presence in Egypt. Following the conversion of Nubia, John of Biclar in his *Chronica* wrote of another embassy, this time specifically concerning the Makurians (*Maccurritarum*) in 573, who brought presents of elephant tusks and a giraffe whilst stating their friendship with Emperor Justin II in Constantinople.[20] *Maccurritarum* is the only known Latin use of the term to denote the Makurians specifically despite its somewhat wider use in Greek texts. Any doubt can also be answered by an earlier passage in which John states that the *Maccuritarum* had become Christian around 567-8 during the third year of Justin II.[21] This embassy appears to be a result of the Christian missions to Nubia sent by Justinian in c.543 and, similar to the 336 embassy, the delegates were presenting precious and exotic gifts to maintain an alliance.[22]

Other precedents for contacts concern Ethiopia. Although not definitive, the Council of Chalcedon in 451 could have received Ethiopian delegates amongst the c.370

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[19] A. Łajtar and J. van der Vliet, 'Rome-Meroe-Berlin. The Southernmost Latin Inscription Rediscovered ("CIL" III 83)', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, 157 (2006), pp. 193-8.

[20] Iohannis Biclarensis, 'Chronica', in *Victoris Tunnunensis Chronicon cum reliquiis ex Consularibus Caesaraugustanis et Iohannis Biclarensis Chronicon*, ed. C. Cardelle de Hartmann (Turnhout, 2001), Ch. 28, 65.

[21] Ibid., Ch. 9, 61. Regarding its usage in Greek, the Μακκούραι, located in his section on Libya, do appear in Ptolemy's *Geography*, for example: Claudii Ptolemaei, *Geographia*, ed. K. F. A. Nobbe, 3 vols. (Leipzig, 1843-5), Book IV, Ch. 2 §19, I:231.

[22] Frend, 'Mission to Nubia'; Zacharopoulou, 'Justinian and Theodora'.

bishops who attended with voting rights or accompanied those who did.[23] Arguments for an Ethiopian presence cannot, however, be made on the evidence of a particular Ethiopian bishop who was said to have attended the Council – one Sabinus of Adulis – which rests on the text of the Council published by Eduard Schwartz. As George Bevan argues, such an identification of the bishop cannot be gained from the edition of Schwartz as he presented amendments to the text without supportable evidence for the toponym of Adulis. Instead, Ethiopia's rejection of the Council most likely rested on a shared support of the miaphysite position of Cyril of Alexandria rather than their presence at the Council.[24]

More conclusively, there is evidence that Byzantines did travel to Ethiopia. For instance, an otherwise unknown Greek merchant, posthumously given the name of Cosmas Indicopleustes, arrived in Ethiopia in 518 and wrote much about the port of Adulis and his visit to Aksum.[25] His account was written in 547 at the height of Ethiopian power in the Red Sea. There was also an embassy on the eve of the joint Aksumite-Byzantine invasion of Himyar in 530-1, but unfortunately Nonnosus' *History* (c.533), which detailed his account of his voyages, is now lost.[26] Notably, such alliances between Byzantium and Aksum, particularly against Himyar, emphasise the strong relationship between the two during this time.[27]

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[23] Although the traditional tally of attendees is usually stated as between 500 and 600, it was likely closer more to c.370 according to Richard Price and Michael Gaddis: *The Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, trans. R. Price and M. Gaddis, 3 vols. (Liverpool, 2005), pp. I: 193-6.

[24] G. Bevan, 'Ethiopian Apocalyptic and the End of Roman Rule: The Reception of Chalcedon in Aksum and the *Kebra Nagaśt'*, in *Inside and Out*, eds. Dijkstra and Fisher, pp. 383-4.

[25] Cosmas Indicopleustès, *Topographie Chrétienne*, ed. and trans. W. Wolska-Conus, 3 vols. (Paris, 1968-73), Book II Chs. 48-65, pp. I:357-81. See: L. P. Kirwan, 'The Christian Topography and the Kingdom of Axum', *The Geographical Journal*, 138.2 (1972), pp. 166-77.

[26] I. Shahid, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Sixth Century*, 4 vols. (Washington D.C., 1995-2009), pp. I:156-8. Photius I, Patriarch of Constantinople (r.858-67), summarised Nonnosus's work in his *Bibliotheca* which does survive: Photius, *Bibliothèque*, ed. and trans. Henry, pp. I:4-7.

[27] According to Theophanes, Justinian had an 'Indian' cook who was possibly someone who took advantage of such strong relations between Aksum and Byzantium during this period in order to move

Is it also possible that there were at least two further embassies of 'Indians' (Ethiopians) to Constantinople: one in 496 which brought an elephant and two giraffes, and another embassy sent by the βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰνδῶν, possibly King Armaḥ of Aksum, to Emperor Heraclius in Jerusalem in 630-1 following his recapture of the city.[28] Contacts appear to have been relatively consistent throughout antiquity, though evidence of contacts seems to disappear following the Muslim expansion in the seventh century. That said, authors did not necessarily immediately lose interest in the African kingdoms. For example, John of Nikiou, writing in Egypt, still wrote of Nubia and Ethiopia in 686 in his Coptic universal history, particularly recalling the historically good relations between Nubia and Constantine.[29]

This poses two important questions for the period leading up to the First Crusade: did connectivity stop as the absence in texts suggests and did this obscure continuous contemporary knowledge regarding the Africans also stop? Moreover, how did the lack of documented interactions affect European knowledge of the Nubians and Ethiopians, if, indeed, it did at all? It would appear that the degree of interaction between Europeans and the Africans was key to European knowledge development.

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to Constantinople if, indeed, he was not already present prior to the 530s: Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. C. de Boor, 2 vols. (Hildesheim, 1980), A. M. 6203, I:379.

[28] Marcellini, 'Comitis Chronicon', Anno 496, in MGH Auct. Ant. XI, 94 (*India Anastasio principi elephantum, quem Plautus poeta noster lucabum nomine dicit, duasque camelopardalas pro munere misit*). Further see: P.-L. Gatier, 'Des giraffes pour l'empereur', *Topoi*, 6.2 (1996), pp. 903-41; Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. de Boor, A.M. 6123, I:335.

[29] OSCN, pp. 30-5.

First Millennium European Knowledge

The degrees of information present in first millennium texts will be briefly discussed here as they were available to many medieval European authors, and thus reflect a base corpus of knowledge which later authors could build upon. Moreover, as briefly alluded to, some explanations for the post-seventh-century stagnation of contemporary knowledge until the First Crusade will be offered. The pre-Christian authors of both Greece and Rome were continuously interested in the region known to them as Αἰθιοπία or *Aethiopia*. An excellent array of wide-ranging ancient sources concerning both Nubia and Ethiopia, along with the wider Nile valley, have been published in the *Fontes Historiae Nubiorum* (FHN). Within this corpus there are passages from 88 Greek and Latin authors, dating between the eighth century BCE and sixth century CE, which accompany Egyptian Demotic texts. To highlight the relative frequency with which North-East Africa appeared in even the most famous of histories, it should be noted that, as identified by the FHN, there are 23 passages in Strabo's *Geography* (c.20-30 CE) and 56 passages in Pliny's *Natural History* (77 CE) alone. Though this discussion does not concern pre-Christian sources, it should be emphasised that later Christian authors had a sound grounding in, and understanding of, North-East African history and geography, including its peoples.

The continual development of contemporary knowledge regarding both Ethiopia and Nubia continued throughout the first half of the first millennium. Both kingdoms were documented when they converted to Christianity, for instance. In fact, a relative plentiful collection of texts discuss Ethiopia's conversion in particular, both in Greek

and Latin, notably in the works of early Church historians.[30] According to Eusebius of Caesarea, Nubia had indeed been converted prior to Ethiopia. Eusebius' Αἰθιοπία (Nubia) was said to have been converted through Phillip's meeting with the eunuch of its queen Candace and is directly associated with Acts 8:26-40.[31] His text further highlights Nubia's, rather than Aksum's, initial attribution to 'Ethiopia'. Though plausible, an early date for widespread Nubian Christianisaton is problematic. The traditional account is that Christianity was only cemented in Nubia during the rival Byzantine missions of the mid-sixth century, as primarily told by John of Ephesus.[32] Moreover, the *Fragmentary History* of Priscus (c.470s) does not support this early Christianisation either. He writes that in 452-3 Nubians and Blemmyes convened with the governor of Thebaid to secure the continuation of the Nubian tradition to visit temples of the cults of Philae freely.[33] However, although royal conversions did not occur in Nubia until King Silko in the fifth century – there is no evidence that any Kandake converted in the first century either, though it remains possible that a member of the court could have been as the story describes – it does not necessarily discount the existence of small groups of Christians in the kingdom. Notable monks of Nubian origin were highly influential in the early church, such as Nephalius, and

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[30] The recounting of the conversion of Aksum by Frumentius was often described in texts as 'India': Sozomenus, *Kirchengeschichte*, eds. J. Bidez and G. C. Hansen (Berlin, 1995), Book II Ch. 24, pp. 82-4; Sokrates, *Kirchengeschichte*, ed. G. C. Hansen (Berlin, 1995), Book I Ch. 19, pp. 60-2; Theodoret, *Kirchengeschichte*, ed. L. Parmentier and G. C. Hansen (Berlin, 1998), Book I Ch. 23, pp. 73-4; Rufinus Aquileiensis, 'Historia Ecclesiastica', Book I Ch. 9, in PL 21.478-80. The conversion of Ethiopia was seen within the wider discourse of late antique universal history. On universal history writing, see: M. I. Allen, 'Universal History 300-1000: Origins and Western Developments', in *Historiography in the Middle Ages*, ed. D. M. Deliyannis (Leiden 2003), pp. 17-42.

[31] Eusebius of Caesarea, *Ecclesiastical History*, ed. and trans. K. Lake, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 1926-32), Book II Ch. 1.13, II:108-11.

[32] Iohannis Ephesini, *Historiae Ecclesiasticae pars Tertia*, ed. and trans. E. W. Brooks, 2 vols. (Louvain, 1935-6), Chs. 48-53, pp. II:174-83 (Latin trans.), I:232-43 (text); OSCN, pp. 25-6 (trans.).

[33] Prisci Panitae, Fragmenta, in HGM, fr. 21, pp. 332-3. For background, see: J. H. F. Dijkstra, *Philae and the End of Ancient Egyptian Religion. A Regional Study of Religious Transformation (298-642 CE)* (Leuven, 2008), pp. 125-74.

earlier churches do seem to have been present in Nubia than those of the sixth century.[34]

The collapse of the Western Roman Empire obstructed the development of European knowledge, as ideological histories were increasingly constructed to legitimise new dynasties, support a writer's teachings, or critiquing existing structures of power – as reflected in the works of the likes of Gregory of Tours, Isidore of Seville, Bede, and Paul the Deacon – which were not conducive to the inclusion of either contemporary Nubia or Ethiopia.[35] This alternative focus of post-Roman Europe coincided with the stagnation of contemporary Western knowledge of the African kingdoms. The sixth-century Byzantine-Aksumite alliance against Yemen was the last important event including Ethiopia that was documented by both Greek and Latin authors despite displaying evidence of the intimacy of sixth-century knowledge networks.[36] The increasing absence of contemporary textual knowledge could be explained by the top-down limitations placed on the principal producers of texts who, for example, focused

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[34] On Nephalius, see: A. Grillmeier and T. Hainthaler, *Christ in Christian Tradition. Volume II.IV The Church of Alexandria with Nubia and Ethiopia After 451*, trans. O. C. Dean (London, 1996), pp. 23-4, 47-52; *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Zachariah Rhetor. Church and War in Late Antiquity*, trans. G. Greatrex et al. (Liverpool, 2011), 213n23. On the Christianisation of Nubia, see: D. N. Edwards, 'Christianisation of Nubia. Some Archaeological Pointers', *Sudan and Nubia*, 5 (2001), pp. 89-96; Welsby, *Medieval Kingdoms*, pp. 31-8; S. G. Richter, *Studien zur Christianisierung Nubiens* (Wiesbaden, 2002); D. N. Edwards, 'Creating Christian Nubia: Processes and Events on the Egyptian Frontier', in *Inside and Out*, eds. Dijkstra and Fisher, pp. 407-31.

[35] For examples, see: M. Heinzelmann, *Gregory of Tours. History and Society in the Sixth Century*, trans. C. Carroll (Cambridge, 2001); N. J. Higham, *(Re-)Reading Bede. The Ecclesiastical History in Context* (Abingdon, 2006); A. Fear and J. Wood, eds., *Isidore of Seville and His Reception in the Early Middles Ages. Transmitting and Transforming Knowledge* (Amsterdam, 2016); C. Heath, *The Narrative Worlds of Paul the Deacon. Between Empires and Identities in Lombard Italy* (Amsterdam, 2017). More generally, see: S. Reynolds, 'Our Forefathers?: Tribes, Peoples, and Nations in the Historiography of the Age of Migrations', in *After Rome's Fall. Narrators and Sources of Early Medieval History. Essays Presented to Walter Goffart*, ed. A. C. Murray (Toronto, 1998), pp. 17-36; J. M., Pizarro, 'Ethnic and National History Ca. 500-1000', *Historiography in the Middle Ages*, ed. Deliyannis, pp. 43-88; A. H. Merrills, *History and Geography in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, 2005); S. J. Schustereder, *Strategies of Identity Construction. The Writings of Gildas, Aneirin and Bede* (Göttingen, 2015).

[36] The sources are summarised in I. Shahid, *The Martyrs of Najran. New Documents* (Brussels, 1971). Works were aware of Kālēb's throne name, reflecting the existence intimate knowledge networks, as they, for instance, call the Ethiopian king Ἐλεσβαὰς, Hellesthaeos, or similar, a variant of Ǝllä Aṣbäḥa. This is in comparison to the source naming King ʿĒzānā directly as Ἀιζανᾷ in the fourth century.

on the condition of Church relations, rather than what everyday traders and travellers would have known – or a communal knowledge – in comparison.[37]

Even though there is little evidence to suggest with certainty, the growing influence of the Coptic Patriarch may have restricted direct communications between the European and Nubian and Ethiopian Churches, which, in turn, limited contemporary European understanding of the Africans. The regional dominance of the Coptic Patriarch towards the end of the sixth century possibly resulted in its subordinate African Churches being ignored despite attempts at reconciliation between the Chalcedonian and anti-Chalcedonian Churches in the sixth and seventh centuries.[38] It may have been that as far as Europeans became concerned, Egypt became *the* sole voice of the Eastern African Churches, leaving no need to communicate with either Nubia or Ethiopia. In comparison, such an explanation is supported by the continued European communication with the North African Church. Whilst it is true that the North African Church was simply geographically closer to Europe, the contrasting European approaches to the African Churches would suggest that desires to communicate with the Churches were not equal.[39]

In any case, these links were seemingly dramatically severed during the seventh century. Present evidence suggests, however, that Byzantine interaction with the Red Sea was already limited by this period. Timothy Power has emphasised plague and

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[37] I will return to this concept of 'communal knowledge' in Section Two.

[38] P. Booth, 'Towards the Coptic Church: The Making of the Severan Episcopate', *Millennium*, 14.1 (2017), pp. 151-90.

[39] J. Cuoq, *L'Eglise d'Afrique du Nord du deuxième au douzième siècle* (Paris, 1984), pp. 105-72; J. Conant, *Staying Roman. Conquest and Identity in Africa and the Mediterranean, 439-700* (Cambridge, 2012), pp. 362-70; S. Adamiak, *Carthage, Constantinople and Rome. Imperial and Papal Interventions in the Life of the Church in Byzantine Africa (533-698)* (Rome, 2016); A. J. Fromherz, *The Near West. Medieval North Africa, Latin Europe and the Mediterranean in the Second Axial Age* (Edinburgh, 2016), pp. 58-85.

environmental factors in the sixth-century decline of Byzantine Red Sea ports, whilst highlighting the intervening periods of Ethiopian and Persian hegemony prior to the coming of the Arabs, rather than recycling the narrative of the destructive 'break' with the rise of Islam.[40] This is compounded by the argument of James Howard-Johnston who has recently emphasised how trade to India increasingly transformed from the sea route to the land route during late antiquity, suggesting that most trade avoided the Red Sea by the later centuries, thus indicating a diminishing Byzantine presence throughout the centuries.[41]

The rise of Islam did, however, restrict any lingering Byzantine desires to revive Byzantium's ties to Red Sea and western Indian Ocean trade in later centuries. Moreover, emerging Italian merchant powers began to shape a principally Mediterranean-orientated focus for directly accessible European trade.[42] Diminishing physical interaction between Nubians, Ethiopians, Europeans, and Byzantines in regions such as Egypt and the Red Sea restricted any development in knowledge and led to this intellectual 'break'. The most important change was the role of Egypt in international trade. Whilst it is true that European and Byzantine trade did not cease with Islamic Egypt, Egypt transformed into a hub for these merchants rather than remaining a node in which to stop before continuing their journeys onwards, as it had

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[40] Power, *Red Sea*, pp. 19-89, 190-201.

[41] J. Howard-Johnston, 'The India Trade in Late Antiquity', in *Sassanid Persia. Between Rome and the Steppes of Eurasia*, ed. E. W. Sauer (Edinburgh, 2017), pp. 284-304. Likewise, Rebecca Darley has argued for a limited trade between Byzantium and India, via the Red Sea, in the period prior to the rise of Islam, particularly state organised trade. Such a view does not limit the argument of this thesis, but re-emphasises that any agents of exchange remain silent in the sources and can only be speculated: R. Darley, *Indo-Byzantine Exchange, 4th to 7th Centuries: A Global History* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham, 2013). Gary Young argues for a similar lack of state-led Eastern trade in the earlier centuries of the Roman Empire, suggesting a continuing lack of official policy: G. K. Young, *Rome's Eastern Trade. International Commerce and Imperial Policy 31 BC-AD 305* (London, 2001). However, for an argued consistent connectivity, see: E. H. Seland, 'Writ in Water, Lines in Sand: Ancient Trade Routes, Models and Comparative Evidence', *Cogent Arts and Humanities*, 2.1 (2015), DOI 10.1080/23311983.2015.1110272.

[42] D. Jacoby, 'Venetian Commercial Expansion in the Eastern Mediterranean, 8th-11th Centuries', in *Byzantine Trade*, ed. Mango, pp. 371-91.

been. Islamic Egypt effectively cemented itself as the 'middleman' for Mediterranean exchange with international markets. The disconnect with the Red Sea region during this period would suggest that growing limitation in the continued development of contemporary knowledge, as reflected in the sources, was to be expected.

No reference to contemporary Nubia or Ethiopia can be found in any surviving annal or chronicle in the latter centuries of the first millennium, for example. That said, the Anastasis scene at Banganarti in Nubia (c.850-c.1050) (Fig. 1) has been noted to look strikingly similar to Italian examples, particularly for its dark contrasting background – specifically the Anastasis' at San Clemente and San Giovanni e Paulo as opposed to traditional Byzantine or Coptic styles, including the one other Nubian example at Faras. This has led to Bogdan Żurawski suggesting that an artistic import from Europe is the primary plausible explanation for the scene's style.[43] If Żurawski is correct, this would suggest a continued undocumented network between Nubian and Latin Christians of sorts was still in existence in the latter centuries of the first millennium. It should also be mentioned that a sixth-century Aksumite coin has been excavated reportedly near Hastings and it has been argued by Bent Juel-Jensen and Stuart Munro-Hay that such coins show striking resemblance to eighth-century coins of King Offa, possibly due to a direct artistic influence, though the Hastings coin may be viewed as a stray Byzantine find.[44] Why, then, did knowledge remain restricted?

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[43] B. Żurawski, 'The Anastasis Scene from the Lower Church III at Banganarti (Upper Nubia)', CAMAPSET, 21 (2007), pp. 162-82.

[44] B. Juel-Jensen and S. Munro-Hay, 'Further Examples of Coins of Offa Inspired by Aksumite Designs', *Spink Numismatic Circular*, 102 (1994), pp. 256-7. As a stray Byzantine find, see: W. Hahn, 'Aksumite Numismatics – A Critical Survey of Recent Research', *Revue numismatique*, 155 (2000), 288n27.

Fig. 1. The Anastasis Scene, Banganarti, c.850-c.1050 with reconstruction. From B. Żurawski, *Banganarti on the Nile. An Archaeological Guide* (Warsaw, 2012), 56.

Knowledge of Nubia and Ethiopia in both the Greek East and Latin West appears to have diminished towards the end of the first millennium. The perceived lack of references in Greek texts has been explained by a simple lack of interest by Byzantine writers.[45] Yet, 'Ethiopians' continue to appear in Byzantine writings until the Ottoman invasion. These lie outside of the scope of this present study and this absence is more reflective of the lack of surviving Byzantine historical sources in general.[46]

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[45] V. Christides, 'The Image of the Sudanese in Byzantine Sources', *Byzantinoslavica*, 43 (1982), 17.

[46] For example, the Aksumites appear as 'τοὺς Αὐξουμίτας ἀπαίρει Αἰθίοπας' in the c.1335 *Historia ecclesiastica* of Nicephorus Callistus along with the embassy of Theophilus to the Homerites by

Additionally, the Νοῦβαι, listed as a people of Africa next to the Nile, are found as an entry in the tenth-century hugely influential encyclopaedic *Suda,* showing that more precise ethnonyms remained commonly known.[47]

Equally, the Byzantine Patriarch Photius I (d.891) carefully noted and summarised many works which he had read in his *Bibliotheca*, many of which documented Nubia and Ethiopia in varying detail. For the purpose here, works he read include those of Nonnosus, Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, Cosmas Indicopleustes, Philostorgius, Procopius, Theophanes, Theophylact Simocatta, Zosimus, and included the literary *Aethiopica* of Heliodorus.[48] The summaries of Photius I suggest that, even if evidence of widespread interest was lacking, there was widespread continuing knowledge, albeit increasingly outdated. However, other notable chroniclers of the ninth and tenth centuries do not include contemporary knowledge. For example, Theophanes in his *Chronicle* (c.810-5) only notes how the Persian invasion of Egypt reached up until the edges of 'Αἰθιοπίας' – Nubia – in 615-6.[49] Likewise, Symeon Magister in his *Chronicle* (c.963-9) cuts off his information following the Persian invasion, though he does add more detail, such as including the relations between Justinian and Kālēb.[50]

Constantine in the mid-fourth century: Nicephorus Callistus Xanthopoulos, 'Historia ecclesiastica', Book IX Ch. 18, in PG 146, cols.295-8. On Byzantine historians, see: W. Treadgold, *The Early Byzantine Historians* (Basingstoke, 2007); A. Kaldellis, 'Byzantine Historical Writing, 500-920', in *The Oxford History of Historical Writing. Volume II. 400-1400*, eds. S. Foot and C. F. Robinson (Oxford, 2015), pp. 201-17.

[47] *Suidae Lexicon*, ed. A. Adler, 5 vols. (Leipzig, 1928-38), III:ν 510. There are also entries for Ethiopia: I:αι 127, Kandake: III:κ 301, Napata (an ancient Nubian kingdom though mentioned as a 'Libyan' city): III:ν 30, Mallon (an ethnonym for peoples near Meroë): III:μ 118, and Meroë: III:μ 639.

[48] For the work of Photius, see: Photius, *Bibliothèque*, ed. and trans. Henry.

[49] Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. de Boor, A. M. 6107, I:301. The tenth-century author of the first Muslim world chronicle, al-Ṭabarī, instead writes the invasion reached the land of Nūba (نوبه) al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa'l-mulūk*, ed. M. Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, 10 vols. (Cairo, 1960-9), II:182.

[50] *Symeonis Magistri et Logothetae Chronicon*, ed. S. Wahlgren (Berlin, 2006), Ch. 103, pp. 137-8, Ch. 109, pp. 157-8.

Similar to their later Greek counterparts, writers in the Latin West in the latter half of the millennium also ignored the region and lacked originality. Throughout the later centuries, Latin writers were content with simply recycling basic geographical knowledge, particularly of Pliny's *Naturalis Historia*.[51] This limited knowledge appeared in histories, commentaries, and encyclopaedic works. To illustrate the first corpus of texts, Orosius in his *Historiae Adversus Paganos* (c.416-7) largely ignores the Africans. Ethiopia could be exempted as it was Christian by his time, but Nubia should probably be expected as it was not officially converted until the following century. Yet, *Aethiopia* only appears as a vague region and peoples in relation to ancient conflicts; for example involving Alexander the Great, with the only knowledge shown of Nubia being of the island of Meroë – though in relation to the Nile, not its kingdom.[52] Equally, Remigius of Auxerre in his *Commentary on Martianus Capella* (c.900) merely states that Meroë was an island of the Nile in *Aethiopia* below Egypt.[53] Whilst these works may not be expected to have large tracts of information on either Ethiopia or Nubia, they do reflect the scant references which were continually repeated throughout the latter half of the first millennium.

Similarly, encyclopaedic works do not shed too much light on either Ethiopia or Nubia. In Bede's *De natura rerum* (c.703) Pliny is reiterated once more with Bede stating that Meroë was 5000 furlongs from Syene whilst having nothing more to say

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[51] L. D. Reynolds and N. H. Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars. A guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Culture* (Oxford, 2013). For the Greek East see pp. 44-79 and for the Latin West see pp. 80-122. For a brief overview, see: W. Berschin, 'Traduzioni dal Greco in latino (secoli iv-xiv)', in *I Greci. Storia cultura arte società. III. I Greci oltro la Grecia*, ed. G. Einaudi (Turin, 2001, 2001), pp. 1023-33; idem, 'Il greco in Occidente: conoscenze e ignoranza (secoli IV-XIV)', in Ibid., pp. 1107-15.
[52] Paulus Orosius, *Historiae Adversus Paganos Libri VII*, ed. K. Zangemeister (Stuttgart, 1889), Book I Ch. 27, 7. Orosius' knowledge is based on: Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, 2.75.183-4, pp. I:316-7.
[53] Remigii Autissiodorensis, *Commentum in Martianum Capellam*, ed. C. E. Lutz, 2 vols. (Leiden, 1962-5), Book VIII Ch. 452, II:276.

about the kingdom.[54] Encyclopaedic works did, however, strengthen medieval views on where 'Ethiopia' was. For example, 'Ethiopia', or 'East Ethiopia', remained linked to Nubia. Isidore of Seville, writing in the early seventh century, placed *Aethiopia* south of Egypt and his *Etymologies* remained the blueprint for geographical knowledge until the expansion of cartography in the fourteenth century.[55] The main conclusion to draw from late first millennium texts is that despite being the foremost western writers on geography, Orosius, Isidore of Seville, and Bede were not as detailed as previous classical writers, such as Strabo, Pliny or Ptolemy.

This overall later lack of contemporary knowledge was not limited to North-East Africa either, but to many realms and peoples. The era of the Crusades witnessed the evolution of contemporary European knowledge of numerous distant lands besides 'Ethiopia' and Nubia, such as India and China.[56] Distant lands were increasingly better understood, but all appear to have suffered similar fates in European texts in the centuries prior to the twelfth century. Five centuries earlier, the Byzantine historian Theophylact Simocatta in his *History* (c.620-30) indicated a diverse display of contemporary knowledge about distant lands. His text offers interesting comparisons

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[54] 'De natura rerum', in *Bedae Venerabilis Opera, pars VI Opera didascalica I*, ed. C. W. Jones (Turnhurt, 1975), Ch. 48, 232. For its transmission, see: M. Capidge, 'Beda Venerabilis, De natura rerum', in *Trasmissione dei testi latini IV*, pp. 55-62.

[55] The most notable passage in Isidore is *Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi Etymologiarum Sive Originum Libri XX*, ed. W. M. Lindsay, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1911), II: Book XIV Ch. 5. However, he only lays out the geography of Africa, situating 'Ethiopia' within it, but does not detail 'Ethiopia' specifically. For Isidore's initial reception more generally, see: Fear and Wood, eds., *Isidore of Seville*. For his later medieval reception, see: *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, trans. S. A. Barney, W. J. Lewis, J. A. Beach, and O. Berghof (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 24-7; C. Codoñer, 'Isidorus Hispalensis Ep., Etymologiae', in *Trasmissione dei testi latini II*, pp. 274-99.

[56] J. P. Rubiés, *Travel and Ethnography in the Renaissance. South India Through European Eyes, 1250-1625* (Cambridge, 2000); W. Baum, *Indien und Europa im Mittelalter. Die Eingliederung eines Kontinents in das europäische Bewußtsein Bis Ins 15. Jahrhundert* (Klagenfurt, 2000); M. Münkler, *Erfahrung des Fremden. Die Beschreibung Ostasiens in den Augenzeugenberichten des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 2000); O'Doherty, *The Indies and the Medieval West*; F. Reichert, 'Chinas Beitrag zum Weltbild der Europäer: Zur Reception der Fernostkenntnisse im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert', *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung*, 6 (1989), pp. 33-57; F. Reichert, *Asien und Europa im Mittelalter. Studien zur Geschichte des Reisens* (Göttingen, 2014).

for the analysis of knowledge regarding 'Ethiopia' and China.[57] Contemporary knowledge regarding both 'Ethiopia' and India all but disappear in later texts, with the information found in Simocatta's account recycling earlier authors to contribute towards other details. The lack of relayed information could be the result of decreasing contact. Other than allusory suggestions that 'Ethiopian' embassies continued to be welcomed to the Constantinopolitan court in later centuries, no texts corroborate these claims.[58]

That said, is the apparent stagnation in contemporary knowledge, both in Byzantium and Western Europe, more a question of source survival rather than an absence of knowledge interaction, or a product of focusing elsewhere? Western Europe, for instance, remained integrated into distant trading networks despite knowledge of distant lands remaining elusive in texts. For example, Bede famously had pepper in his possession upon his death despite not documenting many contemporary events in Africa or the Far East.[59] Though we have no African evidence, Chinese records do corroborate continued interaction and developing knowledge, even with an absence of such in Byzantine texts.[60] If there were more Ethiopian or Nubian documents available, they may also support the Byzantine allusory claims. The effect that the

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[57] The passage which has some focus on 'Ethiopia' is primarily concerned with disproving increasingly popular contemporary 'certain marvels' regarding the flow of the Nile, but is an elaborate copying of Diodorus Siculus: Theophylacti Simocattae, *Historiae*, ed. C. de Boor (Leipzig, 1887), Book XVII Chs. 16-7, pp. 273-83; Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History*, eds. and trans. various authors, Book I Chs. 37-41, pp. I:127-52. The passage regarding Ταυγάστ (China) is describing contemporary or near-contemporary knowledge. In fact, Simocatta explicitly states that he refrains from divulging any more information about China in order to not misdirect away from the purpose of his text: Theophylacti Simocattae, *Historiae*, ed. de Boor, Book VII Ch. 9, pp. 260-2.

[58] For example, Eustathios, the twelfth-century Archbishop of Thessaloniki, mentions the observations of "Ethiopians" observed at the court of Emperor Manuel I in 1173/1174 amongst other foreign peoples: *Eustathii Thessalonicensis Opera Minora*, ed. P. Wirth (Berlin, 2000), 263-4.

[59] D. J. Heisey, 'Bede's Pepper, Napkins, and Incense', *The Downside Review*, 129.454 (2011), pp. 16-30.

[60] See, for instance, the texts in: F. Hirth, *China and the Roman Orient. Researches Into Their Ancient and Mediaeval Relations as Represented in Old Chinese Records* (Shanghai, 1885), pp. 104-10, 119-20 (text); 51-64, 88-91 (trans.). Comparatively, see: X. Zhang, 'On the Origin of "Taugast" in Theophylact Simocatta and the Later Sources', *Byzantion*, 80 (2010), pp. 485-501.

changes to historical writing had on the desires of medieval authors prior to the Crusades emphasises the need to see the 'discovery' of Nubia and Ethiopia following the twelfth century as a documentary reintroduction, whilst acknowledging that knowledge had, in all likelihood, continued to develop, albeit unrecorded. After all, texts were continuously copied and re-copied throughout the centuries even if they were not seemingly added to.[61] It appears the best explanation for the lack of the later documentation of contemporary knowledge is that authors simply had other priorities.

It was precisely this void which led Richard of Poitiers (d. c.1174), a Benedictine monk at Cluny who will also be discussed later, to declare there to be a widespread ignorance amongst his contemporaries and predecessors concerning current affairs.[62] Noting in the introductory dedication to abbot Peter of Cluny in his chronicle, Richard stated the reason he was writing:

> Though I may seem foolish to write childish things, that is in copying, compiling and drawing together the histories of the ancients in a single work, I have noted that nothing can be reworked more profitably at the moment, especially since what has happened for the last four hundred years has almost

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[61] R. R. Bolgar, *The Classical Heritage and its Beneficiaries* (Cambridge, 1958); B. Munk Olsen, 'La popularité des textes classiques entre le IXe et le XIIe siècle', *Revue d'histoire des textes*, 14-15 (1984-5), pp. 169-81; B. Munk Olsen, 'Chronique des manuscripts classiques latins (IXe-XIIe siècle) I-III', *Revue d'histoire des textes*, 21 (1991), pp. 37-76, 24 (1994), pp. 199-249, 27 (1997), pp. 29-85.

[62] For more on Richard's production of his chronicle, see: M. Saurette, 'Tracing the Twelfth-Century *Chronica* of Richard of Poitiers, Monk of Cluny', *Memini. Travaux et documents*, 8 (2005-6), pp. 303-50. Other influential contemporary writers made similar claims regarding the inactivity of previous writers, such as the earlier historian Rodulphus Glaber: Rodulphi Glabri, *Historiarum libri quinque. The five Books of the Histories*, ed. and trans. J. France (Oxford, 1989), Book I Ch. 1, pp. 2-3. See also: G. Melville, 'Le problème des connaissances historiques au Moyen Age. Compilation et transmission des textes' in *L'Historiographie médiévale en Europe*, ed. J.-P. Genet (Paris, 1991), pp. 21-41.

been delivered to obscurity on account of the scarcity or the inactivity of writers.[63]

Even if the histories of the ancients were known, it was clear that this ignorance stifled any understanding of the recent history of Nubia and Ethiopia which had been documented little in Europe. Indeed, throughout the twelfth century the past remained a political tool to substantiate the historicism for European dynasties, and was not necessarily a method for developing extra-European universal knowledge.[64] This inward focus is also evident in the lack of references to other Christian groups, primarily Greeks, Armenians, and Jacobites (Syrians), in Crusader texts in the earlier part of the century, let alone any reference to Nubians and Ethiopians.

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[63] Ricardi Pictaviensis, 'Chronica', in MGH SS, XXVI, 76; Saurette, 'Tracing', 335.
[64] For example: P. Magdalino, ed., *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe* (London, 1992).

III: Initial Contact on the First Crusade

Centuries of European stagnation severely limited early Crusader knowledge of both Nubia and Ethiopia. The contemporary lack of knowledge by the First Crusaders can be best represented by one particularly important event immediately prior to the launching of the Crusades, which was either ignored or unknown to the Europeans despite its obvious advantageous benefit. In 1088, an ecumenical agreement was declared between the miaphysite churches of Egypt, Armenia, Syria, Nubia, and Ethiopia.[1] The Crusaders were unwittingly arriving into a theologically united land which shared, at least rhetorically, their opposition to the Muslims. It is clear, however, that the Crusaders did not take advantage of the wider geopolitical situation; there is no sense of understanding of contemporary politics. For example, on the eve of the First Crusade, between 1088 and 1091, the first known reference to the belief of the Ethiopian ruler's control over the Nile appeared.[2] Whilst relations between Ethiopia and Egypt remained largely amicable, Ethiopia began to demonstrate its power as a guardian and protector of the Christians of Egypt when faced with a Muslim threat. More importantly, as this event was chronicled in the *History of the Patriarchs* (originally started in the tenth century by Sāwīrus ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, the Coptic Bishop of Ashmunein, but added to over later centuries by various authors), it was not written by an Ethiopian. This then poses the questions of how many Egyptian Christians attributed such a role to the Ethiopian kingdom and how easy could such a

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[1] HPEC II.III, 346.

[2] HPEC II.III, 351. For a study of these events, see: E. van Donzel, 'Badr al-Jamālī. The Copts in Egypt and the Muslims in Ethiopia', in *Hunter of the East. Studies in Honor of Clifford Edmund Bosworth*, vol. 1, ed. I. R. Netton (Leiden, 2000), pp. 297-309. It was events during this period which created the legend of the Ethiopian king's control of the Nile which will be discussed later. This threat also coincided with over a century of major droughts in Egypt, notably in the 1050s-70s, possibly further cementing this fear: R. Ellenblum, *The Collapse of the Eastern Mediterranean. Climate Change and the Decline of the East, 950-1072* (New York, 2012), pp. Table 2.1 on 31, 147-55.

belief spread? Regrettably, no other references to this alleged protectorship in other
contemporary chronicles survive until the fourteenth century, however.[3]

Importantly, it should also be noted that according to the *History of the Patriarchs*, the
Coptic Papacy moved from Alexandria further south to Cairo during the reign of Pope
St. Christodoulos (r.1046-77), apparently wanting to make it easier for the many
messengers received from Nubia and Ethiopia.[4] Such an act highlights the importance
of the relationship between the Churches. That said, when Christodoulos' successor,
Cyril, consecrated a new Abuna for Ethiopia, it was made sure that the new Abuna
would maintain the trade coming from the kingdom to Egypt.[5] Despite this dispute,
relative peace between Egypt and its southern neighbours was maintained; neither
Nubians nor Ethiopians would have desired Crusader aid even if it was offered.

Regardless of the results that such knowledge could have created, this wider
geopolitical situation was absent from the Crusaders' thinking in their plans of
conquest, suggesting it was not known in the Crusader ranks. A review of the origins
of the First Crusade is not necessary here, but three recent studies should be
highlighted: those of Christopher MacEvitt, Peter Frankopan, and Jonathan Harris
discussing the role of Eastern Christians in the launching of the Crusades.[6] Both
Frankopan and Harris have argued that there was a Western desire to liberate the

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[3] See below: pp. 210-11.

[4] HPEC II.III, pp. 327-8. Prior to the move, Christodoulos sent a letter to the King of Nubia to ask for help in the troubles which would suggest that communication with Nubia was just as important as communication with Ethiopia: HPEC II.III, 281.

[5] HPEC II.III, 329.

[6] P. Frankopan, *The First Crusade. The Call from the East* (London, 2013); J. Harris, 'Byzantium and the First Crusade: Three Avenues of Approach', *Estudios bizantinos*, 2 (2014), pp. 125-41; J. Harris, 'The "Schism" of 1054 and the First Crusade', *Crusades*, 13, (2014), pp. 1-20. Though Harris criticises Frankopan's approach: Harris, 'Three Avenues', pp. 128-34. MacEvitt, on the other hand, has looked at the Eastern response to the First Crusade in general: MacEvitt, *Crusades and the Christian World*, pp. 50-73.

Byzantines from their suffering at the hands of the Muslims, whilst MacEvitt has

stated that the Crusaders did not care much for distinguishing between the different

Christian groups in the East when they arrived and that co-operation was a necessity,

not a long-held desire, with the Crusaders often encountering resistance by local

Christians. Yet, according to some contemporary Crusade chroniclers, this Latin role

of protector could be expanded to encompass all the Christians in the East, not just the

Greeks.[7] Any early Crusader interest of, and relations with, Eastern Christians did not

seemingly encompass the Nubians or Ethiopians as far as the sources suggest,

however.

From the perspective of planning a crusade such ignorance would seem fool-hardy on

the part of the prospective leaders, especially as prior to the First Crusade Pope

Gregory VII had 'crusade' plans of his own as early as 1074, allowing ample time for

such intelligence gathering if it was desired.[8] Most importantly here, despite this

earlier 'crusading' desire, none of the First Crusaders appeared to have utilised, or

capitalised on, any knowledge of the region and its inhabitants, and form a developed

understanding of the region to strengthen their chances of success. Intelligence

gathering was not deemed to be important.[9] It is also interesting to note how Gregory

had directly concerned himself with North African Christians. For example, in a letter

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[7] See: P. K. Hitti, 'The Impact of the Crusades on Eastern Christianity', in *Medieval and Middle Eastern Studies in Honour of Aziz Suryal Atiya*, ed. S. A. Hanna (Leiden, 1972), pp. 211-7; B. Hamilton, *The Latin Church in the Crusader States. The Secular Church* (London, 1980), pp. 1-17; A. Jotischky, 'The Christians of Jerusalem, the Holy Sepulchre and the Origins of the First Crusade', *Crusades*, 7 (2008), pp. 35-57; C. MacEvitt, 'Processing Together, Celebrating Apart: Shared Processions in the Latin East', JMH, 44.4 (2018), pp. 455-69.

[8] H. E. J. Cowdrey, 'Pope Gregory VII's 'Crusading' Plans of 1074', in *Outremer. Studies in the History of the Crusading Kingdom of Jerusalem Presented to Joshua Prawer*, eds. B. Z. Kedar, H. E. Mayer, and R. C. Smail (Jerusalem, 1982), pp. 27-40. Crusading beginnings can be dated even earlier, see: B. Hamilton, 'Pope John X (914-928) and the Antecedents of the First Crusade', in *In Laudem Hierosolymintani. Studies in Crusades and Medieval Culture in Honour of Benjamin Z. Kedar*, eds. I. Shagrir, R. Ellenblum, and J. S. C. Riley-Smith (Aldershot, 2007), pp. 309-18.

[9] The seeming unimportance of the accumulation of knowledge regarding the East is reiterated in its noticeable absence by Christopher Tyerman in his recent book: C. Tyerman, *How to Plan a Crusade. Reason and Religious War in the Middle Ages* (London, 2015).

to the bishop of Carthage in 1076, Gregory opened with 'it has come to our attention [regarding North Africa]… which when old Christianity was flourishing there [it] was ruled by a very large number of bishops, [but] has fallen into such dire straits that it does not have three bishops for the ordination of a bishop'. Such a bishop was to be sent to Rome to be ordained and returned so that he may provide much needed pastoral oversight and alleviate oppressive labour of north African Christians.[10] Yet, North-East African Christians remain absent in any surviving communication.

In some ways, some contemporary understanding of North-East Africa should actually arguably be expected as an historical consciousness was important in other contemporary arenas. For example, the memory of a Christian Spain *ab antiquo* before the Arab invasions of 711 was a driving force for expeditions to the Iberian Peninsula during the Second Crusade.[11] Yet, comparatively, there appears to have been much less initial Crusader appetite for Egyptian expeditions to reclaim Christian land based on a shared memory of a Christian Egypt before 642. The two events, separated only by 69 years, were remembered in stark contrast, despite the apparent acknowledgement by Pope Urban II at Clermont of Christianity in the lands of Africa as discussed below. There appears to be even no acknowledgement by the Crusaders that contemporary Egypt may still have been, according to the estimates of Tamer el-

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[10] Gregory VII, *Register*, Book III, 19, I:285. See: C. Courtois, 'Grégoire VII et l'Afrique du Nord: remarques sur les communautés chrétiennes d'Afrique du Nord au XI siècle', *Revue Historique*, 195 (1942), pp. 97-122, 193-226.

[11] See: W. J. Purkis, 'The Past as a Precedent: Crusade, Reconquest and Twelfth-Century Memories of a Christian Iberia', in *The Making of Memory in the Middles Ages*, ed. L. Doležalová (Leiden, 2010), pp. 441-62; A. Forey, 'Papal Claims to Authority Over Lands Gained from the Infidel in the Iberian Peninsula and Beyond the Straits of Gibraltar', in *La Papauté et les croisades/The Papacy and the Crusades. Actes du VIIe Congrès de la Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East/Proceedings of the VIIth Conference of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East*, ed. M. Balard (Farnham, 2011), pp. 131-40.

Leithy, mostly Christian up until the fourteenth century.[12] This apparent absence is more striking given that the title Baldwin I of Jerusalem claimed was *rex Babylonie vel Asia*, which suggests that there was an intent to conquer Egypt, although extensive expeditions into Egypt only occurred later, during the 1160s.[13] If the conquest of Egypt was to be expected, a memory of Christian Egypt, like that of Spain, would be suspected to have been more prominent; which would likely have included knowledge of its subordinate Churches in Nubia and Ethiopia. However, there appears to have been no interest or concern in acknowledging the African Christians, likely as a result of the initial lack of European knowledge regarding them.

An interesting comparison is the invocation of the memory of a Christian 'Ethiopia' by the Greek imperial poet Manganeios Prodromos in 1159 following Emperor Manuel's triumphal return from Antioch. Psalm 68:31 is invoked with Αἰθιοπία said to have been reaching its hand back to Manuel following a period of darkness under the Muslims whilst bringing gifts of praise. 'Ethiopia' was used as a metaphor for Manuel's salvation of Eastern Christians.[14] The rhetorical display in the poem is clear,

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[12] The majority of studies tend to argue for the mass conversion of Copts to Islam during the last centuries of the first millennium. However, Tamer el-Leithy has argued that such mass conversions only truly occurred in the fourteenth century, which would suggest that there may have been a large Coptic presence in Egypt during the onset of the Crusades: T. el-Leithy, *Coptic Culture and Conversion in Medieval Cairo, 1293-1524 A.D.* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Princeton University, 2005). For earlier datings of conversions, see: D. P. Little, 'Coptic Conversion to Islam Under the Baḥrī Mamlūks, 692-755/1293-1354', *BSOAS*, 39.3 (1976), pp. 552-69; N. A. Malek, 'The Copts: From an Ethnic Majority to a Religious Minority', in *Acts of the Fifth International Congress of Coptic Studies. Washington D.C., August 12-15, 1992*, ed. D. W. Johnson, vol. 2 (Rome, 1993), pp. 299-311; S. O'Sullivan, 'Coptic Conversion and the Islamization of Egypt', *Mamlūk Studies Review*, 10.2 (2006), pp. 65-79.

[13] J. Richard, 'La Croisade: l'evolution des conceptions et des stratégies', in *From Clermont to Jerusalem. The Crusades and Crusader Societies 1095-1500*, ed. A. V. Murray (Turnhout, 1998), 9. Early in his reign Baldwin styled himself as 'King of Babylon and Asia': *Le Cartulaire du Chapitre du Saint-Sépulcre de Jérusalem*, ed. G. Bresc-Bautier (Paris, 1984), no.19, 73. Baldwin had even promised to donate a third of Cairo in 1104 to the Genoese upon the pretence that it would be conquered with their help: RRH, no.43, 8. On evolving strategy towards Egypt, see: A. V. Murray, 'The Place of Egypt in the Military Strategy of the Crusades, 1099-1221', in *The Fifth Crusade in Context. The Crusading Movement in the Early Thirteenth Century*, eds. E. J. Mylod, G. Perry, T. W. Smith, and J. Vandeburie (Abingdon, 2017), pp. 117-34.

[14] 'Poem 10', lines 235-251 in E. Jeffreys and M. Jeffreys, 'A Constantinopolitan Poet Views Frankish Antioch', *Crusades*, 14 (2015), pp. 138-9.

but it is noteworthy that Manuel was celebrated for acting on behalf of 'Ethiopia'; but why 'Ethiopia'? Similar to earlier emperors, 'Ethiopian' delegations and gifts brought a greater degree of prestige than those of Europeans as they better reflected the emperor's great power throughout the known world. Moreover, despite limited contact, Byzantium does appear to have occasionally interacted with 'Ethiopia', whether Nubia or Ethiopia, through Alexandria; notably declaring their shared faith in the eleventh century and reiterating the union of the churches prior to 1095.[15] 'Ethiopia' was not all but forgotten in Byzantium after all. This feeling was not, however, a feature in Western Europe or in the Holy Land. Early Crusader uses of 'Ethiopia' did not reflect knowledge of the kingdoms of Nubia or Ethiopia. Thus initial European-'Ethiopian' interactions were built upon the stagnation of knowledge evidenced during the preceeding centuries.

Negotiating 'Ethiopia' and 'Ethiopians' on Crusade

The liberation of Eastern Christianity following the capture of Jerusalem was celebrated by Urban's successor Pope Paschal II in a letter to all those victorious in 1100, though without mentioning specific groups.[16] Yet, it would appear that given the policy of co-operation with the Eastern Churches by Urban II, the references to pagan 'Ethiopians' would further suggest that the First Crusaders did not know about the Christian kingdoms south of Egypt. The relationship between the early Crusaders and 'Ethiopia' was principally one of rhetoric, rather than a consequence of

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[15] V. Grumel, V. Laurent, and J. Darrouzès, eds., *Les régestes des actes du Patriarcat de Constantinople*, 7 vols. (Paris, 1971-91), no.814 (possibly as recipients amongst the Patriarchs of the East, but no direct evidence), pp. I.III:324-5 (see also no.820, pp. 330-1); no.871, no.873, I.III:368; no.950, pp. I.III:418-9. The Patriarch of Constantinople had been seen as an 'ecumenical patriarch' since the late sixth century: V. Laurent, 'Le titre de patriarche oecuménique et la signature patriarcale', *Revue des études byzantines*, 6 (1948), pp. 5-26. As such, at least some periodic correspondence with Nubia and Ethiopia, at least via Egypt, should be expected despite the limited surviving evidence.
[16] *Die Kreuzzugsbriefe aus den Jahren 1088-1100*, ed. H. Hagenmeyer (Innsbruck, 1901), no.22, 178.

knowledge. This notion of a lack of Christianity in the African kingdoms is first framed by Fulcher of Chartres, supplemented later by Guibert. Fulcher understood 'Ethiopia' to be a land where Christianity was excluded and was, indeed, adjacent to where the Crusaders had ventured.[17] From the beginning, the early First Crusade narrative was one that described the expedition as entering a region where Christianity had perished. Whilst 'Ethiopia' may appear as rhetoric for the expanse covered by Islam in the East, it is noteworthy that both Nubians and Ethiopians did not receive the same treatment as other Eastern Christians, suggesting that the rhetoric should be coupled with a misunderstanding of the East regarding the Africans following centuries of the stagnation of knowledge.

This depiction of the East and 'Ethiopia' was said to have been first born out of Pope Urban II's infamous speech at Clermont in 1095 which launched the initial Crusade. Guibert of Nogent, in his *Dei gesta per Francos* (revised up until c.1121), recalls Urban declaring very clearly the position of the 'Ethiopians' to the potential Crusaders:

> according to the prophet, [the Antichrist] will undoubtedly kill three kings pre-eminent for their faith in Christ, that is, the kings of Egypt, of [North] Africa, and of *Ethiopiae*. This cannot happen at all, unless Christianity is established where paganism now rules. Therefore if you are eager to carry out pious battles, and since you have accepted the seedbed of the knowledge of God from Jerusalem, then you may restore the grace that was borrowed there. Thus through you the name of Catholicism will be propagated, and it will defeat the

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[17] Fulcheri Cartonensis, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, ed. Hagenmeyer, Pr.4, pp. 117-8; Fulcher of Chartres, *History*, trans. Ryan with Fink, 58.

perfidy of the Antichrist and of the Antichristians. Who can doubt that God, who surpasses every hope by means of his overflowing strength, may so destroy the reeds of paganism with your spark that he may gather Egypt, Africa and *Ethiopiam*, which no longer share our belief, into the rules of his law, and 'sinful man, the son of perdition', will find others resisting him*?*[18]

Urban was said to further state that Islam 'first covered the name of Christ, but now it has wiped out his name from the furthest corners of the entire East, from Africa, Egypt, *Ethiopiae*, Libya, and even the remote coasts of Spain – a country near us'.[19] According to Guibert's recollection of Urban's infamous speech, Islam had already consumed 'Ethiopia', but at no point during the chronicling of the First Crusade do 'Ethiopians' get associated with other conquered Eastern Christians in the Holy Land. For this section, it is not necessarily important whether Guibert was referring to Nubia specifically or not. 'Ethiopia's' importance is more general in highlighting the overall absence of any perceived Christianity in either Nubia or Ethiopia by early twelfth-century Europeans.

This appears despite works such as the *Virtutes apostolorum* (also known as the work of Pseudo-Abdias), reproduced throughout the medieval period, reaffirming that because of St. Matthew 'all the provinces of the *Aethiopium* are filled with Catholic churches until the present day'.[20] Additionally, other contemporary works note the

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[18] Guibert de Nogent, *Dei Gesta per Francos et cinq autres texts*, ed. R. B. C. Huygens (Turnhout, 1996), Book II Ch. 4, pp. 113-4; Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks. A Translation of Guibert de Nogent's Gesta Dei per Francos*, trans. R. Levine (Woodbridge, 1997), pp. 43-4.

[19] Guibert de Nogent, *Dei Gesta per Francos*, ed. Huygens, Book I Ch. 4, pp. 98-9; Guibert of Nogent, *Deeds of God*, trans. Levine, 35.

[20] *Acta, Epistolae, Apocalypses. Aliaque scripta Apostolis falso inscripta sive Codicis Apocryphi Novi Testamenti*, ed. J. A. Fabricius, 2 vols. (Hamburg, 1703), II:668. On a new method of identification for the texts and a list of dated manuscipts, see: E. Rose, 'Abdias Scriptor *Vitarum Sanctorum*

Alexandrian Patriarchate's jurisdiction over Αἰθιοπία, such as Neilos Doxapatrios' *History of the Five Patriarchs*, written in the Sicilian court of Roger II.[21] Importantly, although the loss of Christianity in 'Ethiopia' appears in Guibert's version of Urban's speech, it focuses on recovering its Christian heritage, suggesting its association with an historical Christianity rather than with the rescuing of contemporary subjected Christians whom Urban's successor, Paschal, later praised the victorious Crusade for liberating. Whilst Guibert and Pope Urban may well have known about 'Ethiopia', Guibert's rhetoric of Urban's speech ignores the truth of the existence of 'Ethiopian' Christianity. In any case, rhetoric was more important than portraying knowledge if the Crusaders did, indeed, know little, if anything, about contemporary Nubians or Ethiopians.

In comparison to the overwhelmingly negative image of the rhetoric of 'Ethiopia' and 'Ethiopians', there was almost no mention of Nubia during the first decades of the Crusader States and no mention of the kingdom of Ethiopia. One exception is found in the work of Ekkehard von Aura, a Benedictine monk who wrote his *Chronica universale* in 1101, which featured the *Novades* (Nobades – the peoples of the northern Kingdom of Nubia). In a passage where Ekkehard details the latter history of the Roman Empire, the *Novades* from 'Ethiopia' appear amongst the troubles of Rome.[22] Tellingly, Ekkehard used Jordanes' sixth-century *Romana* as his source for the *Novades*, thus further emphasising the role of past writings in influencing contemporary understanding of African peoples.[23] Importantly, too, Nubians were

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Apostolorum? The «Collection of Pseudo-Abias» Reconsidered', *Revue d'histoire des textes*, n.s., 8 (2013), pp. 227-68.

[21] Neilos Doxapatrios, 'Τῶν Πατριαρχικῶν Φρονων', in PG 132, col.1089.

[22] Ekkehard von Aura, 'Chronicon', De origine Hunorum, in PL 154.773.

[23] Nubians are amongst Rome's enemies in Jordanes' text: Jordanes, *Romana*, Ch. 333, in MGH Aa, V.i, 43.

being re-transmitted as enemies to the audience of this text. Although not reflecting on current matters, Ekkehard's reflection portrays these lands as historical enemies of Christian Rome who, more importantly, were strong enough to force Rome to retreat. Additionally, the association of the *Novades* being from 'Ethiopia' is made clear and clearly demarcates the historical Nubians as enemies of Rome. This was an image that the Crusaders could relate to in their Christian fight against the heretics in the Holy Land as Ekkehard makes explicit reference to the contemporary *orbem Romanum* in his entry for 1099.[24] The historical memory of the Roman Empire was still exhibited in the mentality of the Crusaders.[25]

Arguably, Ekkehard took interest in the East because of the Crusade, prompting the question: what was his motive for writing about the *Novades* when seemingly no one else had done so for centuries? There is no suggestion here that Ekkehard specifically discussed the *Novades* as a direct consequence of attempts at understanding the enemies in the East, but Nubians were tentatively re-introduced into the knowledge of the Crusaders through his text. Most importantly for this study, Ekkehard shows that Nubians were still known to some as an individual people, albeit only for historical purposes. Elsewhere, *Nubia* was briefly known to Hugh of St. Victor in his *Descriptio Mappe Mundi* (c.1130), though only stating that it lay below Egypt with no accompanying information.[26] That said, for the majority of writers Nubia remained almost unknown to the Europeans.

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[24] Ekkehard von Aura, 'Chronicon', in PL 154.964.
[25] On Franks as 'Romans', see: M. Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory. The Legend of Charlemagne, the Franks, and Jerusalem Before the First Crusade* (Oxford, 2011).
[26] *Descriptio Mappe Mundi*, ed. Gautier-Dalché, Ch. XVI, pp. 147-8.

With the initial almost complete absence of Nubia in European discourse in the early twelfth century, it was 'Ethiopians' who were all initially witnessed as un-Christian in First Crusade texts, whether as the fighting or spiritual enemy. The appearance of these 'Ethiopians' is, however, unrelated to Crusader knowledge of actual Nubians or Ethiopians, which remained limited. These 'Ethiopians' were not a product of the knowledge networks which came to inform Europeans about Nubians and Ethiopians in the proceeding centuries and were just as likely to have been from Ghana or elsewhere in Africa as actually from Nubia or Ethiopia. Instead, 'Ethiopians' acted as another rhetorical tool for authors to emphasise the 'othering' of the East. This is a contrast to how true Nubians and Ethiopians came to be described later in the twelfth century and onwards once information about them had been ascertained. For example, 'Ethiopians' might feature as enemies due to the desire by the writers to portray courage, so that fighting the 'Ethiopian' 'other' highlighted the deeds of the Christians. It is also possible that the enemy 'Ethiopian' was an evolution of the portrayal of the Ethiopian demon which served to highlight the alterity of the East by authors familiar with the demonic tradition, thus emphasising the Crusaders' spirituality.[27] This did not, however, reflect actual Crusader knowledge of either Nubians or Ethiopians so will not form part of this thesis.

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[27] A. Karpozilos, 'Οιμαύροιστη Βυζαντινήκοινωνία', in *Οιπεριθωριακοιστο Βυζάντιο*, ed. C. Maltezou (Athens, 1993), pp. 67-81; J. Devise, 'Christians and Black', in IBWA II.I, pp. 31-72. Specifically on the use of 'Ethiopian', see: A. Nugent, 'Black Demons in the Desert', *American Benedictine Review*, 49 (1998), pp. 209-21; D. Brakke, 'Ethiopian Demons: Male Sexuality, the Black-Skinned Other, and the Monastic Self', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 10.3 (2001), pp. 501-35; D. H. Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, and Jews. Making Monsters in Medieval Art* (Princeton, 2003), pp. 79-86; D. Brakke, *Demons and the Making of the Monk. Spiritual Combat in Early Christianity* (Cambridge, Mass., 2006), pp. 157-81; D. G. Letsios, '*Diabolus in figura Aethiopis tetri*. Ethiopians as Demons in Hagiographic Sources. Literary Sterotypes Versus Social Reality and Historic Events', in *East and West. Essays on Byzantine and Arab Worlds in the Middle Ages*, eds. J. P. Monferrer-Sala, V. Christides, and T. Papadopoullos (Piscatway, NJ, 2009), pp. 185-200.

Whilst the majority of references to 'Ethiopians' come from writers who travelled to the East, it is important to note that the first author to disseminate the existence of 'Ethiopians' amongst the enemies in the East was the French abbot of Bourgeuil, Baldric of Dol, in his *Historia Hierosolymitana* (c.1105), who did not travel.[28] Baldric's text, which remained the blueprint for generations of Crusade histories, was written to add authority to the theological reasoning and motivation of the First Crusade, further understating the rhetorical use of the 'Ethiopian'. Notably, in contrast, the *Gesta Francorum* (c.1100-1), a primary source for these later authors, did not mention enemy 'Ethiopians', further suggesting that this detail was a conscious insertion, seemingly first by Baldric of Dol.[29] Before long, further experiences of 'Ethiopians' also began to infiltrate into works of other authors who did not travel to the East. For example, Ralf of Caen, a Norman priest who wrote his biographical work the *Gesta Tancredi in expeditione Hierosolymitana* (c.1118), also described an event regarding enemy 'Ethiopians' despite not travelling to the Holy Land himself.[30] The emphasis here should be placed on the fact that, whether fighting against the Crusaders or not, neither Ethiopians nor Nubians were regarded as Christian in any context. The initial lack of knowledge of the Africans resulted in this rhetorical image prevailing at first.

Contextually, there may have been some truth in these references noting 'Ethiopians' amongst the enemy ranks, though they do still not reflect knowledge of the African kingdoms. Numerous Ethiopians and Nubians, both Christian and Muslim, would

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[28] *The Historia Ierosolimitana of Baldric of Bourgueil*, ed. S. Biddlecombe (Woodbridge, 2014), Book IV, pp. 116-7. More references to enemy 'Ethiopians' are also found in his *Gestis Baldwini*: Baldric of Dol, 'Gesta', in PL 155.854-6.

[29] J. France, 'The Use of the Anonymous *Gesta Francorum* in the Early Twelfth-Century Sources for the First Crusade', in *From Clermont to Jerusalem*, ed. Murray, pp. 29-42.

[30] Radulphi Cadomensis, *Tancredus*, ed. E. D'Angelo (Turnhout, 2011), Ch. 357, 101; *The Gesta Tancredi of Ralph of Caen. A History of the Normans on the First Crusade*, trans. B. S. Bachrach and D. S. Bachrach (Aldershot, 2005), 137.

have fought against the Crusaders in the Muslim armies so their appearance should not be altogether surprising.[31] These descriptions are also important within the context of the problems of the historicity of the authors, particularly between those who could have had direct first-hand experiences of such soldiers and those who merely repeated their textual sources, whether ancient or contemporary.[32] Nevertheless, the First Crusade chroniclers were unanimous that 'Ethiopians' were the enemy and present in the armies fighting against the Crusaders, with seven texts directly mentioning 'Ethiopians' as such. The noting of enemy Nubian soldiers was not just restricted to Western authors either, thus supporting such European observations. For example, the Armenian twelfth-century chronicler Matthew of Edessa also wrote of *Noubi* (Նուպի) as allies of the Muslims in a joint retaliatory attack against the Franks following the Crusader capture of Jerusalem after the victory of the First Crusade.[33]

'Ethiopians' primarily appear in texts written by authors who did participate in the Crusade, suggesting some truth in the observations despite the obvious rhetorical 'othering' trope. Fulcher of Chartres, who had continually extended his *Historia Hierosolymitana* until c.1128, mentions 'Ethiopians' as enemies multiple times throughout his work.[34] Similar to the anecdotal associations of Baldric and Ralf,

[31] For example, see: J. L. Bacharach, 'African Military Slaves in the Medieval Middle East. The Cases of Iraq (869-955) and Egypt (868-1171)', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 13.4 (1981), pp. 486-95; W. J. Hamblin, *The Fāṭimid Army During the Early Crusades* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Michigan, 1985), pp. 27-33, 51-5; K. O'Bweng-Okwess, 'Le recrutement des soldats négros-africains par les Musulmans du viiie au xiiie siècle', JOAS, 1 (1989), pp. 24-9. Though not specifically focused on Nubia and Ethiopia, Jacque Heers has highlighted the many interactions and portability of Africans within the Islamic world: J. Heers, *Les négriers en terres d'islam. VII-XVI siècles* (Paris, 2009). Particularly see: pp. 73-140 for East Africans and pp. 207-11 for Egyptian slave armies.

[32] For background, see: C. Kostick, *The Social Structure of the First Crusade* (Leiden, 2008). For eyewitnesses, see: pp. 9-50 and for the historians, see: 51-94.

[33] Matthieu d'Édesse, 'Extraits de la chronique II', in RHC Doc. Arm. I, Ch. 9, 45; *Armenia and the Crusades,* trans. Dostourian, Part II Ch. 125, 173.

[34] Fulcheri Cartonensis, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, ed. Hagenmeyer, pp. Book I Ch. 27, 300-1, Book I Ch. 30, 308-9, Book I Ch. 31, 311-2, Book II Ch. 11, 414, Book II Ch. 31, 489-90, Book II Ch. 32,

Fulcher recounts how an 'Ethiopian' had actually injured King Baldwin sometime in 1103 after having waited stealthily specifically to kill him.[35] Fulcher's descriptions did influence others, both in the East and in Europe. His description of 'Ethiopians' fighting in the Tower of David was recycled by Bartolf of Nangis (d. c.1109), who seemingly used an early version of Fulcher, suggesting that the enemy 'Ethiopian' motif was present in the text's earliest incarnations.[36] Moreover, according to Fulcher, the threat from 'Ethiopians' was apparently so servere that those living around Jerusalem who strayed too far risked great danger: 'If they are poor men, either peasants or woodsmen, they are captured or killed by the *Aethiopum* in ambush in ravines and forests'.[37] Similarly, Guibert of Nogent's *Gesta* also describes 'Ethiopians' as enemies, with an added description of barbarians looking like *Ethiopicis*, presumably due to their skin colour, on the slopes of Mount Sinai, too.[38]

Peter Tudebode, a priest who did go on the First Crusade and wrote his *Historia de Hierosolymitano itinere* (c.1110), likewise mentioned enemy 'Ethiopians', declaring how the emir led a force of Saracens, Arabs, Ghilman Turks, Kurds, *Asupatorum*, Azymites, and other pagans outside Ascalon.[39] Here, '*Asupatorum*' is a Latin corruption of the French word *Etiope*, which, via speech and the subsequent writing of

498-500, Book II Ch. 33, 503, Book III Ch. 17, 661-3; Fulcher of Chartres, *History*, trans. Ryan with Fink, pp. 121, 124, 125, 158, 182-3, 186-7, 188, 241.

[35] Fulcheri Cartonensis, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, ed. Hagenmeyer, Book II Ch. 24, pp. 460-1; Fulcher of Chartres, *History*, trans. Ryan with Fink, 175. A similar story is also found in Matthew of Edessa: Matthieu d'Édesse, 'Extraits de la chronique II', in RHC Doc. Arm. I, Ch. 26, 68; *Armenia and the Crusades, Tenth to Twelfth Centuries. The Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa*, trans. A. E. Dostourian (New York, 1993), Part III Ch. 12, 191.

[36] RHC HOcc III Ch. 35, 515.

[37] Fulcheri Cartonensis, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, ed. Hagenmeyer, Book III Ch. 42, 763; Fulcher of Chartres, *History*, trans. Ryan with Fink, 278.

[38] Guibert of Nogent, *Dei Gesta per Francos*, ed. Huygens, Book VII Ch. 20, 300, Book VII Ch. 44, pp. 344-5; Book VII Ch. 40, 340.

[39] Petrus Tudebodus, *Historia de Hierosolymitano itinere*, ed. J. H. Hill and L. L. Hill (Philadelphia, 1977) Ch. 12, 147; Peter Tudebode, *Historia de hierosolymitano itinere*, trans. J. H. Hill and L. L. Hill (Philadelphia, 1974), 126.

the '-*ti*-' to '-*ç*-' became a variation of *Açopart*.[40] As well as Peter, Albert of Aachen, a canon who wrote a history of the First Crusade entitled the *Historia Hierosolymitiana* (c.1125-50), also referred to 'Ethiopians' in this Latinised French form.[41] Albert did not travel to the Holy Land himself, which could help explain his use of *Azopart* as the term is most often found in Old French texts and reveals the influence of vernacular literary cultures as sources for his work.[42] However, why Peter Tudebode, as someone who did travel to the East, used the term in place of the more common ethnonym *Ethiopes* is unknown. Peter's *Historia* does, though, have poetic elements within it to suggest that the ethnonym of *Asupart* was a product of Peter's poetic sources, similarly to Albert.[43] In any case, whether any of these references truly represented Nubians or Ethiopians cannot be known, but 'Ethiopians', as according to these and other contemporary writers, were either, at best, actually witnessed as enemies of the Crusaders or, at least, a rhetorical tool to emphasise the deeds of the Franks against a barbaric 'other'. Above all, 'Ethiopians' were not described as fellow Christians, with knowledge of the African kingdoms not apparently interesting the Crusaders.

Though seemingly united in their depiction of 'Ethiopians', it must be highlighted that First Crusade authors primarily were writing with a Norman background. The reason

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[40] On the term *Azopart*, see: P. Meyer, 'Butentrot-Les Achoparts-Les Canelius', *Romania*, 7 (1878), pp. 435-40; E. C. Armstrong, 'Old-French "Açopart", "Ethiopian"', *Modern Philology*, 38.3 (1941), pp. 243-50, esp. 244; Vantini, 'Sur l'éventualité', 342.

[41] Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana. History of the Journey to Jerusalem*, ed. and trans. S. Edgington (Oxford, 2007), pp. Book VI Ch. 41, 456-7, Book VI Ch. 46, 464-5, Book VI Ch. 50, 468-9, Book VII Chs. 10-11, 498-501, Book VII Ch. 39, 542-5, Book VII Ch. 56, 566-7, Book IX Ch. 3, 640-1, Book IX Ch. 6, 644-5, Book XII Ch. 18, 850-3.

[42] S. Edgington, 'Albert of Aachen and the Chansons de Geste', in *The Crusades and Their Sources. Essays in Honour of Bernard Hamilton*, eds. J. and W. Zajac (Aldershot, 1998), pp. 23-37. More generally, see: C. Sweetenham, 'Reflecting and Refracting Reality: The Use of Poetic Sources in Latin Accounts of the First Crusade', in *Literature of the Crusades*, eds. S. T. Parsons and L. M. Paterson (Woodbridge, 2018), pp. 25-40.

[43] Petrus Tudebodus, *Historia de Hierosolymitano itinere*, eds. Hill and Hill, 14.

'Ethiopians' appear as enemies, rather than as fellow Christian pilgrims, could have been due to the influence of a classical narrative. First and foremost, most, if not all, writers wanted to fit within a classical pre-Christian Roman tradition – a tradition which consistently labelled these Africans inevitably as pagans.[44] Furthermore, the Norman writers also worked within what appears to be a Norman tradition emphasising 'Ethiopians' as enemies. For example, 'Ethiopians' appear in Dudo's *Historia Normannorum* (first circulated c.1015) in a somewhat allegorical passage describing the peace between Duke Richard and King Lothair in the 960s in which the bodies of 'Ethiopians' had turned white but had remained black under their clothes during attempts at looting the clothing of the dead enemy who were remaining on the battlefield three days after the battle.[45] The association of 'Ethiopians' and enemy soldiers was not unique to the First Crusade. As well as possible traditional narratives at work, many of the First Crusade accounts rely on each other and so the texts were entwined and the main details copied, thus entrenching the story of the enemy 'Ethiopians'.[46]

That said, the late twelfth-century *Chronicle of Ernoul* depicts the King of Nubia (*roi de Nubie*) as an enemy and ally to the Sultan of Egypt, which had similarly been circulating in contemporary *Chansons de geste*.[47] This would suggest that unlike a

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[44] On the idea of abiding to a shared tradition, see: S. Ranković, 'Communal Memory of the Distributed Author: Applicability of the Connectionist Model of Memory to the Study of Traditional Narratives', in *Making of Memory*, ed. Doležalová, pp. 9-26. There have also been questions regarding how far eyewitnesses wrote original narratives, see Y. N. Harari, 'Eyewitnessing in Accounts of the First Crusade: The *Gesta Francorum* and Other Contemporary Narratives', *Crusades*, 3 (2004), pp. 77-100.

[45] Dudo, *Historia Normannorum*, in J. Lair, ed., 'De moribus et actis primorum Normanniæ ducum', *Mémoires de la Société des Antiquaires de Normandie*, 23 (Caen, 1865), Book II Ch. 124, pp. 287-8; Dudo of St. Quentin, *History of the Normans*, trans. E. Christiansen (Woodbridge, 1998), 162.

[46] For example, see: J. Rubenstein, 'Guibert of Nogent, Albert of Aachen and Fulcher of Chartres: Three Crusade Chronicles Intersect', in *Writing the Early Crusades. Text Transmission and Memory*, eds. M. Bull and D. Kempf (Woodbridge, 2014), pp. 24-37.

[47] 'Chronicle of Ernoul', Ch. 3, in *Chronique d'Ernoul et de Bernard le Tresorier*, ed. M. L. de Las Matrie (Paris, 1871), pp. 18-20. A Nubian king also appears in the thirteenth-century *La gran conquista de ultramar* which did use literary sources: *La gran conquista de ultramar. Edición crítica con*

possible Norman trope regarding enemy 'Ethiopians', enemy Nubians (or 'Ethiopians' for that matter), both Christian and Muslim but unacknowledged by Europeans as possibly Christian, were indeed more widely attested in the Muslim armies, but the toponym of Nubia had not previously been utilised by Latins in written culture.

The notion of the 'Ethiopian' enemy did not disappear after the initial decades following the First Crusade, though it became rarer. For example, it is noteworthy that Robert the Monk's (d.1122) *Historia Iherosolimitana*, which was amongst the most widely distributed texts that chronicled the First Crusade, did not feature 'Ethiopians' at all.[48] Thus, the majority of those reading about the Crusade would not have been fed the image of the 'Ethiopian' enemy so readily. How much effect such absence in popular texts had on restricting the image of the enemy 'Ethiopian' is difficult to ascertain. After all, the 'Ethiopian' enemy continued to appear in later texts regarding the Crusade such as in Orderic Vitalis' *Historia Ecclesiastica* (c.1141), which described 'Ethiopian' soldiers fighting the Crusaders, specifically against the Count of Flanders and Tancred.[49] Most interestingly, Orderic is known to have used Baldric of Bourgueil as his principle source for Book IX, but he did not use any other contemporary accounts for his history following the First Crusade, which would explain the inclusion of this late appearance of enemy 'Ethiopians'.[50] His text, therefore, does not necessarily show that the rhetorical or physical image of the 'Ethiopian' enemy held any particular longevity amongst his contemporary writers,

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introducción notas y glosario, ed. L. Cooper, 4 vols. (Bogotá, 1979), Book II Chs. 159, 160, 207, 211, 212, pp. II:235, 236, 298, 304, 304-5. On Nubians in *chansons*, see: A. Simmons, 'The Changing Depiction of the Nubian King in Crusader Songs in an Age of Expanding Knowledge', in *Croisades en Afrique*, ed. Weber, pp. 25-48.

[48] On the text's popularity, see: *The Historia Iherosolimitana of Robert the Monk*, eds. D. Kempf and M. G. Bull (Woodbridge, 2013), pp. ix-xii. For his sources as an explanation for this, see: M. G. Bull, 'Robert the Monk and His Source(s)', in *Writing the Early Crusades*, eds. Bull and Kempf, pp. 127-39.

[49] *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, ed. and trans. M. Chibnall, 6 vols. (Oxford, 1969-80), Book IX Ch. 17, pp. V:180, 182; 181, 183.

[50] Ibid., I:60.

and can be understood as an example of mere direct copying. That said, William of Tyre noted how he witnessed armed 'Ethiopian' guards whilst on an embassy to Cairo in 1167, suggesting that, although the textual rhetoric may have ceased, it was not due to the absence of a continued African presence in Muslim armies.[51] However, Saladin actively preferred Turkish and Arabs soldiers to Nubians, suggesting that the scale of the physical presence of black enemy soldiers greatly diminished towards the end of the century. Importantly, this coincided with the disappearance of references to such fighting 'Ethiopians' and Nubians in the Muslim armies in Crusader texts.[52] This development should also be associated with growing direct understanding of Nubians and Ethiopians facilitated through the interactions of undocumented knowledge networks, enabling knowledge to replace rhetoric. Even though the presence of Nubians and Ethiopians in Muslim armies as mercenaries likely continued, in European eyes, the Africans were to become associated with Christianity and no longer amongst their enemies.

Throughout the first half of the twelfth century, Crusader texts intially entrenched the view that 'Ethiopians' were enemies and infidels despite the fact that Ethiopians or Nubians in the Muslim armies could still be Christians. This was in stark contrast to the understanding that Eastern Christians were regularly employed in Muslim armies, such as Armenians in Egypt for example.[53] Detailed understanding was not deemed to be needed and instead 'Ethiopians' fulfilled the role of the third ethnically categorised enemy Muslim along with Saracens and Turks. There is no reason to believe that their appearance in these armies was merely the result of a particular literary trait and could

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[51] WT, Book XIX, Ch. 18, II:897; William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, trans. E. A. Babcock and A. C. Krey, 2 vols. (New York, 1943), II:319.
[52] Y. Lev, *Saladin in Egypt* (Leiden, 1999), pp. 141-57.
[53] Hamblin, *Fāṭimid Army*, pp. 19-27; Lev, *Saladin*, pp. 185-6.

well have been based on fact. Yet, 'Ethiopia' and 'Ethiopians' were simultaneously utilised as rhetoric for non-Christian entities. This image of enemy 'Ethiopians' in sources is, however, primarily restricted to sources written between the First and Second Crusades, because their presence in Saladin's armies was more limited and because this period dates before Christian 'Ethiopia's' (re)introduction into European knowledge. Those with direct experience of the East soon began to utilise the undocumented networks and communal knowledge of other communities in the Holy Land to be outlined in the next Section. Nubians and Ethiopians no longer remained distant peoples unknown to Europeans except for their barbarity and un-Christian alterity. Even if the majority of the twelfth century did not create new contemporary knowledge regarding the kingdoms of Ethiopia and Nubia, its greatest achievement in relation to this discussion is that, owing to the dissemination of knowledge facilitated by undocumented networks and communal knowledge, it '(re)discovered' separate toponyms for Nubia and Ethiopia (Abyssinia) in Western writings. This allowed for the separation of specific knowledge in relation to the two distinct kingdoms of Nubia and Ethiopia, increasingly becoming distinct from the vaguer 'Ethiopia'.

Section Two

Sharing the Holy Land and the Dissemination

of Knowledge

IV: The Dissemination of News Regarding Nubians and Ethiopians

Mixed communities in the Crusader States, both Christian and non-Christian, and their interactions with the Franks are well-documented.[1] The medieval Mediterranean was a basin for cross-cultural interaction and the Crusader States were no exception, which facilitated the dissemination of knowledge. Current historiography for medieval exchange, however, primarily centres on the broad definitions of Christian (mainly European), Muslim, or Jew, and does little to take into account the exchanges that Eastern Christians offered in these interactions. It has also focused primarily on the advancement of cultural understanding between Crusaders and Muslims – or pagans in the case of the Baltic – and has yet to ask how exchanges developed geographical and historical knowledge between groups.[2] Much was learnt about Eastern groups by the Europeans following 1095. These interactions equally included Ethiopians and Nubians and developed European knowledge of the Africans.

Here, knowledge accumulation was developed through three forms of dissemination: primary (direct contact), secondary (indirect knowlege mediated through a separate network), and tertiary (indirect nodes of fostering rumour which had no access to primary or secondary sources themselves). Through these different forms of

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[1] The multicultural spaces in Jerusalem have recently been specifically highlighted by an art exhibition in The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York which, for our purposes, included Ethiopian processional crosses and gospels: Boehm and Holcomb, eds., *Jerusalem*, nos. 50, 51, 52, 74, 75a, 75b, 144.

[2] For example, see: M. J. Chiat and K. L. Reyerson, eds., *The Medieval Mediterranean. Cross-Cultural Contacts* (St. Cloud, Minn., 1988); R. Abdellatif, Y. Benhima, D. König, and E. Ruchaud, eds., *Acteurs des transferts culturels en Méditerranée médiévale* (Munich, 2012); S. L. Hathaway and D. W. Kim, eds., *Intercultural Transmission in the Medieval Mediterranean* (London, 2012); D. Jacoby, 'Intercultural Encounters in a Conquered Land: The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', in *Europa im Geflecht der Welt. Mittelalterliche Migrationen in globalen Bezügen*, eds. M. Borgolte, J. Dücker, M. Müllerburg, P. Predatsch, and B. Schneidmüller (Berlin, 2012), pp. 133-54; K. Villads Jensen, K. Salonen, and H. Vogt, eds., *Cultural Encounters During the Crusades* (Odense, 2013).

dissemination, news and rumour regarding Nubia and Ethiopia quickly began to develop in the Crusader Near East.[3] The role of Muslim and Jewish merchants, both known and undocumented, in this knowledge exchange network would have also contributed greatly, however this requires further study and cannot be accommodated within the scope of this present thesis.[4] Additionally, it would also be expected that once ideas and knowledge were exported to Europe, a range of networks enabled them easily to spread across Europe.[5] Institutions designed to facilitate learning in the Holy Land, such as universities, however, were not as excessive or expansive as those in Europe. There was no comparable institution in the Holy Land compared with the growing number of universities in Paris, Bologna, Oxford, Cambridge, Modena, Montpellier, and Toulouse amongst others. Despite the lack of intellectual institutions, knowledge development in the Holy Land was facilitated during the reign of King Amalric (r.1163-74) who actively sought works of knowledge using local sources. It is, therefore, probably no coincidence that his reign coincides with the first flourishes of the advancement of knowledge regarding Nubia and Ethiopia.[6]

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[3] Here an example of news would be the location of the kingdoms, whereas rumour would encapsulate the myth of Prester John. For a similar framework, see: T. Wollina, 'News and Rumour - Local Sources of Knowledge About the World', in *Everything is on the Move. The Mamluk Empire as a Node in (Trans-)Regional Networks*, ed. S. Conermann (Göttingen, 2014), pp. 283-309.

[4] A prime example here is the travel of Benjamin of Tudela. See: R. L., Hess, 'The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela: A Twelfth-Century Jewish Description of North-East Africa', JAH, 6.1 (1965), pp. 15-24; F.-X. Fauvelle-Aymar, 'Desperately Seeking the Jewish Kingdom of Ethiopia: Benjamin of Tudela and the Horn of Africa', *Speculum*, 88 (2013), pp. 383-404. Similarly to the Islamic knowledge of Africa with its foundation in the Qur'an and Hadith, as discussed below in 205n23, Jews also had their own Rabbinic knowledge to offer: D. M. Goldenberg, 'Rabbinic Knowledge of Black Africa (Sifre Deut. 320)', *Jewish Studies Quarterly*, 5 (1998), pp. 318-28. On Christian-Jewish intellectual exchange, see: G. Dahan, *Les intellectuels chrétiens et les juifs au moyen âge* (Paris, 1990).

[5] For example, see: C. Mews and J. N. Crossley, eds., *Communities of Learning. Networks and the Shaping of Intellectual History in Europe, 1100-1500* (Turnhout, 2011).

[6] See: B. Z. Kedar, 'Intellectual Activities in a Holy City: Jerusalem in the Twelfth Century', in *Sacred Space. Shrine, City, Land. Proceedings of the International Conference in Memory of Joshua Prawer*, eds. B. Z. Kedar and R. J. Zwi Werblowsky (Basingstoke, 1998), pp. 127-39. Moreover, a recent study by Jonathan Rubin has explicitly highlighted the importance of exchanges with Eastern Christians for intellectual development in Acre during the thirteenth century, though, unfortunately Nubians and Ethiopians are not included: J. Rubin, *Learning in a Crusader City. Intellectual Activity and Intercultural Exchange in Acre, 1191-1291* (Cambridge, 2018), pp. 139-67.

The influence of undocumented knowledge networks seemingly had more of an effect on the evolution of knowledge than those of manuscripts, though that is not to say that the circulation of manuscripts was not important too. Writers, particularly pilgrims, learnt much from travelling throughout the Holy Land and by talking with locals, for instance during exchanges in markets, and utilising them as their guides.[7] The texts which were produced or influenced following discussion with returning travellers would also circulate amongst other writers who, in turn, influenced further works.[8] Such interaction facilitated the exchange of knowledge regarding Nubians and Ethiopians, particularly when Europeans met them face to face. In turn, the Crusading period soon witnessed the 'birth', or indeed 're-birth' (considering what was known in antiquity), of the understanding of the Nubian and Ethiopian kingdoms.

One piece of evidence for such manuscript dissemination – in this case in relation to Nubia specifically – comes from a short passage in Burchard of Strasbourg's *De Statu Egypti vel Babylonie* (c.1175). Burchard was a bishop from Cologne at Emperor Frederick I's court, but as envoy for Frederick to Saladin he came to know the area around Egypt well. His visit to Egypt enabled him to have a greater understanding of the region. As such, he places Nubia twenty days below the southern border of Egypt

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[7] A. Graboïs, *Le pèlerin occidental en Terre sainte au moyen âge* (Paris, 1998), pp. 137-54. The '*curiositas*' of the pilgrim is also noted in: Rouxpetel, *Occident au miroir*, pp. 20-4; S. A. Legassie, *The Medieval Invention of Travel* (Chicago, 2017), pp. 141-63. On the impact of travelling on knowledge, also see: M. Mollat, *Grands Voyages et connaisance du monde du milieu du XIIe siècle à la fin du XVe*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1966-9).

[8] The German pilgrim Thietmar, for example, alludes to the reading of other itineraries, stating that he opted not to travel to Jerusalem in 1217-8 because so many previous writers had done leaving him free to describe other places, specifically Saydnaya and St. Katherine's: U. Koppitz, 'Magistri Thietmari Peregrenatio. Pilgerreise nach Palästina und auf den Sina in den Jahren 1217/1218', *Concilium medii aevi. Zeitschrift für Geschichte, Kunst und Kultur des Mittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit*, 14 (2011), Ch. 9, 148; Thietmar, 'Pilgrimage (1217-18)', in *Pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the Holy Land, 1187-1291*, trans. D. Pringle (Farnham, 2013), 112. See: P. Booth, *Thietmar. Person, Place and Text in Thirteenth-Century Holy Land Pilgrimage* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Lancaster University, 2017), pp. 173-6.

and describes it as a Christian nation.[9] The importance of this passage's influence here is its insertion into Arnold of Lübeck's c.1209 continuation of Helmold's *Chronica Slavorum.* Helmold originally wrote nothing of Nubia, but Arnold included the passage directly copied from Burchard of Strasbourg almost verbatim.[10] It has been suggested that this insertion prior to the Fifth Crusade could have been the result of knowing the direction of the future expedition and, thus, an attempt to collect information regarding Egypt.[11]

Although the statement uncovers no new development about the understanding of Crusader knowledge of Nubia forty years after the writing of Burchard, it does highlight how transmission of knowledge was beginning to take effect in its dissemination in medieval spheres. What, then, of the existence and role of undocumented networks? There is little direct evidence for exchange between Europeans and Africans in the first century of Crusader rule, but there is other evidence which would suggest, based on probabilities, that interaction should be expected to facilitate undocumented knowledge exchange. For instance, Burchard remained quiet about the extent of the undocumented sources of knowledge that he potentially encountered. According to Abū al-Makārim, a Coptic priest often wrongly known as Abū Ṣāliḥ the Armenian who documented a history of Egyptian churches and monasteries, Burchard would have likely interacted with Eastern Christians in

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[9] Burchard of Strasbourg, 'De statu Egypti vel Babylonie [c. 1175]', Ch. 4, in *Itinera Hierosolymitana Crucesignatorum (saec. XI–XIII)*, ed. S. De Sandoli, 4 vols. (Jerusalem, 1979-84), pp. II:402-4: '*Item in Egypto psitaci abundant, qui veniunt de Nubia. Distat autem Nubia a Babylonia per viginti dietas, et est christiana, habens regem, sed populus eius incultus est et terra silvestris*' (Parrots, which come from Nubia, are abundant in Egypt. The distance between Nubia and Egypt is 20 days. It is a land which has a Christian king, but the people are unkept and the land wild).

[10] Arnoldi, 'Chronica Slavorum', in MGH SS XXI, Book VII Ch. 8, 238.

[11] V. Scior, 'The Mediterranean in the High Middles Ages: Area of Unity or Diversity? Arnold of Lübeck's *Chronica Slavorum*', in *Mobility and Travel in the Mediterranean from Antiquity to the Middle Ages*, eds. R. Schlesier and U. Zellmann (Münster, 2004), pp. 114-5; E. J. Mylod, 'Pilgrimage, the Holy Land and the Fifth Crusade', in *Fifth Crusade in Context*, eds. Mylod, Perry, Smith, and Vandeburie, 154.

Cairo in shared spaces of worship. Yet, no European source corroborates al-Makārim's claim that envoys of the Greeks (روم), Franks (فرنج), Ethiopians (حبشة), and Nubians (نوبه) customarily worshipped alongside each other at the fountain at al-Maṭariyya when received at the court in Cairo.[12] This alternative evidence, displayed through the presentation of what various groups knew who were party to these exchanges, will form the basis of this chapter. Such interaction, both with Africans and other Eastern groups, enabled greater awareness and a multifaceted understanding of Africans by Europeans.

Knowledge Exchange and the Influence of Other Eastern Groups

Both 'Occidentals' and 'Orientals' would have made use of the knowledge available to them, similar to the exchanges witnessed in medieval Spain and Sicily. Hubert Houben has discussed Sicily as a 'Third Space' – a space between cultures which encouraged transculturation – and it is equally possible to see the Holy Land as a 'third intellectual space', one which exists between spheres of knowledge and which enabled greater understanding of the surrounding region.[13] Such interactions of various peoples who were present throughout the Holy Land enabled the creation of knowledge networks.[14] Undocumented knowledge exchange between Europeans and

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[12] Abū al-Makārim, *Tarīkh al-kanā ʾis wa-l-adyura*, ed. S. al-Suryānī, 4 vols. (Cairo, 1984), I:٢٤ (text); U. Zanetti, 'Matarieh, la Sainte Famille et les Baumiers', *Analecta Bollandiana*, 111 (1993), 36 (trans.). If this formed part of the basic text, it appears to date between 1160-87, specifically when the Crusaders began to shift their focus towards Egypt: J. den Heijer, 'Coptic Historiography in the Fāṭimid, Ayyūbid and Early Mamlūk Periods', *Medieval Encounters*, 2.1 (1996), 78.

[13] H. Houben, 'Between Occidental and Oriental Cultures: Norman Sicily as a "Third Space"', in *Norman Tradition and Transcultural Heritage. Exchange of Cultures in the "Norman" Peripheries of Medieval Europe*, eds. S. Burkhardt and T. Foerster (Farnham, 2013), pp. 19-33.

[14] For examples of such networks, see: J. Pahlitzsch, 'Mediators Between East and West: Christians Under Mamluk Rule', *Mamluk Studies Review*, 9.2 (2005), pp. 31-47; G. Christ, 'Beyond the Network – Connectors of Networks: Venetian Agents in Cairo and Venetian News Management', in *Everything is on the Move*, ed. Conermann, pp. 27-59; J. Pahlitzsch, 'Networks of Greek Orthodox Monks and Clerics Between Byzantium and Mamluk Syria and Syria', in Ibid., pp. 127-44; C. F. Petry, '"Travel Patterns of Medieval Notables in the Near East" Reconsidered: Contrasting Trajectories, Interconnected

other Eastern groups, as well as with Nubians and Ethiopians, could have further facilitated the development of knowledge of the African kingdoms. After establishing a range of potential undocumented networks, their effects on the development of knowledge will be detailed in the following chapters.

The sources are relatively quiet on the indigenous populations of the Crusader States. Jonathan Riley-Smith posited that this was the result of the implementation of a hybrid *dhimma* system by the Crusaders, which enabled Eastern communities to carry on living peacefully, whilst enforcing taxes on non-Christians, whether native or not.[15] Yet, this source silence cannot guarantee an absence in exchange. Most importantly, Eastern groups in the Crusader States had access to both Arabic and Western text corpora and had ample opportunity to become agents of knowledge transmission with Europeans. Knowledge exists outside of the sole realm of its codification and textuality and could be more widely understood as communal or societal knowledge; that which is commonly known by a group of people due to shared education or experience. In this instance, an understanding of what could have been known by Europeans who had experienced the East is in some ways more important than tracing manuscript dissemination.

Networks', in Ibid., pp. 165-79 (updated version of C. F. Petry, 'Travel Patterns of Medieval Notables in the Near East', *Studia Islamica*, 62 (1985), pp. 53-87). Both Ethiopians and Nubians were noted far and wide making contacts almost inevitable. For example, for within Islamic lands see: E. van Donzel, 'Ibn al-Jawzī on Ethiopians in Baghdad', in *The Islamic World from Classical to Modern Times. Essays in Honor of Bernard Lewis*, eds. C. E. Bosworth et al. (Princeton, 1989), pp. 113-20; R. Seignobos, 'Bab al-Nubi: Urban Toponymy and Nubians in Medieval Baghdad (Notes on Medieval Nubian Toponymy 1)', *Dotawo*, 4 (2017), pp. 225-30. Similarly, there was a 'Pond of the Ethiopians (Birkat al-Ḥabash)' in Cairo: *Selections from Ṣubḥ al-A'shā by Al-Qalqashandī, Clerk of the Mamluk Court*, trans. H. El-Toudy and T. G. Abdelhamid (Abingdon, 2017), 46n262.

[15] J. Riley-Smith, 'Government and the Indigenous in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem', in *Medieval Frontiers*, eds. Abulafia and Berend, pp. 121-31. Such a society seemingly explains the Frankish 'regime of silence' in the sources: MacEvitt, *Crusades and the Christian World*, pp. 100-35.

The renovation of churches, particularly of the Holy Sepulchre, which was completed in 1149, created possible shared spaces to exchange knowledge and other ideas alongside other arenas, such as markets. Whether the Latin renovations were carried out with or without the consent of the various Eastern Christian groups, who also occupied these churches, the works would have created new relationships, or built on existing ones, in order to carry out the projects smoothly and limit any potential protests. It would be hard to imagine that if the Eastern Christians did not wish for the renovations to happen for whatever reason, that the sources would surely have not remained as quiet as they are on the matter if any troubles and tensions were created – though such subsequent positive relations cannot be presumed. Although this is only suggestive, it should further be noted that the renovation of the Holy Sepulchre created a unified space for all Christian groups who worshipped there under one roof for the first time, presumably also including the Ethiopians and Nubians, and, thus, enabled the possibility of increased exchanges.[16]

New networks for knowledge transmission were being established in the East, adding to those already in place. One event in Barhebraeus' *Chronicle* (writing before 1286) is illustrative of the potential knowledge of actors in undocumented networks. He noted a man called Masʾūd from Aleppo who accompanied a Nubian envoy to Dongola on behalf of Tūrānshāh in 1172-3.[17] Knowledge dissemination was not solely reliant on the transmission of manuscripts. If a man from Aleppo could have had access to personal knowledge regarding the Nubian capital, who else in the Eastern Mediterranean could hold such knowledge to share with Europeans? Given the

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[16] D. Pringle, *The Churches of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem. A corpus*, 4 vols. (Cambridge, 1993-2009), pp. III:19-21. This is particularly notable in art, for example: J. Folda, *The Art of the Crusaders in the Holy Land, 1098-1187* (Cambridge, 1995).
[17] Gregorii Barhebraei, *Chronicon Syriacum*, ed. P. Bedjan (Paris, 1890), 346 (text); *The Chronography of Bar Hebraeus*, trans. E. A. W. Budge, 2 vols. (London, 1932), pp. 301-2 (trans.).

potential for networks to have flourished, the dissemination of knowledge cannot be ruled out.[18] Knowledge lost to the modern reader may not have been lost to contemporaries. Whether directly or indirectly, these mostly undocumented networks did appear to have an impact on knowledge of North-East Africa which is detectable in European sources.

One itinerary, albeit a fourteenth-century example, is particularly revealing of this intellectual exchange of otherwise undocumented networks. Symon Semeonis, an Irish Franciscan friar who wrote his *Itinerarium* in 1323 after visiting the Holy Land makes reference to encountering *Danubiani.*[19] Symon's mis-spelling of *Danubia* for Nubia cannot be explained. Only one manuscript survives, which is dated c.1335-52, so it cannot be known whether it was a scribal error or not. However, no other author of the period uses that term in relation to Nubia. Moreover, its modern editor, Mario Esposito, states that the *Itinerary* was written in 'correct Medieval Latin', which would suggest that a repeated scribal error might be unlikely.[20] Instead, I would suggest that it could reflect the use of a possible Coptic guide by Symon as the Coptic word for Nubia is ⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲛⲟⲩⲃⲁ, which would be Latinised and interpreted as *Danubia*. If this was the case, and the guide was Symon's only reference to the region, it would also help to explain his use of 'India' – a more indistinguishable and traditional term – in his mentions of Ethiopia.[21] This apparent adoption of a Coptic toponym is

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[18] MacEvitt, *Crusades and the Christian World*, pp. 122-6. Also, see: H. Teule, '*It is Not Right to Call Ourselves Orthodox and the Others Heretics*: Ecumenical Attitudes in the Jacobite Church in the Time of the Crusades', in *East and West II*, pp. 13-28; D. Weltecke, 'Contacts Between Syriac Orthodox and Latin Military Orders', in *East and West III*, pp. 53-78.
[19] *Itinerarium Symonis Semeonis ab Hybernia ad Terrum Sanctam*, ed. and trans. M. Esposito (Dublin, 1960), Chs. 71-2, pp. 90, 92; 91, 93.
[20] Ibid., 5.
[21] Ibid., pp. Ch. 41, 66, 67, Ch. 47, 72, 73. On the use of translators by pilgrims, see: Z. Stahuljak, 'The Pilgrim Translation Market and the Meaning of *Courtoisie*', in *The French of Outremer. Communities and Communications in the Crusading Mediterranean*, eds. L. Morreale and N. L. Paul (New York, 2018), pp. 201-20.

particularly surprising as Arabic had all but replaced Coptic as the language of the Egyptian Christians.[22] Despite this, the use of a Coptic guide would provide a logical explanation.

Eastern groups could equally have been potentially influential actors in such undocumented knowledge networks elsewhere, divulging geographical knowledge to Europeans. The superiority of the knowledge of Eastern authors regarding Nubia and Ethiopia was not without its problems. Eastern Christians could still confuse Nubia and Ethiopia, such as the example of Abū al-Makārim who merged separate ideas regarding the Nubian and Ethiopian kings together and mistook details.[23] Similar restrictions appear in the work of Agapius of Hieropolis, an Arab Christian writer of the tenth century, who wrote of both Nubia and Ethiopia, though he did not mention their Christianity in his *Universal History*.[24] Despite potential problems, the scope for such dissemination should not be underestimated. As well as those noted here, there may well also have been a similar influence by Armenian dissemination, but there are no references found in surviving contemporary Armenian chronicles regarding the Nubian and Ethiopian kingdoms, despite external evidence noting their direct and indirect relationships.[25]

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[22] S. Rubenson, 'The Transition from Coptic to Arabic', *Égypte/Monde arabe*, *Première série*, 27-8 (1996), pp. 77-92; A. Papaconstantinou, '"They Shall Speak the Arabic Language and Take Pride in it": Reconsidering the Fate of Coptic after the Arab Conquest', *Le Muséon*, 120.3-4 (2007), pp. 273-99; J. R. Zaborowski, 'From Coptic to Arabic in Medieval Egypt', *Medieval Encounters*, 14 (2008), pp. 15-40.

[23] Compare his passages on Nubia and Ethiopia. For example, he calls the King of Makuria an Abyssinian: *The Churches and Monasteries of Egypt and Some Neighbouring Countries Attributed to Abū Ṣāliḥ the Armenian*, ed. and trans. B. T. A. Evetts (Oxford, 1895), pp. ١١٩-٢٧ , ١٣٥-٢ (text), 260-74, 284-91 (trans.).

[24] OSCN, pp. 120-1 with references to original text.

[25] A brief overview of direct references for Armenians in Africa during the medieval period can be found in: H. W. McKenney, 'Examples of Armenian Presence and Contacts in Egypt, Nubia and Ethiopia from 5th to 16th Century', in *Art of the Armenian Diaspora. Proceedings of the Conference, Zamość, April 28-30, 2010*, ed. W. Deluga (Warsaw, 2011), pp. 11-24. Hayton of Corycus in the early fourteenth century even eluded to the fact that either Nubians understood Armenian or Armenian translators knew Old Nubian when he suggested Armenians could act as mediaries between the

Three specific Eastern groups are noteworthy examples acting as mediators of news and rumour who did produce works concerning Nubians and Ethiopians which could have been disseminated amongst the Crusaders given other connections: Copts, Syriac Christians, and Muslims. Copts were in a position to disseminate knowledge regarding the African kingdoms, especially through connections with their Patriarch and the Crusader's interactions with Egypt. A dissemination of Nubian power could have easily been disseminated to Europeans through such networks. For example, knowledge of an 1186 letter from King Moses George to Coptic Patriarch Mark III citing Moses George as King of Alwa, Makuria, Nobadia, Damot, and the Aksumites (ⲃ̅ ⲏⲙⲱⲛ ⲁⲣⲟⲩⲁ`ⲁ′ ⳑ ⲙⲁⲕⲟⲩⲣ`ⲧ′ ⳑ ⲛⲟⲃⲁⲁⲓⲟⲛ ⳧ ⲁⲁⲙⲁⲁ`ⲧ′ ⳑ ⲁⲍ̇ⲓⲱ̇ⲙⲁ), during a period of increasing European understanding of Nubia, could have fed into the kingdom's growing status.[26] Old Nubian documents are too fragmentary to suggest with certainty, but this declaration arguably shows Nubia portraying itself to incorporate all the lands of 'Ethiopia' to an external audience and, thus, overstating its influence in arenas where news and rumour would spread quickly. Whether directly or indirectly, Nubian power could be disseminated, and possibly even over-stated, amongst other Eastern groups where news of such later made its way to Europeans.

Whilst Coptic influences upon the accumulation of European knowledge regarding Ethiopia and Nubia remain limited, Nubian and Ethiopian relationships with Syria should not be underestimated either for the presence of undocumented networks. Indeed, both had historic ties with the Syrian Church, notable for its position in the

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Crusaders and Nubians: Hayton of Corycus, 'La Flor des Estoires de la Terre d'Orient', in RHC Doc. Arm. II., Ch. 23, 247.

[26] DBMNT no.610. Probably Egyptian Museum, Cairo, Catalogue Number Unknown, Qasr Ibrim Excavation Number 74.1.30/6A. Translation can be found in W. Y. Adams, *Qasr Ibrîm. The Late Mediaeval Period* (London, 1996), pp. 228-9.

Holy Land alongside the Crusaders, which produced a potential Syriac corpus that could be disseminated in various forms amongst Europeans.[27] Authors of Syriac works, which often shared information found in Muslim works, occupied an expansive area in the East throughout the medieval period.[28] Syriac writers were also important for maintaining discussion of classical geography seemingly unbeknown to those in the West, such as the discussion of Ptolemy. For instance, Ptolemy's work influenced the Syriac chronicle of Zachariah dating to the sixth century, which was utilised in part by later prominent writers such as Michael the Syrian and Barhebraeus.[29]

Syriac historians had access to knowledge which the Europeans did not seemingly know. On the eve of the Crusades, for example, the *Ellath Kul-ʿEllān* noted that the Red Sea extended towards the kingdoms of Ethiopia and Nubia.[30] Most importantly for the significance of potential networks Syrians were influential in Jerusalem too, though they did encounter difficulties maintaining claims.[31] Influential Syrian

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[27] On Ethiopia and Syria, see: W. Witakowski, 'Syrian Influences in Ethiopian Culture', in *Languages and Cultures*, ed. Bausi, pp. 197-208; P. Marrassini, 'Once Again on the Question of Syriac Influences in the Aksumite Period', in Ibid., pp. 209-19; Munro-Hay, 'Saintly Shadows', in *Languages and Cultures*, ed. Bausi, pp. 221-52. The historic contacts between Copts and Syrians are important to emphasise for the development of Eastern Christian knowledge networks: J.-M. Fiey, 'Coptes et Syriaques, contacts et échanges', *Studia Orientalia Christiana, Collectanea*, 15 (1972-3), pp. 297-365.

[28] J.-C. Ducene, 'La géographie chez les auteurs syriaques: entre hellénisme et Moyen Âge arabe', in *Migrations de langues et d'idées en Asie. Actes du colloque international organisé par l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, la Société asiatique et l'INALCO*, eds. J.-L. Bacqué-Grammont, P.-S. Filliozat, and M. Zink (Paris, 2015), pp. 21-36.

[29] Though the writer confused Ptolemy for the king of Egypt: *Chronicle of Pseudo-Zachariah Rhetor*, trans. Greatrex et al., Book XII Ch. 7, pp. 431-46. On later uses by writers, see: pp. 57-60. However, elements of Ptolemy did also surive in Europe: P. Gautier Dalché, *La géographie de Ptolémée en Occident (IVe-XVIe)* (Turnhout, 2009). On Syriac sources, see: W. Witakowski, 'Syriac Historiographical Sources', in *Byzantines and Crusaders in Non-Greek Sources, 1025-1204*, ed. M. Whitby (Oxford, 2008), pp. 253-82.

[30] *Das Buch von der Erkenntnis der* Wahrheit, ed. K. Kayser (Leipzig, 1889), 258 (text); OSCN, 248 (trans.).

[31] A. Palmer, 'The History of the Syrian Orthodox in Jerusalem [Part I]', *Oriens Christianus*, 75 (1991), pp. 16-43; A. Palmer, 'The History of the Syrian Orthodox in Jerusalem, Part II: Queen Melisende and the Jacobite Estates', *Oriens Christianus*, 76 (1992), pp. 74-94. Armenians were another prominent group in Jerusalem whose knowledge could have been tapped into: J. Prawer, 'The Armenians in Jerusalem Under the Crusaders', in *Armenian and Biblical Studies*, ed. M. Stone (Jerusalem, 1976), pp.

historians, such as Michael the Syrian and Barhebraeus, worked within the Crusader States and were potentially accessible as they held prominent positions in society. Michael the Syrian, specifically, who also had a beneficial relationship with the Crusaders, was well-versed in Nubian and Ethiopian history detailing their stories of conversion – particularly utilising the text of John of Ephesus – and even recounted King George of Nubia's visit to Baghdad in 836.[32] Michael could have been one such undocumented network for Crusader knowledge. Bernard Hamilton has noted how it was perhaps uncoincidental that European knowledge of Nubians developed after Michael the Syrian's visit to Jerusalem upon King Amalric's request.[33] For instance, King Amalric knew that Nubia was under the jurisdiction of the Coptic Patriarch no later than 1173 as noted in a correspondence.[34]

As well as the historic ties between Syria and Ethiopia being well-noted, textual communication with Nubia was also possible. Nubians were said to have known Syriac in the tenth century and a twelfth-century Syriac alphabet has recently been found at Qasr Ibrim.[35] Although the reason for the text's existence remains unknown, it could be suggested that the presence of Syriac in Nubia highlights the possibility for individuals or groups within these communities to exchange texts and ideas. Syrians,

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222-35. Likewise, for the history of the Copts in Jerusalem throughout the period discussed in this thesis, see: O. F. A. Meinardus, *The Copts in Jerusalem* (Cairo, 1960), pp. 9-25.

[32] *Chronique de Michel le Syrien. Patriarche jacobite d'Antioche (1166-1199)*, ed. J.-B. Chabot, 4 vols. (Paris, 1899-1910), pp. Book VII Ch. 3, IV:131-2, Book X Ch. 18, IV:371-2, Book XII Ch. 19, IV:330-4 (text); *The Syriac Chronicle of Michael Rabo (The Great). A Universal History from the Creation*, trans. M. Moosa (Teaneck, 2014), pp. 160-1, 415, 567-9 (trans.). On Michael and his relations with the Crusaders, see: MacEvitt, *Crusades and the Christian World*, pp. 167-9. On wider relations, see: Hamilton, *The Latin Church*, pp. 188-211; B. Hamilton, 'The Latin Church in the Crusader States', in *East and West I*, pp. 1-20; B. Hamilton, 'Aimery of Limoges, Latin Patriarch of Antioch (c. 1142-c. 1196) and the Unity of the Churches', in *East and West II*, pp. 1-12.

[33] Hamilton, 'Crusades and North-East Africa', 172.

[34] RRH, no.500, pp. 131-2.

[35] Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, ed. G. Flügel, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1871-2), I:١٩ (text); *The Fihrist of al-Nadīm. A Tenth-Century Survey of Muslim Culture*, trans. B. Dodge, 2 vols. (New York, 1970), Ch. 1, I:36 (trans.); J. van Ginkel and J. van Der Vliet, 'A Syriac Alphabet from Qasr Ibrim', in *Nubian Voices II. New Texts and Studies on Christian Nubian Culture*, eds. A. Łajtar, G. Ochała, and J. van der Vliet (Warsaw, 2015), pp. 45-52.

Nubians, and Ethiopians held neighbouring monasteries, not only in Jerusalem, but also, notably, in the Wadi al-Natrun in Egypt. This close proximity, along with the profession of a shared faith in the East in 1088, enabled communication and thus allowed for up to date transmission of knowledge between the communities which began to be disseminated in the Holy Land.

Moreover, contemporary, or near contemporary, other Eastern Christian writings noting the differences between the Christian groups are rare, but they did exist. Eutychius of Alexandria (d.940) was one author who, despite his incorrect reasoning, did correctly know that Nubians were Jacobites (يعقوبيه).[36] As such, Nubia and Ethiopia appear alongside the history of the Egyptian Church by Eastern Christian historians. In the *Kitāb al-tawārīkh* (c.1259) of Petrus Ibn al-Rāhib, both Nubia and Ethiopia appear in the section of the work discussing the patriarchs of Alexandria. Moreover, within the text there is an acknowledgement of their relationship with Egypt, but there is no information regarding any distinction between varying theological customs or beliefs.[37] Presumably this can be explained by the fact that any such differences were either commonly known, and thus did not need further discussion, or were not indeed known. Given that other Eastern Christian writers also omit any discussion of Nubian and Ethiopian faith, it suggests that they were considered within larger groups, such as the Jacobites, without need for any further clarification. Therefore, the limited Eastern Christian references would appear to be due to the lack of interest or desire to distinguish such groups. For example, Paul of Antioch, the twelfth-century bishop of Sidon, notes the differences between Melkites,

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[36] J. Selden and E. Pococke, *Contextio gemmarum, sive, Eutychii patriarchae Alexandrini annales*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1654-6), II:386 (text); OSCN, 110 (trans.).
[37] Petrus Ibn al-Rāhib, *Chronicon Orientale*, ed. and trans. L. Cheikho 2 vols. (Beirut, 1903), pp. I:101, 125-6, 130 (text), II:109, 134-5, 139-40 (Latin trans.).

Nestorians, Jacobites, and Maronites, but at no point details any ethnicities or nationalities in his discussion.[38] The unimportance of distinguishing the different peoples within these sects has been noted by the editor of the text, Paul Khoury, and it was posited that this seeming ignorance helps to explain the silence on Latins and Armenians, both of whom were instead treated as Melkites and Monophysites respectively despite the fact that the co-adjutor bishop would have been acutely aware of the Latin differences whilst at Sidon.[39]

Complimenting Eastern Christian influences, contemporary Muslim geographical writings were the primary source for information regarding the locations of Nubia and Ethiopia amongst Eastern groups. For example, both Ethiopia and Nubia featured in the anonymous *Ḥudūd al-ʿĀlam* (982).[40] Indeed, Egypt (here we can include the role of Copts too) had long had a history of knowledge exchange with Nubia which may have disseminated amongst the Europeans.[41] Equally, prior to the Crusades, Muslim writers make note that the Nubians and Ethiopians share the religious customs of the 'Rum' or directly call them Jacobites, most notably in the works of al-Masʿūdī, Ibn Ḥawqal, and al-Yaʿqūbī.[42] Supported with the increased availability of intellectual interactions, the expansion of European knowledge had a range of direct and indirect potential origins. Such developing knowledge undoubtedly owed itself to increasing

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[38] *Paul d'Antioche, évêque melkite de Sidon (xiiᵉ s.)*, ed. and trans. P. Khoury (Beirut, 1964), pp. ٨٤-٩٧ (text), 188-99 (trans.).

[39] Ibid., pp. 15-6.

[40] Ḥudūd al-ʿĀlam, *Rukopis Tumanskogo*, ed. V. Barthold, (Leningrad, 1930), 39a, 39a-b; trans.: Ḥudūd al-ʿĀlam, *'The Regions of the World'. A Persian Geography 37 A.H.-982 A.D.*, trans. V. F. Minorsky, ed. C. E. Bosworth, with preface by V. V. Barthold (London, 1970), Ethiopia: §57, 164, Nubia: §59, pp. 164-5.

[41] R. Seignobos, *L'Égypte et la Nubie à l'époque médiévale. Élaboration et transmission des savoirs historiographiques (641-ca. 1500)* 2 vols. (Unpublished PhD Thesis, L'Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, 2017).

[42] Al-Masʿūdī, *Kitāb al-Tanbīh wal-ishrāf*, ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leiden, 1894), ١٥١ (text), OSCN, 139 (trans.); Ibn Ḥawqal, *Kitāb Ṣūrat al-arḍ*, ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leiden, 1873), ١٥ (text), OSCN, 150 (trans.); Al-Yaʿqūbī, *Historiae*, ed. M. Th. Houtsma, 2 vols. (Leiden, 1883), pp. I:١٩١٣- (text), *The Works of Ibn Wāḍiḥ al-Yaʿqūbī*, trans. M. S. Gordon, C. F. Robinson, E. K. Roswon, and M. Fishbein, 3 vols. (Leiden, 2018), pp. II:497 (trans.).

contacts and networks with those who also had an understanding of elements of Muslim geography. Muslim writers, based on Ptolemy, knew the kingdoms of Nubia and Ethiopia in great detail and some Muslim geographers also worked in Europe, particularly in Spain and Sicily, during the twelfth century, most notably Ibn al-Idrīsī.[43] Al-Idrīsī's influence in the court of Roger II of Sicily has been questioned, yet he cannot be presumed to have had no interaction with Europeans whatsoever regardless of surviving manuscripts suggesting so.[44] That said, there was, however, ample potential for undocumented knowledge dissemination through the mediation of Arabic texts and language.

Evidence is suggestive that this equally applied to Ethiopia regarding Europeans, emphasising the multilateral importance of Muslim geographical knowledge. The scale of the Ethiopian use of Arabic, particularly in terms of knowledge, can be seen through the development of European ethnonyms. Such utilisation of Arabic knowledge can be witnessed in an Ethiopian manuscript detailing the Ethiopian embassy to Venice in 1402 which calls Venice *Bandeqya*, a clear association with the Arabic name *Bunduqya*.[45] Moreover, Ethiopic references to the Portuguese in the fifteenth century call them *färänǧ* (ፈረንጅ: or *afränǧ*, *afrengi*), related to the Arabic *al-Afranj* (Frank: European), rather than an understanding of Portugal (Arabic: *Burtuqāl*).[46] *Al-Afranj* was widely used to designate all Latin Europeans, rather than just the people of France, upon the onset of the Crusades. The Ethiopian use of *färänǧ*

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[43] See: OSCN; M. Tolmacheva, 'Ptolemaic Influence on Medieval Arab Geography: The Case Study of East Africa', in *Discovering New Worlds. Essays on Medieval Exploration and Imagination*, ed. S. D. Westrem (New York, 1991), pp. 125-41. For a discussion of avenues of twelfth-century transmission, see: P. Gautier Dalché, 'Géographie Arabe et Géographie Latine au XIIe Siècle', *Medieval Encounters*, 19 (2013), pp. 408-33.
[44] D. Abulafia, 'The End of Muslim Sicily', in *Muslims Under Latin Rule, 1100-1300*, ed. J. M. Powell (Princeton, 1990), 122.
[45] Raineri, 'I doni della Serenissima', pp. 364, 391-3 (text).
[46] R. Pankhurst, 'Färäng', in EA, pp. II:492-3.

in the fifteenth century would suggest that similar widespread contacts had been occurring, though likely not as prolonged as the Muslim contacts around the Mediterranean basin, for a similar usage of the ethnonym. For the period before the Crusades, it has been argued that the Ethiopian tradition knew nothing of Latin Rome and only the New Rome of Constantinople, and so another ethnonym for Westerners would be expected.[47] Without an evolution similar to Arabic, it would be expected to see *Rōmyā* (an equivalent of *Rūm* for Romans) if there were limited to no contacts and thus no development of the ethnonym. During the Crusades, Roman identity was transferred from Byzantium to the Latins in numerous Eastern Christian groups, so something similar could have happened for Ethiopians too.[48] In which case, the use of *färänğ* would suggest a relationship between Ethiopian understanding and knowledge of Arabic geography and history. Presumably, as Europeans began to learn more about Nubians and Ethiopians, the Africans, too, learnt more about Europeans.

With the many potential exchanges between Europeans and Eastern facilitators of knowledge, some European writers, though they do not explicitly say so, clearly benefitted from their stay in the East, utilising numerous undocumented knowledge networks. The Crusades enabled knowledge gathering akin to the Roman and Byzantine Empire before the seventh century through the interactions between Europeans, Nubians, and Ethiopians, as well as other Eastern groups. To use the explanation of Strabo for the wealth of Roman knowledge of the East: 'Indeed, the spread of the empires of the Romans and of the Parthians has presented to geographers

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[47] K. Durak, 'Who are the Romans? The Definition of *Bilād al-Rūm* (Land of the Romans) in the Medieval Islamic Geographies', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 31.3 (2010), pp. 285-98. On the development of the ethnonym in Arabic, see: D. G. König, *Arabic-Islamic Views of the Latin West. Tracing the emergence of Medieval Europe* (Oxford, 2015), pp. 208, 211-21.

[48] See: C. MacEvitt, 'True Romans: Remembering the Crusades Among Eastern Christians', JMH, 40.3 (2014), pp. 260-75. Also: G. W. Bowersock, 'Old and New Rome in the Late Antique Near East', in *Transformations in Late Antiquity. Essays for Peter Brown*, eds. P. Rousseau and M. Papoutsakis (Farnham, 2009), pp. 37-50.

of today a considerable addition to our empirical knowledge of geography, just as did the campaign of Alexander to geographers of earlier times, as Eratosthenes points out'.[49] Similar can be said of the resulting European societies created following the First Crusade, which facilitated the European development of knowledge regarding Nubians and Ethiopians through their interactions between all three groups in addition to the interactions with the groups previously noted.

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[49] Strabo, *Geography*, I.2.I, pp. I:48-51. Strabo then points out how and why knowledge was expanded by these figures and empires. Indeed, see: B. Hamilton, 'The Impact of the Crusades on Western Geographical Knowledge', in *Eastward Bound. Travel and Travellers, 1050-1550*, ed. R. Allen (Manchester, 2004), pp. 15-34.

V: Nubians and Ethiopians as Facilitators of Knowledge Through Interaction?

Following the potential role of Eastern groups, how far may we even suggest a direct African role in the twelfth-century expansion of European knowledge? The primary problem in interpreting the existence of Nubians and Ethiopians in the Holy Land is not whether or not they were present, but how to distinguish between the various European ethnonyms used.[1] Importantly, the initial inclusion and development of Nubia and Ethiopia (Abyssinia) in European discourse, to be discussed in the next chapter, importantly coincided with the sharing of spaces in the Holy Land and Egypt. Whilst no European explicitly names an African for their source during the Crusader period, the mere act of witnessing Nubians or Ethiopians could also develop European knowledge. In a similar study which also illustrates this point, Hyunhee Park has examined how medieval Chinese and Islamic commercial exchange, naturally across vast distances, led to a greater cultural and intellectual exchange, which resulted in increased geographical knowledge by both peoples of one another despite a lack of direct consistent textual evidence to portray this development.[2] Here, a discussion of the question of the African presence in the Holy Land is important to determine their potential active role in the development of European knowledge regarding their kingdoms as facilitators of transmission.

As mentioned in Chapter II, 'Ethiopians' were said to have been present in the Holy Land from the fourth century onwards. The cathedral at Aksum, for example, was

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[1] This is why this thesis ignores references to Jacobites and Indians amongst others. See Rouxpetel, 'Indiens, Éthiopiens et Nubiens'; Rouxpetel, *Occident au miroir*, pp. 104-6, 115-36. On Indians: J. Valtrová, 'Indian Christians in Medieval European Travel Accounts', in *Eastern Christianity, Judaism and Islam Between the Death of Muhammad and Tamerlane (632-1405)*, eds. M. Gálik and M. Slobodník (Bratislava, 2011), pp. 195-213.

[2] H. Park, *Mapping the Chinese and Islamic Worlds. Cross-Cultural Exchange in Pre-Modern Asia* (Cambridge, 2012).

built in the style and dimensions of the Holy Sepulchre along with other churches based on Palestinian examples which suggests that some Ethiopians visited Jerusalem.[3] Likewise, Nubians also maintained a special interest in Jerusalem; ⲛ̄ⲟⲓⲉⲁⲏⲙ ⲛ̄ⲧⲡⲉ (heavenly Jerusalem), or a variant, appears in numerous inscriptions throughout Nubia suggesting its importance in Nubian imagination.[4] This importance of Jerusalem in Ethiopia and Nubia would suggest that pilgrims made somewhat regular journeys and would have been present during the establishment of the Crusader States despite contemporary texts not noting their presence.[5]

Denys Pringle has shown that Nubians or Ethiopians were present at at least six different churches in the Holy Land during the period covered by the present study. Both Nubians and Ethiopians are most witnessed by Europeans at the Holy Sepulchre;[6] with Nubians also being said to have been at the Synagogue Church in Nazareth,[7] and at the Church of St. Mary in Jerusalem (though only noted in the late fifteenth century),[8] whilst Ethiopians are described at the Church of St. Mary in Bethlehem,[9] the Church of St. Gabriel in Nazareth,[10] and at St. Mary of the Valley of Jehoshaphat in Jerusalem.[11] It is also important not to forget the increasing contacts in the wider region beyond the Holy Land occurring in the wider region, such as in

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[3] G. Hatke, 'Holy Land and Sacred History: A View from Early Ethiopia', in *Visions of Community in the Post-Roman World. The West, Byzantium and the Islamic World, 300-1000*, eds. W. Pohl, C. Gantner, and R. Payne (Farnham, 2012), pp. 271-2. On the historical relationship between Jerusalem and Ethiopia, see: T.-N. Pérès, 'Jérusalem et Axoum ou la reine de Saba et l'arche d'alliance: Mythe fondateur et traditions religieuses et politiques en Éthiopie', *Graphe*, 11 (2002), pp. 45-59. See also: K. Stoffregen Pedersen, 'Jerusalem', in *EA*, pp. II:273-7.

[4] J. van Der Vliet, *Catalogue of the Coptic Inscriptions in the Sudan National Museum at Khartoum (I. Khartoum Copt)* (Leuven, 2003), pp. 21-30, esp. 29n.149.

[5] For the period discussed here also see: von Den Brincken, *Nationes*, pp. 243-53 for Nubia, and pp. 262-72 for Ethiopia.

[6] On these churches, see: Pringle, *Churches*, no.283, pp. III:6-72.

[7] Ibid., no.172, pp. II:145-7.

[8] Ibid., no.343, pp. III:322-6.

[9] Ibid., no.61, pp. I:137-56.

[10] Ibid., no.170, pp. II:140-5.

[11] Ibid., no.337, pp. III:287-306.

Egypt. For example, separate references to Ethiopians in Alexandria in the twelfth and fifteenth centuries suggest a continued presence – Benjamin of Tudela mentioned Ethiopians (people from חבש who he associates with Ethiopia proper, חבשה, elsewhere) and Joos van Ghistele noted *Abassijnen* respectively.[12] Specifically in the case of Ethiopia, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries it embarked on a mass translation movement of texts through its connections with Egypt, suggesting that Egypt may even have facilitated more exchanges with Europeans than those recorded given the activity of Ethiopian monks.[13] Importantly, Egypt was as central as the Holy Land for the dissemination of knowledge regarding Nubians and Ethiopians.

Though there is no direct evidence for these Africans being present at churches in the northern Crusader kingdoms, the suggestion should not be dismissed. Indeed, the importance of Edessa can be seen in the Ethiopian rock-hewn churches in Lalibäla, also known as Wärwär and Roha amongst other toponyms, an area which derives its

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[12] *The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela*, ed. and trans. M. N. Adler (London, 1907), Alexandria, קו (text), 76 (trans.); Ambrosius Zeebout, *Tvoyage van Mher Joos van Ghistele*, ed. R. J. G. A. A. Gaspar (Hilversum, 1998), Book III Ch. 34, 214. The importance of Alexandria to Nubians can be witnessed through its toponymy in texts, with the Old Nubian Miracle of Saint Mina attesting to the saint's influence on Nubian pilgrims whom would have travelled frequently to Alexandria: A. Tsakos, 'On Place Names Used By Nubians For Places Outside Nubia (Notes On Medieval Nubian Toponymy 2)', *Dotawo*, 4 (2017), pp. 232-6. On cosmopolitan Alexandria as a centre for exchange, see: G. Curatola, 'Venetian Merchants and Travelers in Alexandria', in *Alexandria. Real and Imagined*, eds. A. Hirst and M. Silk (Aldershot, 2004), pp. 185-98; A. Wolff, 'Merchants, Pilgrims, Naturalists: Alexandria Through European Eyes from the Fourteenth to the Sixteenth Century', in *Alexandria*, eds. Hirst and Silk, pp. 199-226; N. Christie, 'Cosmopolitan Trade Centre or Bone of Contention? Alexandria and the Crusades, 487-857/1095-1454', *Al-Masāq*, 26.1 (2014), pp. 49-61. The important axis between Alexandria and the Holy Land, in turn it being an important destination for Europeans, should not be forgotten either: D. Jacoby, 'Acre-Alexandria: A Major Commercial Axis of the Thirteenth Century', in *"Come l'orco della fiaba". Studi per Franco Cardini*, ed. M. Montesano (Florence, 2010), pp. 151-67.
[13] Z. Wellnhofer, 'Die arabisch-altäthiopische Übersetzungsliteratur im historischen Kontext des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts', in *Multidisciplinary Views on the Horn of Africa*, ed. Elliesie, pp. 467-95; A. Bausi, 'Ethiopic Literary Production Related to the Christian Egyptian Culture', in *Coptic Society, Literature and Religion from Late Antiquity to Modern Times. Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Rome, September 17th-22nd, 2012, and Plenary Reports of the Ninth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Cairo, September 15th-19th, 2008*, eds. P. Buzi, A. Camplani, and F. Contari, 2 vols. (Leuven, 2016), pp. I:503-71.

name of Roha from the Arabic name for Edessa (*al-Ruha*).[14] The rock-hewn complex

there, traditionally dated to the twelfth century though some churches have evidence

for earlier construction, can also be interpreted as symbolising numerous pilgrimage

places that Ethiopians would have most likely seen on their visits to Jerusalem. Its

creation was to emulate the Old Jerusalem in a New Jerusalem in Ethiopia, both for

religious and political reasons.[15] Admittedly limited for drawing too many

conclusions, the evidence of toponymy and the architecture of the site is suggestive of

an intimate affiliation with the Holy Land, one which may have led Ethiopians to

undertake pilgrimage to the original sites in the Holy Land prior to their

documentation there by the Crusaders. Indeed, ecclesiastical messengers from Nubia

and Ethiopia were likely to have travelled to Syria to communicate with the

Antiochene Patriarch, a sister Church of both Nubia and Ethiopia, and would have

congregated in shared places to worship, including Edessa. The knowledge of Syriac

in Nubia suggests its utilisation for communication, especially considering that Syriac

texts have not currently been found anywhere in Christian Nubia for an alternative

use.[16] In fact, Michael the Syrian insinuated that Nubians (ܟܘܫܝ̈ܐ) and Ethiopians

(ܗܢܕܘܝ̈ܐ) were present in Syria, Palestine, and Armenia, as well as Egypt, in the late

1120s as they were occasionally provoked along with other Monophysites by Greeks.

As Michael was discussing the Syrians, Copts, and Armenians too, it is unclear

whether he intended to localise Nubians and Ethiopians specifically to Egypt or if they

were also to be associated with the other lands mentioned.[17] If so, this reference would

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[14] See: J.-N. Pérès, 'Édesse d'Éthiopie', in *Sur les pas des Araméens chrétiens. Mélanges offerts à Alain Desreumaux*, eds. F. Briquel-Chatonnet and M. Debié (Paris, 2010), pp. 135-42.

[15] M. E. Heldman, 'Architectural Symbolism, Sacred Geography and the Ethiopian Church', *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 22.3 (1992), pp. 229-32; Phillipson, *Foundations*, pp. 237-8.

[16] See above: 97n35. On suriving Nubian text languages, see: G. Ochała, 'Multilingualism in Christian Nubia', *Dotawo*, 1 (2014), pp. 26-7.

[17] *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, ed. Chabot, Book XVI Ch. 2, IV:608. ܗܢܕܘܝ̈ܐ could mean Indians but both Jean-Baptiste Chabot and Matti Moosa have translated this as Abyssinians/Ethiopians here:

pre-date any European notice of either Nubians or Ethiopians in the Holy Land by almost five decades.

Since Ethiopians are not specifically noted at the Holy Sepulchre until the thirteenth century in European texts, unlike the mentioning of Nubians worshipping there by the German pilgrim Theodoric in 1172, any earlier Ethiopian presence has been questioned.[18] An Ethiopian community was established no later than 1290 when Emperor Yāgbeʿā Ṣeyōn sent a delegation, via Cairo, with one hundred candles to be lit in the churches of Jerusalem and asking for the Ethiopians not to be subject to a tax when entering their churches.[19] Following the position of Enrico Cerulli, Bernard Hamilton and Emeri van Donzel have doubted the existence of an Ethiopian presence in the twelfth century, with discussion primarily focusing on their post-thirteenth-century occupation.[20] An earlier Ethiopian presence should, however, be expected despite Ethiopians appearing to have been largely ignored as a distinguishable group; especially if we accept Michael the Syrian's claim that Nubians and Ethiopians were present in Syria, Armenia, Palestine, and Egypt in the twelfth century whilst not being commented on by any European contemporary.[21]

Further illustrative of the early supposed absence of Africans in European texts are notices recording the Feast of the Holy Fire in Jerusalem at Easter which may have

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Chronique de Michel le Syrien, ed. Chabot, III:226; *Syriac Chronicle of Michael Rabo*, trans. Moosa, 645.

[18] Theodoric, 'Libellus de Locis Sanctis', in *Peregrinationes Tres. Saewulf, John of Würzburg, Theodoricus*, ed. R. B. C. Huygens (Turnhout, 1994), Ch. 8, 152; 'Theoderic', in J. Wilkinson with J. Hill and W. F. Ryan, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage, 1099-1185* (Cambridge, 1988), 282.

[19] Cerulli, *Etiopi*, pp. I:88-90; S. Munro-Hay, *Ethiopia and Alexandria. The Metropolitan Episcopacy of Ethiopia* (Warsaw, 1997), pp. 195-9.

[20] Cerulli, *Etiopi*, pp. I:31-7; Hamilton, 'Continental Drift', 241; van Donzel, 'Were There Ethiopians'. Also, see above: pp. 17-8n36.

[21] *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, ed. J.-B. Chabot, Book XVI Ch. 2, IV:610 (text); *Syriac Chronicle of Michael Rabo*, trans. Moosa, 645 (trans.).

had Nubians and Ethiopians amongst the Eastern groups who celebrated it, though texts of the Crusader period do not mention them.[22] No source mentions Ethiopians directly as participants until 1481-3, though not alongside Nubians, the absence of whom in later accounts can be explained by the much reduced contemporary influence of their kingdom.[23] An argument for an Ethiopian absence is primarily based solely on their exclusion in European sources, which has consequently distorted the picture in scholarship. Equally, Niccolò da Poggibonsi, a Tuscan Franciscan friar who visited the Holy Land and Egypt and wrote his *Libro d'oltramare* between the years c.1345-50, commented that Eastern Christians, including *Nubini*, worshipped together on Holy Saturday after the hour of the Vespers.[24] Similarly to the question of the African observation of the ceremony of the Holy Fire, it cannot be known how often they took part in this shared act on Holy Saturday, though presumably they would have done for many years before Niccolò's reference.

A pre-dating of the Ethiopian presence can also be suggested elsewhere to accompany the question of Jerusalem. Ethiopians are documented at the Monastery of Mar Musa in Syria and on Mount Lebanon, though only from the fifteenth century, thus leaving

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[22] However, it is difficult to say for sure whether they would have been present as not all Eastern Christians necessarily agreed with the ritual: Matthew of Edessa: Matthieu d'Édesse, 'Extraits de la chronique II', in RHC Doc. Arm. I, Chs. 25-6, pp. 61-8; *Armenia and the Crusades*, trans. Dostourian, Part III Chs. 8-12, pp. 187-91.

[23] Fratris Pauli Waltheri Guglingensis, *Itinerarium in Terram Sanctam et ad Sanctam Catharinam*, ed. M. Sollweck (Tübingen, 1892), 146. However, note Hans Schiltberger, writing between the years 1394-1427, who mentioned participants from the 'land of Prester John' without giving a specific land: Hans Schiltberger, *Reisebuch*, ed. V. Langmantel (Tübingen, 1885), Ch. 40, 73. On the ceremony, see: O. F. A. Meinardus, 'The Ceremony of the Holy Fire in the Middles and To-Day', *Bulletin de la société d'archeologie copte*, 16 (1961-2), pp. 243-52; A. Jotischky, 'Holy Fire and Holy Sepulchre: Ritual and Space in Jerusalem from the Ninth to the Fourteenth Centuries', in *Ritual and Space in the Middle Ages. Proceedings of the 2009 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. F. Andrews (Donington, 2011), pp. 44-60. For the Ethiopian tradition, see: G. Fiaccadori, 'Sulla formula etiopica per la Festa del Fuoco sacro a Gerusalemme', in *Studia Aethiopica. In honour of Siegbert Uhlig on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday*, eds. V. Böll et al. (Wiesbaden, 2004), pp. 37-40.

[24] NP, Ch. 35, pp. I:103-4.

the question of an earlier presence up for debate.[25] Regrettably, no evidence has yet

been uncovered to suggest an earlier dating. Whilst such an earlier presence cannot be

ascertained, the symbolic importance attached to the naming of holy sites in Ethiopia

particularly suggests that some places were important Ethiopian pilgrimage centres in

the Holy Land despite limited supporting documentary evidence. For instance, Däbrä

Sina in the rock-hewn complex in Ethiopia imitated Mount Sinai in name and

although Ethiopic manuscripts and monks are only known at the Egyptian Sinai from

the fifteenth century onwards, it may be likely that Ethiopians had been travelling to

Sinai earlier – from at least the twelfth century, the latest date for the building of

Däbrä Sina – given such important associations for the Egyptian Sinai to have become

a pilgrimage site in Ethiopia.[26]

The absence of Ethiopians in Jerusalem is associated with the debate of the supposed

donation of churches to Ethiopians by Saladin following his capture of the city in

1187. However, it is important to note the late dating of the sources for this proposed

donation which has led to the event's authenticity being questioned. Both sources for

this event date to the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries respectively. The most cited

piece of evidence comes unreferenced from Athanasios Papadopoulos-Kerameus, a

Greek scholar writing in the 1890s researching in the library of the Patriarchate of

Jerusalem, presumably on the authority of a manuscript he had found. Emery van

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[25] In 1488, Ethiopians, along with Jacobites, were expelled by the Maronites from Ehden in the Mount Lebanon with the coercion of Franciscans: For Lebanon, see: P. Jacob, 'Etude analytique de l'inscription éthiopienne dans l'ermitage de Mar Assia (Mont-Liban, vallée de la Qadisha)', *Spéléorient*, 1 (1996), pp. 35-8; R. J. Mouawad, 'The Ethiopian Monks in Mount-Lebanon (XVth Century)', *Liban Souterrain*, 5 (1998), pp. 186-207. Their appearance at Mar Musa appears linked to the expulsion in Lebanon: E. C. Dodd, *The Frescoes of Mar Musa al-Habashi. A Study in Medieval Painting in Syria* (Toronto, 2001), pp. 19-22.

[26] For example, in the fourteenth century, a separate Däbrä Sina was founded in Ethiopia on an island in Lake Tana. There are four locations and monasteries called Däbrä Sina in Ethiopia altogether noted in the EA: pp. II:44-8. Of the surviving six Ethiopic manuscripts at Sinai, none date to before the fourteenth century, however; three date from the late fourteenth century (one) and the fifteenth century (two): Kamil, 'Les manuscrits éthiopiens'.

Donzel has explicitly called this document a forgery, emphasising Enrico Cerulli's

earlier remarks, though he states it is the only source for Saladin's supposed donation,

unaware of a text by Stefano Lusignano.[27] In his 1573 text Lusignano speaks of the

Indiani returning to the Holy Sepulchre thanks to Saladin.[28] Despite no contemporary

writers noting any such donation, an awareness of Lusignano's text should call for a

re-evaluation of Papadopoulos-Kerameus's legitimacy, if not of the supposed donation

more generally, even despite of Lusignano's use of *Indiani* rather than a more explicit

reference to Ethiopians.

It is true that conditions between Ethiopia and Egypt prior to this supposed donation

were preferable for such an act. According to the *Gadl* of Emperor Yemreḥanna

Krestos (r. c.1087-c.1137), ecclesiastics from 'Rome' (ርም: Byzantium), most

probably from Egypt, came to Ethiopia on account of his practising of the faith.[29] The

fortunes of both Ethiopian Christians and the Muslims in Egypt were entwined

through the Coptic See, suggesting that good relations between them may also have

found influence in the court of the Sultan.[30] This favourable relationship with Egypt is

also evident in another passage in the *Gadl* which extended directly to the Muslims.

Yemreḥanna Krestos wrote to the Sultan of Egypt to request a door made from the

tree of Libanos which the Sultan had in his palace. Although the door was to be used

for the emperor's 'House of God', the Sultan sent it immediately once he saw the

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[27] A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, ed., *Αναλεκτα ιεροσολυμιτικης σταχυολογιας*, 5 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1891-8), II:409; van Donzel, 'Were There Ethiopians'.
[28] S. Lusignano, *Chorograffia et breve historia universale dell'isola de Cipro principiando al tempo di Noè per in sino al 1572* (Bologna, 1573), pp. 34a, 46a.
[29] *Il Gadla Yemreḥanna Krestos*, ed. and trans. P. Marrassini (Napoli, 1995), pp. 53 (text), 87 (trans.). For some wider context, see: M.-L. Derat, 'The Zāgwē Dynasty (11-13th Centuries) and King Yemreḥanna Krestos', *Annales d'Ethiopie*, 25.1 (2010), pp. 157-96.
[30] M. N. Swanson, *The Coptic Papacy in Islamic Egypt, 641-1517* (Cairo, 2010).

amount of gold on offer.[31] If indeed Ethiopians were not usually present in the Holy

Land before 1187, the donation by Saladin did occur during a time of good relations to

facilitate such an act.

However, the letter of Pope Alexander III to the 'King of the Indies' in 1177 granted a

place to worship in the Holy Sepulchre suggesting access prior to Saladin.[32] In fact,

the twelfth-century manuscript analysed by Anton Schall possibly attests to an

Ethiopian presence pre-dating the supposed donation.[33] Indeed, 'Ethiopians' are

described in the Holy Land centuries prior to the Crusades, further questioning the

validity of any such datable donation in which to use as a point of origin for an

Ethiopian presence, though we can only derive the existence of 'Black men' in the

Holy Land in earlier itineraries rather than specifically Ethiopians.[34] For example, the

otherwise unknown sixth-century Piacenza Pilgrim describes seeing men from

Aethiopiae in Jerusalem and Elusa who were said to have had their 'nostrils split, ears

cut, boots on their feet, and rings on their toes' by orders of Emperor Trajan. Not least

due to the use of *Aethiopiae*, the pilgrim was likely actually describing men from

northern Sudan – in lands neighbouring the Roman Empire at the time – as opposed to

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[31] *Gadla Yemreḥanna Krestos*, ed. and trans. Marrassini, pp. 56 (text), 89 (trans.).

[32] 'Pope Alexander III to the King of the Indies, Dated 27th September 1177', in *Lettere tra i Pontefici Romani e i Principi Etiopici (Secoli XII-XX)*, ed. O. Raineri (Vatican City, 2003), 26. Yet, Bernard Hamilton has posited that the letter was in response to the 'letter' of Prester John whilst also casting doubts on Alexander's seriousness: B. Hamilton, 'Prester John and the Three Kings of Cologne', in *Studies in Medieval History Presented to R. H. C. Davis*, eds. H. Mayr-Harting and R. I. Moore (London, 1985), pp. 188-90; Hamilton, 'Lands of Prester John', 133.

[33] A. Schall, 'Ein äthiopischer Transkriptionstext in einer lateinishcen Handschrift des 12. Jahrhunderts – Jerusalem als Mittler?', in *International Conference of Ethiopian Studies. Proceedings of the Sixth International Conference, Tel-Aviv, 14-17 April 1980*, ed. G. Goldberg (Rotterdam, 1986), pp. 467-70.

[34] Not long after the conversion of Ethiopia were 'Ethiopians' witnessed in Jerusalem. 'Ethiopians' are referenced in a letter from Paula and Eustochium to Marcella in 386, and St. Jerome, in a letter written in 403, further boasted that in Jerusalem '*De India, Perside et Aethiopia monachorum cotidie turbas suscipimus*': Paula and Eustochium, Letter XLVI to Marcella, in Hieronymus, *Epistularum Pars I. Epistulae I-LXX*, ed. I. Hilberg (Vienna, 1910), 340; St. Jerome, Letter CVII to Laeta, in Hieronymus, *Epistularum Pars II. Epistulae LXXI-CXX*, ed. I. Hilberg (Vienna, 1912), 292. As Nubia was not officially converted by this time, it would seem more likely that these Christians were indeed Ethiopians.

Aksum.[35] Similarly, in the eighth century, St. Willibald was said to have met two 'Ethiopians' (*Ethiops*) on his pilgrimage to the Holy Land.[36] Regardless of the questionable textual ethnonym evidence, there is additional suggestive numismatic evidence for an Ethiopian (Aksumite) presence in Jerusalem, particularly in the mid-first millennium CE.[37] Furthermore, according to the *Gadl* of St. Ṗänṭälewon, twelve monks in the sixth century asked Ṗänṭälewon for his blessing for their relocation to Jerusalem. Upon this request, Muse, one of the monks and brother of Emperor Kālēb, was asked by Ṗänṭälewon to send him information of the state of the holy places and for relics to venerate.[38] Whilst the surviving version of the *Gadl* was written in the Solomonid period, and thus post-dates an attested Ethiopian presence in the Holy Land and possibly written to support the claim of such an earlier presence, it suggests that there had been an early established Ethiopian presence in Jerusalem much earlier than Saladin's supposed donation in 1187. Ultimately, however, limited and ambiguous evidence restricts our picture of a continuous presence in the preceeding centuries to Crusader rule.

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[35] Antonini Placentini, 'Itinerarium', in *Itinera Hierosolymitana saeculi VI-VIII*, ed. P. Geyer (Vienna, 1898), 182; J. Wilkinson, trans., *Jerusalem Pilgrims Before the Crusades* (Warminster, 1977), 87. It is impossible to say whether these seemingly northern Sudanese men may have actually have been Nobades given the constant ethnic movements in the region: on this see above: pp. 7-8n15.

[36] Hygeburg, 'Vita Willibaldi Episcopi Eichstetensis', in MGH SS XV.i, pp. 100-1; 'Hugeburc, Life of St. Willibald. Extracts', in Wilkinson, trans., *Jerusalem Pilgrims*, 132.

[37] For example, see: R. Barkay, 'An Axumite Coin from Jerusalem', *Israel Numismatic Journal*, 5 (1981), pp. 57-9. There are also stylistic links with Jerusalem on the coins: W. Hahn, 'Touto arese te chora – St. Cyril's Holy Cross Cult in Jerusalem and Aksumite Coin Typology', *Israel Numismatic Journal*, 13 (1999), pp. 103-17. Stuart Munro-Hay asserts that given the relatively few bronze and silver Aksumite coins found outside of Ethiopia, gold coins were primarily for external use: Munro-Hay, *Aksum*, 184. However, the coin discussed by Barkay is bronze (also another bronze coin has been found at Caesarea) which, if Munro-Hay's assessment is to be followed, the finding of such bronze coins would suggest that their owners were not primarily there for trade. In turn, they could be scant evidence for the presence of early pilgrims accompanied by their few goods and not traders concerned with the international markets.

[38] *Acta Yārēd et Panṭalēwon*, ed. and Latin trans. C. Conti Rossini, Versio and Textus (Leuven, 1904), pp. Textus: 59 (text), Versio:54 (Latin trans.).

That said, according to Ethiopian tradition, Emperor Lalibäla (r. c. before 1204-after 1225) began to build his 'New Jerusalem' for Ethiopians to worship at following a visit to Jerusalem in a dream.[39] Though some churches date from an earlier period, Lalibäla's plans were said to emulate Jerusalem. This form of surrogate pilgrimage has elements interestingly reflective of what was developing in Europe during the same period, though any explicit European influence for such an Ethiopian project is not suggested here.[40] The building of Jerusalem's Ethiopian counterpart is suggestive of at least an Ethiopian desire to go to Jerusalem, if not the probability of an original Ethiopian presence in the Holy Land that was being catered for in this instance. Therefore, a complete absence of Ethiopians in the Holy Land cannot be firmly established one way or the other. Similarly, despite Jacopo da Verona only witnessing Ethiopians (*Jabes sive Jabeni*: a corruption of *Ḥabasha*) and Nubians outside of Jerusalem in Bethlehem in 1335 and Niccolò da Poggibonsi declaring their presence in Nazareth only in c.1345-50, there is no reason why Ethiopians could not have been seen earlier given their importance to Christianity.[41] Regardless, the witnessing of and interactions with Nubians and Ethiopians would have given European communities their own intimate knowledge of the Africans which would have been otherwise undocumented.

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[39] Lalibäla was said to have gone on both a spiritual and physical journey to Jeruslaem before the churches were constructed: *Vie de Lalibela*, ed. and trans. Perruchon, pp. 22-5, 37-40, 55-61 (text); 88-92, 103-6, 121-6 (trans.). See: E. van Donzel, 'Lālibalā and Jerusalem in the Twelfth Century', in *East and West I*, pp. 73-80; M. E. Heldman, 'Legends of Lālibalā: The Development of an Ethiopian Pilgrimage Site', *Anthropology and Aesthetics*, 27 (1995), pp. 25-38; E. van Donzel, 'Ethiopia's Lalibäla and the Fall of Jerusalem 1187', *Aethiopica*, 1 (1998), pp. 27-49. For the wider geo-cultural context of the churches, see: M. Gervers, 'The Mediterranean Context for the Medieval Rock-Cut churches of Ethiopia', in *Proceedings of the Eighth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies. University of Addis Ababa, 1984*, ed. T. Beyene, 2 vols. (Addis Ababa, 1988-9), pp. I:171-83.

[40] The disastrous loss of Jerusalem forced Europeans to re-evaluate their forms of pilgrimage with the introduction of a once more largely inaccessible Holy Land: C. Morris, *The Sepulchre of Christ and the Medieval West. From the Beginning to 1600* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 283-94.

[41] LP, Ch. 5, pp. 60-1; NP, Ch. 126, I:269.

Even the presence of Nubians in Jerusalem, despite Theodoric's first 1172 reference, poses problems. Jacopo da Verona explicitly stated how the Nubian chapel on Mount Calvary was often visited (*illam capellam sepe visitavi*) by *Nubiani*.[42] It is difficult to conclude whether later pilgrimage texts simply reflect on a presence which had always been there or if the perceived increased presence was actually the result of the 1333 negotiations to allow Christian sects to have places in the Holy Land. According to one contemporary pilgrim 'In my time the *Nubiani* did not have a place of their own, but the Sultan had a chapel specially built for them', suggesting that this permanent presence was recent.[43] Such a donation may have been for the appeasement of Christian Nubians following decades of Mamluk-supported Muslims being installed on the Nubian throne since 1286, though this then begs the question of why the Sutlan, who was in to his third decade of his third reign, would have cared when Nubia was in decline because of Mamluk actions. Moreover, an anonymous account of the Holy Land, written around c.1350 and most closely associated with the account by Philippus Brusserius Savonensis, actively added the fact that Nubians worshipped at Calvary despite Philippus not mentioning this.[44] This could be because of the increased presence in the author's time compared to Philippus', though Nubians would have still been present during Philippus' visit as noted by other earlier writers. If the events of 1333 proved to be as successful as would be suggested, it is possible that there were indeed simply more Nubians and Ethiopians in the Holy Land than there had been, though it is important to stress that there was *more* of them, particularly those who remained resident, rather than suggest a new presence

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[42] LP, Ch. 2, 32.

[43] *Ludolphi rectoris ecclesiae parochialis in Suchem, de itinere terre sanctae liber*, ed. F. Deycks (Tübingen, 1851), Ch. 37, 72.

[44] *Guide-Book to Palestine (circ. A.D. 1350)*, trans. J. H. Bernard (London, 1894), Ch. 43, 9.

altogether despite the majority of European references in our period appearing in the fourteenth century.[45]

The potential influence of Eastern groups, both direct European interaction with Nubians and Ethiopians as well as with other Eastern Christians and Muslims, cannot be underestimated given their interactions with the Crusaders, particularly in the Holy Land. Importantly, the ability to communicate would not have been restricted either, whether through Arabic or another language. More directly, it is also possible that some Europeans in the Crusader States would have either known some Old Nubian or Gəʿəz in order to make basic interactions or mediated through the use of more widely used languages, such as Coptic which was spoken in the Holy Land.[46] There is even a possible example of Ethiopian speakers using Latin in the Holy Land in the twelfth century as evidenced in one manuscript.[47] Evidence of direct communication between Nubians and Europeans can indeed be witnessed in one Old Nubian document. Two saints, Maria and Simeon, appear in the form of ⲥⲁⲛⲧⲁ ⲙⲁⲣⲓⲁ and ⲥⲁⲛⲧⲁ ⲥⲓⲙⲉⲟⲩⲟⲛ in one Old Nubian document from Qasr Ibrim.[48] ⲥⲁⲛⲧⲁ would appear to be an integrated form of the Italianised *santa* for 'saint', with the Old Nubian word for 'saint' normally being ⲁⲅⲓⲟⲥ or ⲛ̄ⲅⲓⲥⲥ seemingly portraying some European influence. With only one known example we cannot say for certain, but it does suggest some tentative evidence for the undocumented networks proposed here. Equally, the early

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[45] Cerulli, *Etiopi*, I:220; LP, Ch. 3, 39; NP, Ch. 32, pp. I:94-5. Men from '*Etiopia*' are later explicitly stated as worshipping in the chapel on Mount Calvary: Ch. 40, pp. I:116-7; *Ludolphi rectoris*, ed. Deycks, Ch. 38, 78; *The Three Kings of Cologne. An Early English Translation of the "Historia Trium Regum" By John of Hildesheim*, ed. C. Horstmann (London, 1886), Ch. 36, 263.

[46] For the use of Coptic specifically, see: C. Aslanov, 'Languages in Contact in the Latin East: Acre and Cyprus', *Crusades*, 1 (2002), pp. 155-81.

[47] Schall, 'Ein äthiopischer Transkriptionstext'.

[48] The Qasr Ibrim Archive at the British Museum, P.QI inv. 74.1.29/7A. The reference was first noted by Giovanni Ruffini, though the overall meaning of the document is yet to be understood: Ruffini, *Medieval Nubia*, pp. 262-3.

fourteenth-century pilgrim Symon Semeonis made note of two Italian dragomen in Egypt who were Jacobites, who would have been likely to have spoken in both Italian and Arabic, if not in other languages too.[49] It is possible that earlier Italians, or Latin speakers, also became Jacobites and who would then have shared the same churches as the Nubians in Egypt, thus encouraging such linguistic exchange.[50] Manuscripts have been found in Nubia in Arabic, Greek, Coptic, and Old Nubian – adding to some knowledge of Syriac – Nubia was a multilingual medieval community with the knowledge of numerous shared languages in the Holy Land.[51] Then, as today, limited words and phrases could also have been known by both Europeans and Africans, especially by those who experienced a high degree of exchange, such as traders or permanent residents at the Holy Sepulchre.

The existence of the Old Nubian document at Qasr Ibrim is perhaps unsurprising given that the most intimate interaction witnessed by Europeans occurred primarily in Egypt; though unfortunately such European references post-date the document by about 150 years. That said, as has been highlighted elsewhere, an absence in European texts does not necessarily mean an absence in interaction. Despite the description of the shared worship at al-Maṭariyya by Abū al-Makārim, according to Europeans Cairo only witnessed both Nubians and Ethiopians worshipping there in the fourteenth

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[49] *Itinerarium*, ed. and trans. Esposito, Ch. 79, pp. 96-9.

[50] On this earlier Italian presence in Egypt, albeit in a trading capacity, see: D. Jacoby, 'Les Italiens en Égypte aux XIIᵉ et XIIIᵉ siècles: du comptoir à la colonie?', in *Coloniser au Moyen Âge*, eds. M. Balard and A. Ducellier (Paris, 1995), pp. 76-89.

[51] M. Bechhaus-Gerst, 'Nubier, Beja, Griechen, Kopten und Araber in Dongola. Der Nordsudan als kosmopolitischer Raum im mittelalterlichen Jahrtausend', in *Transkulturelle Verflechtungen im mittelalterlichen Jahrtausend. Europa, Ostasien, Afrika*, eds. M. Borgolte and M. M. Tischler (Darmstadt, 2012), pp. 21-33. Additionally this discussion adds Syrians. Nubia had a rich and diverse multilingualism, too. See, most recently: Ochała, 'Multilingualism'.

century.[52] Most revealingly, not only did Nubians worship throughout Egypt but Niccolò da Poggibonsi also says that he actually celebrated mass to a congregation of *Nubbiani* at the Church of St. Martin between Cairo and Babylon, where he also held the body of St. Martin, a bishop of Alexandria, in his arms.[53] The language in which he celebrated the mass is not recorded, though presumably in Latin using a translator. Yet it was the Nubians' appearance elsewhere noted in texts which reveals more about their scattered presence. For example, Ludolph von Sudheim, further comments on *Nubiani* in Egypt, specifically at the monastery of St. Antony and St. Macarius on the Red Sea.[54] Ethiopians, too, also have a long history of being present at the monastery of St. Antony despite not being mentioned by earlier travellers, though this further leads to questions of both scale and of dating their original presence.[55]

Worshipping in centres close to the Red Sea also supports the possibility of the idea of Nubians or Ethiopians being present at Mount Sinai which is another area with limited textual references despite some versions of Ludolph actually stating that *Nubiani* were observed there.[56] Such presence would undoubtedly have resulted in contact with Europeans for whom Sinai was also a pilgrimage centre, further increasing the

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[52] NP, Ch. 177, II:64; Leonardo Frescobaldi, 'Viaggio in Terrasanta', in *Pellegrini Scrittori. Viaggiatori toscani del Trecento in Terrasanta*, eds. A. Lanza and M. Troncarelli (Florence, 1990), Ch. 77, pp. 182-3.

[53] NP, Ch. 187, II:82.

[54] *Ludolphi rectoris*, ed. Deycks, Ch. 34, 61.

[55] Gabra G., 'Perspectives on the Monastery of St. Antony: Medieval and Later Inhabitants and Visitors', in *Monastic Visions. Wall Paintings in the Monastery of St. Antony at the Red Sea*, ed. E. S. Bolman (London, 2002), pp. 176. The only known surviving Ethiopic graffiti at the monastery only date from the sixteenth century, though a twelfth- or thirteenth-century Ethiopian manuscript fragment has been found suggesting an early presence: S. H. Griffith, 'The Handwriting on the Wall: Graffiti in the Church of St. Antony', in *Monastic Visions*, ed. Bolman, pp. 189-90; M. El-Antony, J. Blid, and A. M. Butts, 'An Early Ethiopic Manuscript Fragment (Twelfth-Thirteenth Century) From the Monastery of St. Antony (Egypt)', *Aethiopica*, 19 (2016), pp. 27-51. There is no surviving comparable physical evidence for a Nubian presence other than Ludolph's reference.

[56] Ludolph von Sudheim, 'De itinere Terre Sancte', Descriptio Terrae Sanctae, Pars I Ch. 7, ed. Neumann, in AOrLat, II:346. This text does confuse '*Nubiani*', '*Indi*', and '*Ysyni*' at times though, for example such as at: Descriptio Tarrae Sanctae, Pars II Ch. 6, pp. 368-9.

likelihood of exchange.[57] How long these centres had a shared established presence before relatively late datable sources cannot be known, yet this later awareness suggests a possibility of numerous places of exchange far and wide and not just solely reliant on major religious centres such as Jerusalem, or trading centres such as Alexandria. Both Nubians and Ethiopians had a presence elsewhere in Egypt, though they were unrecorded by Europeans, such as in the Wadi al-Natrun.[58]

Significantly, there is possible evidence that Africans themselves even rose to prominent positions in Crusader society which may have further facilitated European knowledge accumulation. An otherwise unknown Guido of *Nubie* is listed as a witness to three separate letters in 1226.[59] The potential existence of a Nubian official is not necessarily unlikely and non-Latin Christians are known to have held office in the Crusader States.[60] Caution must be issued, however. Though the vast majority of references to Nubia do seem to refer to the kingdom, a few irregular references could suggest another origin for the witness. One twelfth-century text names a city called *Nubia* in Tunisia, for example.[61] Another example of a different use of the toponym *Nubia* appears in a letter exchange between Roger II of Sicily and Savona regarding North Africa in which *Nubia* appears in relation to Tripoli.[62] However, as Robert Lee Wolff and Harry Hazard have pointed out, 'this must be an error for Numidia' given

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[57] D. Jacoby, 'Christian Pilgrimage to Sinai Until the Late Fifteenth Century', in *Holy Space, Hallowed Ground. Icons from Sinai*, eds. R. S. Nelson and K. M. Collins (L.A., 2006), pp. 79-93.

[58] B. al-Suriany, 'Identification of the Monastery of the Nubians in Wadi al-Natrun', in *Christianity and Monasticism in Aswan and Nubia*, eds. G. Gabra and H. N. Takla (Cairo, 2013), pp. 257-64; H. G. Evelyn White, *The Monasteries of the Wādi ʾl Natrūn*, 3 vols. (New York, 1972), pp. II:366, 368.

[59] H. E. Mayer and J. Richard, *Die Urkunden der lateinischen Könige von Jerusalem*, 4 vols. (Hannover, 2010), no.652, III:1075, no.654, III:1092, no.657, III:1099. See also his appearance in a letter dated to 1243: no.697, III:1200. 'Nubie' also appears as 'Nubre', though no clearer explanation can be gained by this other name either.

[60] For example, see the discussion in: MacEvitt, *Crusades and the Christian World*, pp. 149-56.

[61] *Liber de Existencia Riveriarum*, in P. Gautier-Dalché, *Carte marine et portolan au XIIe siècle. Le Liber de Existencia Riveriarum et Forma Maris Nostri Mediterranei* (Rome, 1995), Ch. 4, 121.

[62] The exchange can be found in: G. Filippi, 'Patto di pace tra Ruggiero II normanno e la città di Savona', *Archivio storico per le province napoletane*, 14 (1889), pp. 750-7.

the location involved.[63] Moreover, Guido could simply have been from a small fief of Tripoli mentioned in a letter in 1163.[64] Another alternative suggestion is that Guido came from Bait Nuba, between Jaffa and Jerusalem. This seems unlikely, however, since its most common variations were Betenoble, Bet(t)enuble, Betenopolis, Bethnoble, Betinubilum, and Nobe, not Nubia or *Nubie*.[65] As nothing is really known of Guido or the fief of Nubia (or even Bait Nuba) we cannot say for certain. Given that no other example of 'Nubia' appear in other contemporary texts to this letter, its definition proves problematic. In truth, it is impossible to ascertain whether the toponym is reflective of the Sudan, though the lack of other similar sustained references to Nubia in other contexts allow for the possibility nonetheless.

As well as possible African officials such as Guido, as has been highlighted by Marilyn Heldman, separate to pilgrimage activity, there was an active international Ethiopian network of artisans in the Holy Land between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries.[66] Not only did African traders buy and sell goods, they also were active in their production. A range of Africans, not just pilgrims, would have been present in the Holy Land. Given the available evidence, a comparative non-pilgrim Nubian network has not yet been traced, though it should not necessarily be discounted. Moreover, though the existence of *fondacos* (or *funduqs*) – hostels and warehouses for travellers and traders – in the Holy Land is well-known, identifying which nationalities used them is difficult.[67] Surmising that such an undocumented network

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[63] HotC II:22n31.
[64] RRH, no.378, 99.
[65] Pringle, *Churches*, no.34, pp. I:102-3.
[66] M. E. Heldman, *The Marian Icons of the Painter Frē Ṣeyon. A Study in Fifteenth-Century Ethiopian Art, Patronage, and Spirituality* (Wiesbaden, 1994), pp. 139-62.
[67] O. R. Constable, '*Funduq*, *Fondaco*, and *Khān* in the Wake of Christian Commerce and Crusade', in *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, eds. A. E. Laiou and R. P. Mottahedeh (Washington D.C., 2001), pp. 145-56; idem, *Housing the Stranger in the Mediterranean World. Lodging, Trade, and Travel in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2009).

existed, which included Nubians and Ethiopians, would suggest that they also accessed the commercial and hospitable buildings available to them alongside Europeans. What may be more surprising than the existence of possible African nobles such as Guido is that exchanges between the groups are documented throughout the Mediterranean, emphasising that knowledge accumulation had multiple regional sources; though quantifiable evidence of interaction outside of the Holy Land is limited.

A Note on Nubians and Ethiopians in Europe

Whilst the issue of slavery has been neglected in this thesis due to the uncertain terms in documents, such as *negri*, and the difficulty in tracing slave origins, the existence of Nubian and Ethiopian slaves in Europe may also have contributed to the dissemination of knowledge regarding their homelands alongside the undocumented networks of the East.[68] Nonetheless, Nubians appear to be present in Europe during this period, thus suggesting that a degree of undocumented networks and communal knowledge may have been present in areas distant from the Holy Land, too.

The witnessing of the Nubian king in Constantinople in 1203 and his desired destinations, as recorded by Robert of Clari, is a good indication of such increasing contacts and a Nubian presence. Encountered by the Fourth Crusaders, he was said to have been on pilgrimage to the city, via Jerusalem, and had intended to visit Rome

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[68] G. Christ, 'Differentiated Legality: Venetian Slave Trade in Alexandria', in *Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean (c. 1000–1500 CE)*, eds. R. Amitai and C. Cluse (Turnhout, 2018), pp. 305-6. On the identification of slave origins – primarily known from Arabic sources – one example of a Nubian slave can be identified as such; a girl called Mubāraka bought from Alexandria in 1419: Ibid., pp. 305, 310; F. Bauden, 'L'achat d'esclaves et la rédemption des captifs à Alexandrie d'après deux documents arabes d'époque mamelouke conservés aux Archives de l'État à Venise (ASVe)', in *Regards croisés sur le Moyen Âge. Mélanges à la mémoire de Louis Pouzet s.j. (1928-2002)*, eds. A.-M. Eddé and E. Gannagé (Beirut, 2005) pp. 271-304.

and Santiago de Compostela before returning to Jerusalem, where he hoped to die.[69]

Though no evidence can suggest any truth in a desire to travel to Rome, the *Codex Calixtinus* (c.1138-45) lists *Nubiani* and *Ethiopi* amongst 73 different groups of Christians, as well as naming Jews and other many innumerable peoples (*et cetere gentes innumerabiles*), who undertook pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela.[70] On the face of it some caution should be used as it should be noted that elsewhere in the *Codex* the *Nubianos*, closely ressembling the African ethnonym, are mentioned alongside the *Scotos* and *Cornubianos* as the three tribes which Julius Caesar sent to Spain to end a revolt.[71] In the list of 73 Christian groups the *Nubiani* are listed alongside neither the British tribes nor African peoples to suggest a favourable connection to either; though the rhetoric underlying the list would be problematic to suggest any relationship between the groups anyway.

A positive identification with African Nubians, however, can be obtained. Nubians (*Nūbah*, نوبه), for instance, are noted amongst other distant Christians who were present at Santiago during al-Manṣūr's campaign to it in 997 by the Muslim chronicler Ibn ʿIdhāri al-Marrakuši in his *Kitāb al-Bayān al-Mughrib* in 1312.[72] Added to the fact that two of the previous four Nubian kings had also retired to monasteries following

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[69] Robert of Clari, *La Conquête de Constantinople*, ed. and trans. J. Dufournet (Paris, 2004), Ch. 54, 130. For the debate on the event, see: B. Rostkowska, 'The Visit of a Nubian King to Constantinople in AD. 1203', in *New Discoveries in Nubia. Proceedings of the Colloquium on Nubian Studies, The Hague, 1979*, ed. P. van Moorsel (Leiden, 1982), pp. 113-6; B. Hendrickx, 'Un roi Africain à Constantinople en 1203', *Byzantina*, 13.2 (1985), pp. 893-8; G. Fiaccadori, 'Un re di Nubia a Constantinopoli nel 1203', *Scrinium*, 1.1 (2005), pp. 43-9.

[70] *Liber Sancti Jacobi. Codex Calixtinus*, ed. W. M. Whitehill, vol. 1 (Santiago de Compostela, 1944), Book I Ch. 17, pp. 148-9.

[71] Ibid., Book IV Ch. 7, 359.

[72] Ibn ʿIdhārī al-Marrākushī, *Kitāb al-bayān al-mughrib fi akhbār al-Andalus wa-al-Maghrib*, eds. G. S. Colin and É. Lévi-Provençal, 2 vols. (Beirut, 1948-51), II:296 (text); Ibn ʿIdhārī al-Marrākushī, *Histoire de l'Afrique et de l'Espagne*, trans. E. Fagnan, 2 vols. (Algiers, 1901-4), II:494 (trans.).

their reign it adds to the validity of the travel of the king.[73] Some Nubian presence in Europe through pilgrimage could, or perhaps should, be expected.

In comparison, some direct evidence is currently known for Ethiopians being present in mainland Europe in a religious capacity during the fourteenth century, though further pilgrimage to certain sites might be expected if Franciscan and Dominican missionaries acted as guides.[74] The first established religious Ethiopian presence in Rome is traditionally seen with the donation of the Church of Santo Stefano to the Ethiopian community by Pope Sixtus IV in the late fifteenth century.[75] However, according to Francesco Maria Torrigio in 1635, the learned canon and scholar of Christian archaeology, Pope Alexander III was said to have first housed *Ethiopi* at Santo Stefano (whom were equated with Abyssinians in his time) in the sixth year of his pontificate, 1165-6.[76] Nothing more can be said about the matter and the lack of sources would suggest that Francesco either had access to now lost documents or was fabricating his own evidence, yet the later date of Torrigio's text would suggest that he did indeed mean Ethiopians proper. The same Alexander is most known in the Ethiopian context for sending a letter in the 'King of the Indies' in 1177 who had asked permission to build a church in Rome.[77] Attributing authorship to the letter is contentious, but it is noteworthy here because of the corroboratory date with Torrigio, further adding confusion to any permanent Ethiopian presence in Rome in the twelfth century. There had been an earlier appearance of 'Indians' in Cologne who could

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[73] King Solomon, retired to the convent of St. Onophrios before being invited by the caliph to Cairo in 1079, followed by Giorgios IV, who retired to the Wādī al-Natrūn complex in 1158. See separately: Monneret de Villard, *Storia della Nubia*, pp. 128-9 and V. van Gerven Oei, 'The Old Nubian Memorial for King George', in *Nubian Voices. Studies in Nubian Christian Civilization*, eds. A. Łajtar and J. van der Vliet (Warsaw, 2011), pp. 225-62.
[74] Lefevre, 'Presenze etiopiche', 20.
[75] On the church, see most recently: D. V. Proverbio, 'Santo Stefano degli Abissini. Una breve rivisitazione', *La parola del passato: Rivista di studi antichi*, 66 (2011), pp. 50-68.
[76] Francesco Maria Torrigio, *Le sacre Grotte vaticane* (Rome, 1635), 125.
[77] *Lettere*, ed. Raineri, 26.

potentially be linked to Ethiopia, but due to the text's vague use of 'India' it will be ignored here.[78]

It is only with the onset of the fifteenth century that an Ethiopian presence in Europe can be established with certainty via documentation, specifically after 1402. Contacts had been so frequent by the end of the fourteenth century that in a letter describing an Ethiopian delegation in Aquileia in 1404, an embassy containing a translator who spoke 17 languages arrived who stated that the embassy had come because the previous embassy returned without desired relics.[79] With the decline of Nubia, the fifteenth century witnessed the explosion in contacts between Europe and Ethiopia which have been referred to as the 'birth' of such relations.[80] Most importantly, undocumented knowledge networks may not have been limited to a particular place or region in order to facilitate the development of European knowledge regarding Nubians and Ethiopians.

Elsewhere, contacts also occurred on fourteenth-century Cyprus. Famagusta, in particular, was noted for its cross-cultural interactions more generally.[81] Moreover, the appearance of Africans on Cyprus has already been noted by others, yet the origins of these appearances are unknown.[82] It is clear, though, that, despite writings noting their

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[78] Hamilton, 'Three Kings of Cologne'.

[79] 'Letter from Niccolò di Gagliano to Corrado Bojani, dated 5th August 1404', in V. Lazzarini, 'Un'ambasciata etiopica in Italia nel 1404', *Atti del Reale Instituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti*, 83, 1923-4 (1924), pp. 845-6.

[80] Salvadore, *African Prester John*.

[81] L. Balletto, 'Ethnic Groups, Cross-Social and Cross-Cultural Contacts on Fifteenth-Century Cyprus', in *Intercultural Contacts in the Medieval Mediterranean. Studies in Honour of David Jacoby*, ed. B. Arbel (London, 1996), pp. 35-48. However, Balletto does not discuss the presence of Africans. For how this affected church relations on Cyprus, see: N. Coureas, 'One Faith But Several Rites: The Application of Canon 9 of Lateran IV on Cyprus (1215-1570) and the Wider Mediterranean Context', in *Sacrum w Mieście. Średniowiecze i Wczesna Epoka Nowożytna. Wymiar Religijny, Kulturalny i Społeczny*, eds. D. Quirini-Popławska and Ł. Burkiewicz (Krakow, 2016), pp. 95-109.

[82] Cerulli, *Etiopi*, pp. I:31-7, 43, 94, 155-7; G. Grivaud, 'Les minorités orientales à Chypre (époques médiévale et moderne)', in *Chypre et la Méditerranée orientale. Formations identitaires. Perspectives*

existence only appearing in the second half of the fourteenth century, they likely would have been on the island some time before then, even if we cannot say for precisely how long.[83] Cyprus, with its close relations to the Holy Land, was integrated into the networks required for such movement.[84] In fact, we have one detailed account of a prominent Ethiopian monk who travelled to Cyprus during his exile from Ethiopia in the 1330s and 1340s, though his travels remain absent in Western sources.[85] Éwosṭatéwos' exile from Ethiopia in c.1330 amidst a fear of his growing influence is recorded in his *Gadl*. Although the deeds mentioned are clearly meant to praise the character of Éwosṭatéwos, he appears to have had a wider influence than solely in Ethiopia and was also accompanied by other monks, notably Marqorēwos. According to Marqorēwos' *Gadl*, Marqorēwos went to the Holy Land and Armenia with Éwosṭatéwos but returned to Ethiopia whilst Éwosṭatéwos stayed in, and ultimately died in, Armenia.[86] Specifically here, the story of Éwosṭatéwos is most important for reflecting upon the international presence of Ethiopians in the period. The travels of Éwosṭatéwos and Marqorēwos further highlight the potential for distant

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historiques et enjeux contemporains. Actes du colloque tenu à Lyon, 1997, eds. Y. Ioannou, F. Metral, and M. Yon (Lyon, 2000), 50; C. Schabel, 'Religion', in *Cyprus. Society and Culture 1191–1374*, eds. A. Nicolaou-Konnari and C. Schabel (Leiden, 2005), 163; N. Coureas, *The Latin Church in Cyprus, 1313-1378* (Nicosia, 2010), 486; K. S. Parker, 'Peter I de Lusignan, the Crusade of 1365, and the Oriental Christians of Cyprus and the Mamluk Sultanate', in *Medieval Cyprus. A Place of Cultural Encounter*, eds. S. Rogge and M. Grünbart (Münster, 2015), 58.

[83] Ethiopians on Cyprus became a feature in sixteenth-century Ethiopic texts: E. Cerulli, 'Two Ethiopian Tales on the Christians of Cyprus', JES, 5.1 (1967), pp. 1-8.

[84] S. A. Epstein, *Purity Lost. Transgressing Boundaries in the Eastern Mediterranean, 1000-1400* (Baltimore, 2007), pp. 80-93.

[85] 'Vita et miracula Eustathii', in *Monumenta Aethiopiae Hagiologica*, ed. B. Turaiev, 3 vols. (Leipzig, 1902-5), pp. III:f.45-6; *Saints fondateurs du christianisme éthiopien. Frumentius, Garimā, Takla Hāymānot, Ēwosṭātēwos*, trans. G. Colin with C. J. Robin and M.-L. Derat (Paris, 2017), pp. 151-2. For background, see: G. Fiaccadori, 'Etiopia, Cipro e Armenia: la "Vita" di 'Ēwosṭātēwos, santo abissino del secolo XIV', in *Corso di Cultura sull'arte Ravennate e Bizantina XXXII. Seminario internazionale di studi su "Cipro e il Mediterraneo orientale", Ravenna, 23 - 30 marzo 1985* (Ravenna, 1985), pp. 73-8. On Éwosṭatéwos and his influence, see: Tadesse, *Church and State*, pp. 206-19.

[86] *Acta Marqorēwos*, ed. and Latin trans. C. Conti Rossini, Versio and Textus (Leuven, 1904), pp. Textus: 31 (text), Versio: 43 (Latin trans.); 'Vita et miracula Eustathii', *Monumenta Aethiopiae Hagiologica*, ed. Turaiev, pp. III:f.54-58; *Saints fondateurs*, trans. Colin with Robin and Derat, pp. 211-5.

contacts even outside of the Holy Land and Egypt; though the scale of such may never be quantifiable.

The only contemporary European reference to both Ethiopians and Nubians being on Cyprus together was written by Philippe de Mézières in his *Life of St. Peter Thomas*, written between 1365-1405. It portrays a sense of ecumenicalism in Famagusta, including the Africans, whilst describing the events following the pestilence in Famagusta during the year 1361-2. *Nubiani* and *Aethiopiani*, amongst other Eastern groups along with Jews and Muslims, were said to have been brought to tears, despite not understanding Peter's sermon, as was his zealous delivery of his speech.[87] The appearance of Ethiopians and Nubians not only portrays the society of Cyprus, but the text, despite its rhetoric, also highlights the importance of them in Crusader mentality. Two aspects of the rhetoric should be noted here. Firstly, the speech that makes them all weep, despite the Africans seemingly being unable to understand it, fits within a broader theme of spectacle on the island during the century.[88] Philippe's text was also designed to present Peter Thomas, the papal legate, in as 'universalist' a role as possible since Peter's reason for being on the island was to persuade Peter I of Cyprus to launch a new Crusade against Egypt. Though the rhetoric of the text suggests describing both Ethiopians and Nubians was a tool used in the broader descriptions of Latin prestige and influence, it more importantly notes their presence; a presence on an island central to vast Eastern Mediterranean networks which highlights further potential for their role in undocumented networks.

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[87] Philippe de Mézières, *The Life of Saint Peter Thomas*, ed. J. Smet (Rome, 1954), Book I Ch. 3, pp. 99-100.
[88] T. Devaney, 'Spectacle, Community and Holy Way in Fourteenth-Century Cyprus', *Medieval Encounters*, 19 (2013), pp. 300-41.

European Communal Knowledge of Africans

Whilst the notion of undocumented networks produced largely untraceable sources of knowledge, undocumented communal knowledge can be said to have been the framework for the common knowledge of Europeans or decendents of Europeans who had resided in the Holy Land for any length of time, who would have developed their own personal knowledge particularly in relation to their potential interactions with Nubians and Ethiopians. This communal knowledge also influenced European accumulation of knowledge, which, unlike the majority of undocumented networks, can be highlighted through details noted by European pilgrims with their encountering of Africans, specifically following the turn of the thirteenth century.

European pilgrimage to the Holy Land thrived during the period of the Crusades, with routes forever evolving and expanding.[89] Between 1100 and 1500, pilgrims increasingly documented their inquisitive nature to learn more about the lands and peoples they were visiting.[90] Pilgrims are the best indicators of the influence of the undocumented knowledge networks as they heavily relied on local guides. Their importance here is that they acknowledge the presence of and detail the European knowledge of Nubians and Ethiopians in the Holy Land and Egypt much more than comparable other authors, such as chroniclers. Whilst it is not the purpose here to discuss the manuscript dissemination of pilgrim itineraries, primarily because many

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[89] A. Davids, 'Routes of Pilgrimage', in *East and West I*, pp. 81-102; D. Jacoby, 'Evolving Routes of Western Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Eleventh to Fifteenth Century. An Overview', in *Unterwegs im Namen der Religion II/On the Road in the Name of Religion II. Wege und Ziele in vergleichender Perspektive – das mittelalterliche Europa und Asien/Ways and Destinations in Comparative Perspective – Medieval Europe and Asia*, eds. K. Herbers and H. C. Lehner (Stuttgart, 2016), pp. 75-97.

[90] At least 526 accounts have survived for this period, with others undoubtedly becoming lost through time, but it would be impossible to estimate the amount of pilgrims who did not record their travels in addition to these texts.

do not survive in great numbers, such as the single manuscript of Symon Semeonis,[91] the aim here is to identify what Europeans present in the East would have witnessed, and, in turn, what would have been freely experienced, and known, through interaction and travel. In this instance, this phenomenon may be best called undocumented communal knowledge which accompanied undocumented networks.

As a result of changing technique and opportunity, later pilgrims made a conscious decision to elaborate in their own accounts more than previous writers had done. Even with the loss of the Holy Land, contacts were not impeded and knowledge regarding the Holy Land was continually relayed back to Europe at the turn of the fourteenth century.[92] During this period, knowledge diversified yet further. As a consequence of the loss of Jerusalem in 1187, pilgrims increasingly travelled further afield and added diversity into their travels rather than focusing solely on Jerusalem, with many opting to travel to Egypt.[93] Pilgrims to Egypt tended to give more intimate accounts of their experience with Nubians and Ethiopians than those who describe their encounters which took place in the Holy Land. The fourteenth century provides the most detailed accounts, undoubtedly aided by the input of local guides, as earlier suggested by the example of Symon Semeonis, and increased contacts.

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[91] The surviving manuscript is MS 407 held at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge: *Itinerarium*, ed. and trans. Esposito, pp. 1-3.

[92] B. J. Cook, *The Transmission of Knowledge About the Holy Land Through Europe 1271-1314*, 2 vols. (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Manchester University, 1985). On the inclusion of specific groups in later travel guides, see: M. Campopiano, 'Islam, Jews and Eastern Christianity in Late Medieval Pilgrims' Guidebooks: Some Examples from the Franciscan Convent of Mount Sion', *Al-Masāq*, 24.1 (2012), pp. 75-89.

[93] A. Wolff, *How Many Miles to Babylon? Travels and Adventures to Egypt and Beyond, 1300-1640* (Liverpool, 2003). Though pilgrimage to Jerusalem remained important: N. Chareyon, *Pilgrims to Jerusalem in the Middle Ages*, trans. W. D. Wilson (New York, 2005). The shift in focus to Egypt, beginning in the thirteenth century, has been recently argued to be as an outcome of the loss of Jerusalem in 1187 and subsequent lack of access to Holy Land sites which resulted in more diverse pilgrimage practices: E. J. Mylod, *Latin Christian Pilgrimage in the Holy Land, 1187-1291* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Leeds, 2013); Booth, *Thietmar*, pp. 165-79. Regarding Africans, for the period discussed here, see: von Den Brincken, *Nationes*, pp. 253-62 for Nubia, and pp. 272- 87 for Ethiopia. See also: Baum, *Äthiopien und der Westen*, pp. 133-42, 158-74.

Much of this newly documented knowledge could be developed through simply witnessing Africans, which added to further knowledge gathered through physical interaction. For example, specific details regarding Nubians and Ethiopians were increasingly noticed but also, more importantly, written about. Both Nubians and Ethiopians were said to have been 'baptised by fire', with Europeans noting a branded cross on their forehead throughout the period.[94] Such knowledge could be developed through simple observation of the branded Africans and was available to any residents, whilst not necessarily requiring direct interaction. Another detail to be noted were the three perceived errors of the religious practices of the Nubians; though these did not remain consistent. For example, Oliver von Paderborn stated that these errors were the act of circumcision, the way they made the sign of the cross with one finger signifying the one nature of Christ, and the branding of the cross on their forehead; Marino Sanudo, on the other hand, lists their act of circumcision, the way they made the sacrament of confession, and the act of their branding of a cross.[95] Both forms of

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[94] On Nubian branding: Jacques de Vitry, *Historia Orientalis*, ed. and trans. J. Donnadieu (Turnhout, 2008), Ch. 76, 308; Robert of Clari, *La Conquête de Constantinople*, ed. and trans. Dufournet, Ch. 54, 130; Oliver of Paderborn, 'Historia Damiatini', in *Die Schriften des Kölner Domscholasters, späteren Bischofs von Paderborn und Kardinal Bischofs von S. Sabina Oliverus*, ed. H. Hoogeweg (Tübingen, 1894), Ch. 62, 264; Benoit d'Alignan, 'Tractatus super erroribus quos citra et ultra mare invenimus', BnF Lat. 4224, f.399v; *Itinerarium*, ed. and trans. Esposito, Chs. 71-2, pp. 90, 92. On Ethiopian branding: Koppitz, 'Magistri Thietmari Peregrenatio', Ch. 49, 170; Polo, Ch. 193, 435; 'Letter from Candido de Bona to Corrado Bojani, dated 5th August 1404', in Lazzarini, 'Un'ambasciata etiopica', 842. On the importance of the branding of the cross in Ethiopia, see: S. Chojnacki, with C. Gossage, *Ethiopian Crosses. A Cultural History and Chronology* (Milan, 2006), pp. 58-9, with photos of modern examples (figs. 19 and 20) on pp. ix-x. Similarly, Leonardo Frescobaldi lists the varying branding practices of Eastern Christians in the latter half of the fourteenth century, including Nubians and Ethiopians, though he does not specifically identify which practice belongs to which group: Leonardo Frescobaldi, 'Viaggio in Terrasanta', in *Pellegrini Scrittori*, eds. Lanza and Troncarelli, Ch. 77, pp. 182-3.

[95] Oliver of Paderborn, 'Historia Damiatini', ed. Hoogeweg, Ch. 62, 264; Oliver of Paderborn, 'The Capture of Damietta', trans. J. J. Gavigan, in *Christian Society and the Crusades, 1198-1229*, ed. E. Peters (Philadelphia, 1971), pp. 118-9; Marino Sanudo Torsello, *Liber secretorum fidelium crucis super terrae sanctae (1611)*, ed. J. Bongars (Jerusalem, 1972), Book III Part VIII Ch. 4, pp. 184-6; Marino Sanudo Torsello, *The Book of the Secrets of the Faithful of the Cross. Liber Secretorum Fidelium Crucis*, trans. P Lock (Farnham, 2011), pp. 293-5. Sanudo does not explain the error of the sacrament, but it would seem to be similar to other Jacobites where they practiced direct confession to God whilst

knowledge accumulation, that of witnessing and physical interaction, were central to the development of European knowledge regarding the African kingdoms.

Fundamentally, the African's Christianity would have been observed by Europeans, with them soon becoming listed amongst the Christian groups or '*ordo*'s of the Holy Land.[96] Additionally, the knowledge of their presence also filtered into other media, with the Ebstorf *mappaemundi* (thirteenth century), for example, being noted by Marcia Kupfer for the position of the Nubians in line with Ebstorf and Jerusalem, which thus reflected the European acknowledgement of Nubia's shared Christianity.[97] Both resident and visiting Christian Africans frequented the Holy Land. Towards the end of the thirteenth century, Burchard of Mount Sion, a German Dominican resident at the priory in Acre, expressed how he could not say how many monks from 'Ethiopia' and 'Nubia' there were, stating that there was an infinite multitude (*infinita multitudo*) of *Nubiani* and *Ethiopes* amongst other Eastern Christian groups who all had their own patriarchs, but who say that they would be willing to become subject to Rome.[98] Whilst excessive numbers would appear exaggerated, Burchard gives the impression that numerous Christian Nubians and 'Ethiopians' were present in the

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burning incense. Also see: LP, Ch. 2, pp. 32-3. Similar claims are restated later : Ch. 5, pp. 59-60. Also: NP, Ch. 257, pp. II:210-1.

[96] The first writer to specifically list '*Nubianorum*' (as the seventh *ordo*) amongst the eight '*ordo*'s in Jerusalem was Alberic of Trois-Fontaines (c.1241): Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, 'Chronica', in MGH SS XXIII, Anno 1234, 935. The eighth '*ordo*' was also 'all that multitude of Christians which is subject to Prester John', though it is an unclear whether this refered to Ethiopians.

[97] M. Kupfer, 'Reflections in the Ebstorf Map: Cartography, Theology and *dilectio speculationis*', in *Mapping Medieval Geographies. Geographical Encounters in the Latin West and Beyond, 300-1600*, ed. K. D. Lilley (Cambridge, 2013), pp. 100-26. For the reference to Nubia see pp. 115-6n.43. More generally, see: J. Jaynes, *Christianity Beyond Christendom. The Global Christian Experience on Medieval Mappaemundi and Early Modern World Maps* (Wiesbaden, 2017).

[98] Burchard of Mount Sion, 'Descriptio Terrae Sanctae', in *Peregrinatores medii aevi quatuor. Burchardus de Monte Sion, Ricoldus de Monte Crucis, Odoricus de Foro Julii, Wibrandus de Oldenborg. Quorum duos nunc primum edidit, duos ad fidem librorum manuscriptorum*, ed. J. C. M. Laurent (Leipzig, 1873), Prologus, 20, Book XIII Chs. 5-8, pp. 89-90; Burchard of Mount Sion, 'Description of the Holy Land (1274-85)', in *Pilgrimage to Jerusalem*, trans. Pringle, pp. 242, 315-7.

Holy Land, both as visitors and permanent inhabitants who, for our purposes, would have been readily witnessed by any European whether they documented it or not.

Most importantly, these later documentations by pilgrims often included additional intimate details to accompany the otherwise plain statement of whether Nubians or Ethiopians could be found at a certain site. Significantly the thirteenth century also marked the beginnings of the western policy of ecumenicalism with the Eastern Churches, possibly instigatng the increased documenting of other Christian groups which has been mistakenly understood as greater awareness of others, ignoring earlier interactions.[99] Whilst the presence of Africans arguably likely pre-dated this European acknowledgement, pilgrims began to note knowledge which can be presumed to have been known by Europeans resident in the East, albeit to varying degrees, who may have interacted directly or indirectly with Nubians and Ethiopians and learnt similar facts. Moreover, the details described by later writers would surely also have been known by earlier generations of pilgrims amongst other undocumented 'communal knowledge', further emphasising that the true extent of knowledge regarding the Africans cannot be quantified.

How far was the information found in itineraries common – or communal – knowledge? Such understanding could have stretched to possible knowledge or at least awareness of languages, too. Niccolò da Poggibonsi, for example, provides a brief notice on the 'Ethiopian' language, which was relatable to both Hebrew and Arabic. If so, it would be the earliest mentioning of the language by a European. Though he did not know it himself, his interpreter could apparently recognise it:

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[99] Hamilton, *The Latin Church*, pp. 332-60.

[Niccolò asked his interpreter about some voices from olive trees] And he replied that, of who he understood, those in one olive tree shouted in the Arabic language, and those in the other in the *lingua etiopica*; and I can interpret the Hebrew and Saracen languages. This is the truth and what they were saying were good words, and the many people who were around all were singing loudly, each in his own tongue.[100]

This is the first known reference to Ethiopians speaking their own Semitic Ethiopic language.[101] The acknowledgement of the language highlights the networks in which Niccolò was operating, particularly emphasising the knowledge that local guides could disseminate. As a Franciscan who was not necessarily known for adopting local language and customs, Niccolò's reference also begs the questions about the social knowledge of other orders. For instance, although the Ethiopic language was not studied by European academics until the sixteenth century, it could be presumed that some Dominicans may have learnt it for missionary activity, considering that the General Chapter of 1236 decreed that friars must learn the local language of their preaching area.[102] It should be expected that limited language exchange occurred in the Holy Land in order to conduct daily business; whether in Arabic, Latin, French,

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[100] NP, Ch. 36, pp. I:107-8.

[101] Albeit tentative, this is on the basis that the understanding of hearing Nubian should be expected to have been written as '*lingua nubica*' following Poggibonsi's style and separation of ethnonyms.

[102] *Acta capitulorum generalium Ordinis Praedicatorum*, ed. B. M. Reichert, vol. 1 (Rome, 1898), 9. On early academic study, see: R. Smitskamp, *Philologia Orientalis. A Description of Books Illustrating the Study and Printing of Oriental Languages in 16th- and 17th-Century Europe* (Leiden, 1992). Yet, this was despite earlier Papal interest in Eastern translations Ethiopic was seemingly ignored: P. Chiesa, 'Traduzioni e traduttori a Roma nell'alto medioevo', in *Roma fra Oriente e Occidente, 19-24 aprile 2001*, 2 vols. (Spoleto, 2002), pp. I:455-92. Additionally, Ethiopic was later confused for Chaldean: H. F. Wijnman, *An Outline of the Development of Ethiopian Typography in Europe* (Leiden, 1960); M. H. Goshen-Gottstein, 'Ethiopic-Chaldean and the Beginnings of Comparative Semitics in Renaissance Times', in *Atti del secondo congresso internazionale di linguistica camito-semitica. Firenze, 16 –19 aprile, 1974*, ed. P. Fronzaroli (Florence, 1978), pp. 149-50; S. Kelly, 'The Curious Case of Ethiopic Chaldean: Fraud, Philology, and Cultural (Mis)Understanding in European Conceptions of Ethiopia', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 68 (2015), pp. 1227-64.

Italian, Gəʿəz, Old Nubian, Coptic, Hebrew, or Syriac. Monolingualism should be considered a rarity rather than the rule.[103] Such multilingualism, as has been noted, does indeed appear to have occurred as evidenced by the appearance of Italian in a twelfth-century Old Nubian text and the possible use of Latin by a twelfth-century Ethiopian; not to mention the untraceable use of any other language for communication.[104]

Academic European scholarship of Eastern languages did not occur during the Crusading era, but, as evidenced by earlier Arabic-Gəʿəz works, languages do not have to be studied in an intellectual setting to be understood. The diplomatic contacts attributed to the intellectual understanding of Eastern languages were not as numerous in the previous centuries, but other contacts did exist, notably those of traders, just without the manuscript collections to show for it.[105] Even though the first published Gəʿəz work in Europe only appeared in 1513, with the first Ethiopic grammar being produced in 1552, the first Arabic-Gəʿəz works were written in the late fourteenth century in c.1374-5.[106] Ethiopian languages, and we can also add to this Nubian, would have been known to the ears of some Europeans in the Holy Land even if none mention it in their accounts, with the first European depictions of the Ethiopian and Nubian (*Nubien* – though actually depicts Coptic) alphabets only dating to the late

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[103] See above: pp. 10-1n19.

[104] See above: pp. 115-6.

[105] A. Hamilton, 'Eastern Churches and Western Scholarship', in *Rome Reborn. The Vatican Library and Renaissance Culture*, ed. A. Grafton (Washington D.C., 1993), pp. 225-49.

[106] M. Marisco and G. R. Smith, *The Manuscript of al-Malik al Afḍal. A Medieval Arabic Anthology from the Yemen* (Warminster, 1998); M. Bulakh and L. Kogan, *The Arabic-Ethiopic Glossary by al-Malik al-Afḍal. An Annotated Edition with a Linguistic Introduction and Lexical Indices* (Leiden, 2017). A discussion of the Ethiopian alphabet also briefly appears in the work of al-Maqrīzī (c.1435-6): *Macrizi Historiae regum islamiticorum in Abyssinia*, ed. and Latin trans. T. F. Rinck (Leiden, 1790), 14 (text); Al-Maqrīzī, *The Book of the True Knowledge of the History of the Moslem Kings in Abyssinia. Translated from the Latin Version of F. T. Rinck (1790)*, trans. G. W. B. Huntingford (1955), SOAS Library PP MS 17/05/16, 11 (trans.). The sixteenth-century works in Europe noted are Johannes Potken and Thomas Wäldä Samu'el, *Psalterium Aethiopicum* (Rome, 1513) and Mariano Vittori, *Chaldeae seu Aethiopicae Linguae Institutiones* (Rome, 1552).

fifteenth century (Figs. 2 and 3). There was much that was acknowledged or known by

Europeans that remained unrecorded.
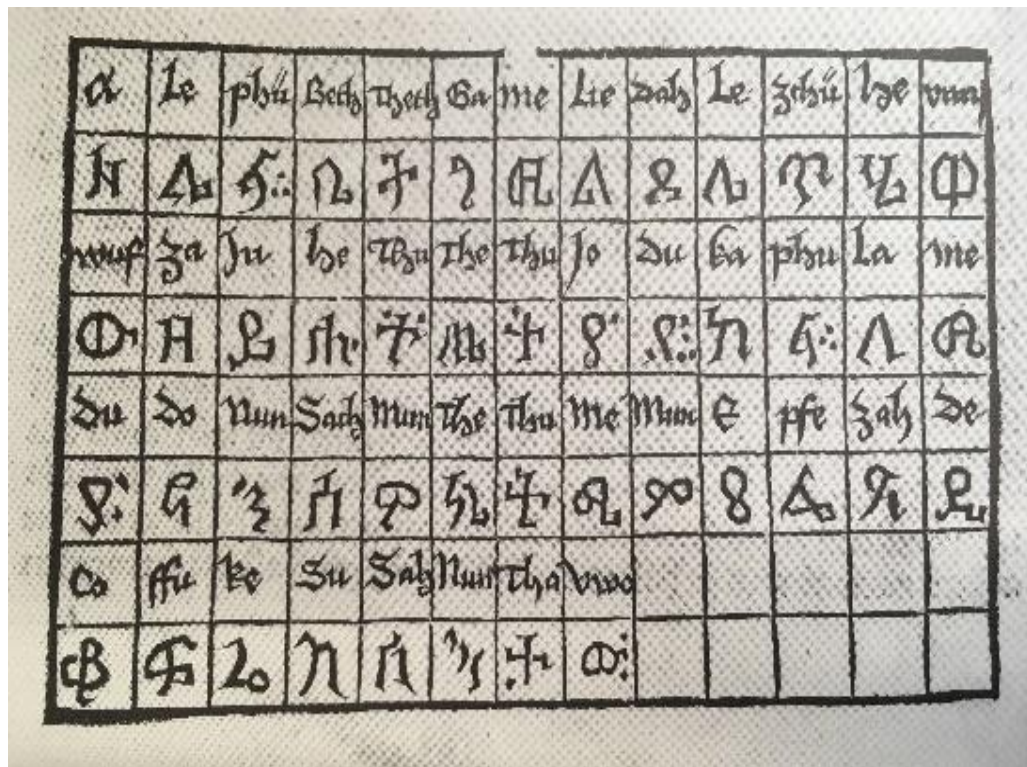
Fig. 2. Depiction of the Ethiopic alphabet by Bernhard von Breydenbach (1486). Taken from: Bernhard von Breydenbach, *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam. Eine Pilgerrreise ins Heilige Land. Frühneuhochdeutscher Text und Übersetzung*, ed. and trans. I. Mozer (Berlin, 2010), fig. 20

Fig. 3. Depiction of the Nubian alphabet by Arnold von Harff (1499). Taken from: *Die Pilgerfahrt des Ritters Arnold von Harff von Cöln durch Italien, Syrien, Aegypten, Arabien, Aethiopien, Nubien, Palästina, due Türkei, Frankreich und Spanien, wie er sie in den Jahren 1496 bis 1499*, ed. E. von Groote (Cologne, 1860), 152.

For example, Ludolph von Sudheim, a German priest who visited the Holy Land in 1350 and who wrote his *De Terra sancta et itinere Iherosolomitano,* made a particular note of the Nubian space within the Holy Sepulchre, unrecorded by other contemporary writers, though most likely known by other witnesses. Ludolph, similarly to comments by others, places the Nubian place of worship at Calvary, yet he further states that the very same place held the tombs of Godfrey of Bouillon and King Baldwin I.[107] The importance of these tombs would suggest that the Nubians would have been aware of the significance of their space to the Crusaders and were likely informed about the particular legacy of Baldwin as the first King of Jerusalem. It would be unlikely that either through their own intrigue or through the desire of the Crusaders attempting to hold on to their increasingly dwindling legacy of the city that Nubians would have been uninformed about elements of Crusader State history.

The presence of Nubians and Ethiopians throughout the Holy Land and in other various arenas enabled interactions between themselves and Europeans which developed European knowledge about the Africans greatly, both through actual interactions and mere witnessing. Whilst very few direct references in twelfth-century European texts can be identified to attest to the influence of Eastern groups in epistemological development, similarly to greater awareness of the Red Sea, it is possible that numerous undocumented networks in the East greatly contributed to European understanding of Nubians and Ethiopians, too. This chapter has highlighted these potential networks of knowledge amongst communities living in close proximity in the Holy Land. It may have taken a little while for Europeans to note what they knew of Nubians and Ethiopians in their works, but sources suggest that they were

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[107] Ludolph von Sudheim, 'De itinere Terre Sancte', Descriptio Terrae Sanctae, Pars I Ch. 11, ed. Neumann, pp. II:352-3.

interacting with, and learning about, them since the establishment of the Crusader States even if such information does not primarily appear in European texts until the turn of the thirteenth century.

VI: Tracing the Influence of Undocumented Networks and Communal Knowledge

The influence of the physical Crusader presence in the East is reflected in the development of European discourse. For instance, William of Tyre described previously unnoted places in relation to the Red Sea, such as Aidhab, in his *Historia Rerum in Partibus Transmarinis Gestarum* (c.1170-84).[1] Perhaps uncoincidently, the twelfth century also accompanied changes in historiographical technique, which emphasised a shift away from the uninvestigable Biblical influences of the past, thus creating an intellectual void for writers such as William to fill.[2] This chapter will discuss how the undocumented networks and communal knowledge of the previous two chapters can be traced in European texts and what impact they possibly had upon Crusader actions in the first century or so of Crusader rule.

References to Aidhab reflect an understanding of the region in the late twelfth century whichs attests to some participation in Red Sea trade, or, at least, a developing understanding of it through others. In fact, the importance of the Red Sea is highlighted in the building of the first completely new castle by Baldwin I, Montréal, after undergoing a process of consolidating his power directly north of the Red Sea after 1115. Likewise, the next year resulted in the building of more new castles, Li Vaux Moise and Ayla, further engaging the newly created Kingdom of Jerusalem with the Red Sea, undoubtedly motivated by the riches its trade had to offer.[3] Here again,

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[1] WT, Book XIX Ch. 27, II:903. On William's sources, see: P. W. Edbury and J. G. Rowe, *William of Tyre. Historian of the Latin East* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 32-58.

[2] J. Coleman, *Ancient and Medieval Memories. Studies in the Reconstruction of the Past* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 294-9.

[3] M. Barber, *The Crusader States* (New Haven, 2012), pp. 104-5; J. Prawer, *Crusader Institutions* (Oxford, 1980), pp. 471-83. For example, the Crusaders held the fortress of Ayla until 1171 on the Red Sea. On this fortress, see: D. Pringle, 'The Castles of Ayla (Al-Aqaba) in the Crusader, Ayyubid and Mamluk Periods', in *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras*, vol. 4, eds. U. Vermeulen and J. van Steenbergen (Leuven, 2005), pp. 333-53.

however, there is little evidence of Crusader trade in the Red Sea, though it cannot be discounted. The lack of evidence is possibly due to the fact that before the Muslim capture of Montréal in 1189, its Crusader inhabitants focused largely on sugar production despite its proximity to the Red Sea, and, thus, trade was orientated towards the Mediterranean.[4] Yet, one tantalising piece of evidence comes from the survival of about 1500 textile fragments from Jazīrat Firʿawn on the Red Sea, dating from between the late twelfth century and the beginning of the fourteenth.[5] This dating allows for the possibility that at least some of the textiles may date to the Crusader period when the island was known as Ile de Graye. Other commodities are no more conclusive either with ivory, one of the most important African products, only seemingly being used to make one piece of important Crusader art – the twelfth-century Melisende Psalter.[6]

In spite of the scant sources, the Kingdom of Jerusalem's proximity to the Red Sea suggests that the Crusader States would have been involved in southern trade to at least some degree. Indeed, the German pilgrim Thietmar specifically noted the bustling trade of the Red Sea in his itinerary in the early thirteenth century.[7] Europeans likely sought the riches of the Red Sea and Indian Ocean trade and the riches other trading diasporas were making, such as the Karimi Corporation – a Muslim merchant community most active in the Red Sea region – and the Jewish Geniza.[8] Both trading diasporas, who must have had access to their own sources to

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[4] A. Boas, *Crusader Archaeology. The Material Culture of the Latin East* (London, 1999), pp. 78-9.
[5] Ibid., 175.
[6] Ibid., pp. 178-9.
[7] Koppitz, 'Magistri Thietmari Peregrenatio', Ch. 17, 162; Thietmar, 'Pilgrimage (1217-18)', in *Pilgrimage to Jerusalem*, trans. Pringle, 123.
[8] J. L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony. The World System A.D. 1250-1350* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 227-30; S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society. The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza*, 6 vols. (Berkeley, 1967-93), pp. I:138-9, 386; II:283; III:169; IV:219. Nubia also features in the Geniza: pp. I:135-7, 434. For greater context, see: J. L.

connect with the trade, could have exchanged such knowledge to others. After all, *Ethiopia*, to use Thietmar's vague toponym, was an active part of this trade. Europeans were proactive in finding networks that they desired as well as were influenced by others in which they operated.

Reynald de Châtillon's Red Sea 'raid': A Possible Example of the Influence of Undocumented Networks on European Knowledge?

One notable event reflective of how Eastern knowledge could direct Crusader actions is Reynald de Châtillon's Red Sea 'raid' of 1182-3, which is the only known Crusader venture into the Sea, though why it occurred is disputed. Surviving European evidence suggests that it was enabled through the accumulation of local knowledge, both directly and through the knowledge gathered by other Europeans. Two principal questions arise: was it an independent venture to gain personal fortune; or was it driven by other factors?[9] As Reynald was the former Prince of Antioch and current Lord of Oultrejordain during his 'raid' multiple factors could have been at play, including jockeying for power during a time of internal weakness in the Kingdom of

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Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions in the Medieval Mediterranean. The Geniza Merchants and their Business World* (Cambridge, 2012). There were also Armenian networks operating in the same region: S. D. Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean. The Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa* (Berkeley, 2011). More generally, see: T. Power, 'Trade Cycles and Settlement Patterns in the Red Sea Region (ca. AD 1050-1250)', in *Navigated Spaces, Connected Places*, eds. Agius, Cooper, Trakadas, and Zazzaro, pp. 137-45. Also, though broadening into the Indian Ocean, see: P. Beaujard, 'The Indian Ocean in Eurasian and African World-Systems Before the Sixteenth Century', JWH, 16.4 (2005), pp. 411-65. Neither did traders need much reason to seek the riches coming through the Red Sea: J. Le Goff, 'L'Occident médiéval et l'Océan Indien: un horizon onirique', in *Pour un autre Moyen Âge. Temps, travail et culture en Occident*, ed. J. Le Goff (Paris, 1977), pp. 280-98.

[9] Cerulli, *Etiopi*, pp. I:20-6; D. Newbold, 'The Crusaders in the Red Sea and the Sudan', *Sudan Notes and Records*, 22.2 (1945), pp. 213-27; J. Prawer, *Histoire du royaume latin de Jérusalem*, trans. G. Nahon, 2 vols. (Paris, 1969-70), pp. I:612-6; B. Hamilton, *The Leper King and His Heirs. Baldwin IV and the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem* (New York, 2000), pp. 159-85; G. Leiser, 'The Crusader Raid in the Red Sea in 578/1182-3', *Journal of the American Research Center in Cairo*, 14 (1977), pp. 87-100; W. Facey, 'Crusaders in the Red Sea: Renaud de Chatillon's Raids of AD 1182-3', in *People of the Red Sea*, ed. Starkey, pp. 87-98; A. Mallett, 'A Trip Down the Red Sea with Reynald of Châtillon', JRAS Third Series, 18.2 (2008), pp. 141-53.

Jerusalem. Since his release from captivity in Aleppo in 1176, Reynald found a new zeal for the crusading cause and actively preyed upon Muslim caravans to disrupt Saladin's growing power.[10] Whatever the case, the 'raid' arguably reflects the Crusader utilisation of indigenous geographical knowledge regarding the regions surrounding Nubia and Ethiopia for their own gains, which will be detailed here.

First, it must be noted that our understanding of this event is reliant on the available sources, which are almost solely from Muslim authors. Only one European source, the *Chronicle of Ernoul*, makes note of the event, and does so only in two short lines.[11] None of the sources give any suggestion that the Crusaders were exploring routes to potential allies in Africa, but this does not necessarily mean they were not aware of the Christian African kingdoms. Reynald has traditionally been seen as a rogue raider, though this has been challenged. Joshua Prawer had initially posited that Reynald actually desired to discover the Red Sea winds in order to tap into the spice trade, with Bernard Hamilton further suggesting that the expedition may have been for 'scientific exploration'.[12] After all, Reynald had access to the knowledge of the monastery of Sinai (both of its peoples and documents), as it was within his dominion, in order to obtain such geographical understanding if desired.[13] Furthermore, Alex Mallett has convincingly argued that the 'raid''s purpose was not to destroy the tomb of Muhammad, which the Muslim sources suggest, instead representing a wider anti-

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[10] C. Hillenbrand, 'The Imprisonment of Reynald of Châtillon', in *Texts, Documents and Artefacts. Islamic Studies in Honour of D. S. Richards*, ed. C. F. Robinson (Leiden, 2003), pp. 98-101.

[11] *Chronique d'Ernoul*, ed. Las Matrie, Ch. 7, pp. 69-70.

[12] Prawer, *Crusader Institutions*, 482; Hamilton, *Leper King*, pp. 68-9. More broadly, see: P. Handyside, 'Differing Views of Renaud de Châtillon', in *Deeds Done Beyond the Sea. Essays on William of Tyre, Cyprus and the Military Orders Presented to Peter Edbury*, eds. S. Edgington and H. Nicholson (Farnham, 2014), pp. 43-52.

[13] 'Livre de Jean d'Ibelin' in RHC Lois I, Ch. 266, 417; *Chronicle d'Ernoul*, ed. Las Matrie, Ch. 7, 68.

Saladin policy.[14] Indeed, such a policy would have required knowledge accumulation, particularly in regards to accessing the trade routes of the Red Sea.

The Crusaders knew the area of the Red Sea relatively well. Twelfth-century writers had up-to-date knowledge about the sea, such as its geography and ports, with Fulcher of Chartres showing awareness early in the century, aided by his residence in the East, that the Sea connected to the Indian Ocean.[15] Additionally, the key port of Aidhab was known both for its position across the Red Sea from Mecca and for its central position in the region's trade.[16] It may even be said that Europeans knew of Aidhab, along with neighbouring ports such as Badi and Sawakin, in order to interact with the Sudanese and Egyptian gold trade; which coincidently was in crisis during Saladin's reign.[17] It is no coincidence, then, that Reynald decided to 'raid' Aidhab if it was an increased flow of gold that he sought. Though we have no current evidence for any question of scale, it cannot be dismissed that European traders were active in the Red Sea either, let alone had access to merchant knowledge from those who came to trade in the Crusader States from the Red Sea itself. If true, it is likely that Crusader merchants favoured navigating along the African coasts similarly to Muslim merchants due to westward winds and many shoals making the Arabian coast hazardous, thus naturally

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[14] Mallett, 'A Trip Down the Red Sea'.

[15] Fulcheri Cartonensis, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, ed. Hagenmeyer, Book II Ch. 57, 597; Fulcher of Chartres, *History*, trans. Ryan with Fink, 216.

[16] *Du Yorkshire à l'Inde*, ed. Gautier-Dalché, De Viis Maris, Ch. 11, pp. 215-6; WT, Book XIX Ch. 27, II:903. On Aidhab and the wider Red Sea ports, see: D. P. S. Peacock and A. Peacock, 'The Enigma of 'Aydhab: A Medieval Islamic Port on the Red Sea Coast', *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology*, 37.1 (2008), pp. 32-48; Breen, 'Towards an Archaeology'; C. Le Quesne, 'Hajj Ports of the Red Sea: A Historical and Archaeological Overview', in *The Hajj. Collected Essays*, eds. V. Porter and L. Saif (London, 2013), pp. 74-83.

[17] These ports had developed as hubs for this trade: T. Power, 'The Origin and Development of the Sudanese Ports ('Aydhâb, Bâ/di', Sawâkin) in the Early Islamic Period', *Chroniques yéménites*, 15 (2008), pp. 92-110. During Saladin's reign there was a gold crisis which may suggest that fewer traders interacted with these ports in the late twelfth century: A. Baadj, 'The Political Context of the Egyptian Gold Crisis during the Reign of Saladin', IJAHS, 47.1 (2014), pp. 121-38.

developing knowledge of the African coast.[18] Indeed, knowledge of distant lands

disseminated amongst some Europeans. Gervase of Tilbury, for example, described

'the virtuous people who hold sway over the Red Sea' beyond Mount Climax, an

'immensely big and high mountain which stretches as far as the shore of the Red Sea',

who live further south; possibly an interpretation of the traders of the Swahili Coast

and Mount Kilimanjaro or with the 'virtuous people' being the Christian communities

on Socotra and neighbouring islands.[19]

Gaining access to the wealth of Indian Ocean trade was not only beneficial to the

Crusaders but it also interfered with the Ayyubids' source of income. Trade was a

vital element of the polities of the Red Sea and it should be expected that Reynald

utilised the help of local guides and sailors with knowledge of the Red Sea winds.[20]

That said, the Crusader use of nailed ships for the expedition rather than the sewn

boats used by sailors of the sea then appears strange. Sewn boats were used because

nails easily rusted in the Red Sea conditions and because sewn planks offered some

structural movement which limited boat damage.[21] I would suggest that the use of

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[18] G. R. Tibbetts, 'Arab Navigation in the Red Sea', *The Geographical Journal*, 127.3 (1961), 325.

[19] Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia Imperialia*, eds. and trans. Banks and Binns, Book II Ch. 4, 214. Christians had been present on Socotra since as early as the fourth century and are mentioned by later European writers, such as Marco Polo and William Adam, amongst others: N. J. Andrade, *The Journey of Christianity to India in Late Antiquity. Networks and the Movement of Culture* (Cambridge, 2018), pp. 75-7; William Adam, *Defeat*, Ch. 5, pp. 112-4; Polo, Ch. 189, pp. I:424-5.

[20] The winds are not easy to navigate without prior knowledge: Cooper, *Medieval Nile*, Fig. 11.4, 175. Connectivity to markets was of first and foremost importance for Red Sea ports, regardless of cultural connections elsewhere; for example: C. Breen, 'Towards an Archaeology of Early Islamic Ports on the Western Red Sea Coast', *Journal of Maritime Archaeology*, 8 (2013), pp. 311-23. For another study, albeit on a different region but particularly addressing the issue of networks and adaptivity, see J. Preiser-Kappeller and F. Daim, eds., *Harbours and Maritime Networks as Complex Adaptive Systems* (Mainz, 2015).

[21] R. E. Margariti, 'Mercantile Networks, Port Cities, and "Pirate" States: Conflict and Competition in the Indian Ocean World of Trade Before the Sixteenth Century', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 51.4 (2008), 567. On Red Sea vessels and navigation, see: Tibbetts, 'Arab Navigation'; G. Hourani, *Arab Seafaring in the Indian Ocean in Ancient and Early Medieval Times* (Princeton, 1995); D. A. Agius, 'Ships that Sailed the Red Sea in Medieval and Early Modern Islam: Perception and Reception', in *The Hajj*, eds. Porter and Saif, pp. 84-95. For centuries, the *dhow* has been an influential Red Sea craft: D. A. Agius, *The Life of the Red Sea Dhow. A Cultural History of Seaborne Exploration in the Islamic World* (London, 2018). Indeed, this fact had been noted since the

nails does not reflect an ignorance of knowledge of Red Sea conditions, but only suggests that the boats were built in haste. For example, it would make little sense for the Ilkhan Arghun Khan to employ 700-800 Genoese mariners in 1290 to build two galleys in Baghdad to be used to blockade the Red Sea, if they were making nailed boats – presuming that they used similar building techniques to Reynald's expedition; especially when they would have had to sail across the Indian Ocean, via the Persian Gulf, to get to their destination and avoid such issues of rust.

One element of the contemporary knowledge of the expedition that has largely been ignored is the (mis)understanding of the geography of the Nile and the Red Sea. Perhaps coincidently, the passage in Ernoul's *Chronicle* directly following the unknown fate of Reynald's expedition comments on the connection between the Red Sea and the Nile.[22] The twelfth-century *Liber de Existencia Riveriarum* noted how the Nile:

> proceeds underground [from a mountain in Lower Mauritania] until the shores of the Red Sea, going around *Ethiopiam*. It comes out through Egypt, and divides into six branches at the sea, as we have said above, and enters the Mediterranean near Alexandria.[23]

Periplus of the Erythraean Sea: *The Periplus Maris Erythraei*, ed. and trans. L. Casson (Princeton, 1989), Chs. 15-6, 36, pp. 58-61, 72-3; later references can be found in, for example, Procopius, *History of the Wars*, ed. and trans. Dewing, Book I, Ch. 19, pp. I:182-5.

[22] *Chronique d'Ernoul*, ed. Las Matrie, Ch. 7, 70: *Et parmi celle Rouge Mer cuert uns fluns de Paradis. Et quant il ist hors de le mer, si s'en court parmi le tiere d'Egypte. Cel flun apiele on en l'escripture Sison; et en le tiere l'apiele on Nil* (And from the Red Sea flows a River of Paradise. When it comes out of the sea it flows through the heart of the land of Egypt. This river is called in scripture the Sison, and on earth it is called the Nile). Though Ernoul labelled the Nile as the Phison and not the Gehon it does not devaluate its display of contemporary understanding of the Nile's direct access to the Red Sea.

[23] 'Liber de Existencia Riveriarum', in *Carte marine*, ed. Gautier Dalché, Ch. 9, 125.

According to the *Liber*, which has been described as an early portolan, 'Ethiopia' and the Red Sea were connected by the Nile. Combined with Muslim knowledge that Nubia lay a month's (land) journey from Egypt along the Nile, Crusaders could have believed they could access Nubia, and thus access to Egypt, from the Red Sea.[24] A hybrid understanding of Muslim geography and European belief, on the part of Reynald himself or anyone in his retinue, might explain the course of action. Whilst knowledge of Nubia and Ethiopia may have been tangential to the 'raid', there is nothing to suggest that the 'raid' did not have some element to it to find the opening of the Nile to attack Egypt's trade seemingly based on accumulated knowledge.

(Re)Introducing Nubia alongside Ethiopia/Abyssinia in European Texts

Specifically related to the African kingdoms, above all the (re)introduction of Nubia and Ethiopia (Abyssinia) into European discourse attests to the role of twelfth-century undocumented networks on European knowledge. Whilst few European sources note exchanges with Africans, it is clear that European authors had access to sources which informed them about Nubia and Ethiopia. Although 'Ethiopia' continued to be used as a common toponym, the incorporation of Nubia became increasingly utilised alongside the separate emergence of Abyssinia. Such increasing understanding of these toponyms further suggests a development in specific geographical knowledge of North-East Africa as a result of the Crusades.[25]

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[24] For example, anybody versed in the work of Al-Muqaddasī (tenth century): Al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm fī maʿrifat al-aqālīm*, ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leiden, 1906), pp. ٢٠, 240-1 (text); Al-Muqaddasī, *The Best Divisions for Knowledge of the Regions*, trans. B. A. Collins (Reading, 1994), pp. 19-20 (trans.), also with a map on 179. The distance of twenty days had been contemporarily noted by Burchard of Strasbourg, 'De statu Egypti vel Babylonie [c. 1175]', Ch. 4, in *Itinera*, ed. De Sandoli, pp. II:402-4.

[25] Indeed, this conclusion is also reached in Seignobos, 'L'autre Ethiopie'.

European writers became increasingly aware of Christian Nubia in the latter half of the twelfth century. The first European writer to show an awareness of contemporary Nubia, the Benedictine Cluniac monk Richard of Poitiers, detailed in his universal *Chronica* in c.1174 that:

> Concerning the… King of *Ethiopum* we have seldomly heard so few things that we are almost completely ignorant of what is happening there... This is because Christianity has been driven out of those lands by the false teaching of Mahomet [and so] those people have cut themselves off from the Roman Empire and from the Christian faith. Similarly we know very little about the Sultan of Persia because his land is very distant, and is cut off from us by language and religion, though they do say that there are Christian kings beyond the lands of the Medes and Persians and the Macedonians... They strongly attack the pagan nations in those parts. We have also heard that the King of Georgia (*Avesguia*) and the King of *Nubianorum* do the same... This was the state of human affairs in the year of the Incarnate Word 1172.[26]

The reference to Nubia in Richard's *Chronica* could be reflective of its developing focus. Its appearance arguably shows a developing, albeit small, interest in the region. The first redaction seems to have been started before 1156 with a dedication to Peter the Venerable, with the reference to Nubia only appearing in 1172 following a sixteen-year writing process. Indeed, Richard's text is the first to directly reference the King of Nubia and the described Nubian hostility could even be indicative of news regarding Tūrānshāh's raid later that year. This is particularly noteworthy as he could

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[26] Ricardi Pictaviensis, 'Chronica', Ex continuatione recensionum D et E, 84.

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not have gleaned this information from his sources, of whom he lists: Isidore, Theodolfus, Josephus, Hegesippus, Eutropius, Titus Livy, Suetonius, Aimoinus, Justinus, Freculphus, Orosius, Anastasius, Anneus Florus, Gregory, Bede, Ado, Gildas, the monk Paul, and 'of a few others', none of whom would provide him with knowledge concerning contemporary Christian Nubia.[27]

As shown by the work of Dominique Iogna-Prat, this extension would not appear to be out of character with Peter the Venerable's own fear of the confrontation with Islam against a disunited Church, particularly focusing on Islam's geographical advancement towards Christian realms.[28] It appears likely that Richard was actively seeking new information to add to his chronicle to combat this threat. Short of hearing stories from returning travellers and Crusaders, there were no clear contemporary sources to use to indicate knowledge of the warring Nubian king. Consequently, it would therefore suggest that undocumented knowledge networks in the East were disseminating into the West.

There are questions, however, as to how far Nubians were even in fact 're-introduced' to European knowledge at all. Despite the lack of textual examples discussing Nubia, it does appear prominently throughout the Old French *chansons de geste*, which, though only codified in later centuries, the First Cycle is believed to have been devised soon after the events they describe in the First Crusade. More work needs to be done to determine the dissemination of knowledge in literary culture, particularly in oral culture, though the changing religion of the Nubian king in *chansons de geste* does suggest a wider understanding of people from *Nubie* within European culture and

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[27] Ibid., 77.

[28] D. Iogna-Prat, *Order and Exclusion. Cluny and Christendom Face Heresy, Judaism, and Islam (1000-1150)*, trans. G. R. Edwards (Ithaca, 2002), pp. 265-74, 356-7.

discourse, particularly throughout Frankish society.[29] Moreover, if we accept that the surviving written forms of the *chansons* are somewhat similar to their originals, was *Nubie* known despite a lack of textual supporting evidence?

Concurrently, a greater understanding of Nubia, as evidenced in texts, was accompanied by the appearance of 'Abyssinia'. Whilst the (re)introduction of Nubia can be dated to either c.1130 (its first generic brief use by Hugh of St. Victor) or 1172 (its first association with Christianity by Richard of Poitiers and Theodoric) in European texts – Hugh may, however, be viewed as a very late copier of the knowledge of late antiquity akin to writers such as Orosius, Isidore of Seville, or Bede rather than representing the utilisation of newly (re)introduced contemporary knowledge – the dating of the first appearance of Abyssinia does need to be re-evaluated. Traditionally, its appearance has been linked to the itinerary of Thietmar, a German Christian pilgrim visiting the Holy Land between the years 1217-8, who mentions the *Issini* (an understanding of *Ḥabasha*) of a land beyond Egypt who are Christians and fight against the Muslims.[30] Oft-forgotten is that Thietmar's itinerary was not the only early thirteenth-century text in which the toponym appeared. Contemporarily, Gervase of Tilbury places the *Abasitarum* in North-East Africa.[31] Additionally, the toponym of *Abesiam* appears as early as c.1202.[32] It had once been suggested that the *Avesguia* of Richard of Poitiers' text was a true reference to Ethiopia as a corruption of its Arabic toponym, though this has long since been abandoned in scholarship. Instead, as has been pointed out by Enrico Cerulli and

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[29] On this phenomenon, see: Simmons, 'Changing Depiction of the Nubian King'.
[30] Koppitz, 'Magistri Thietmari Peregrenatio', Ch. 24, 170; Thietmar, 'Pilgrimage (1217-18)', in *Pilgrimage to Jerusalem*, trans. Pringle, 130. For example, see: Hamilton, 'Crusades and North-East Africa', pp. 176-7; B. Hamilton, 'The Impact of Prester John on the Fifth Crusade', in *Fifth Crusade in Context*, eds. Mylod, Perry, Smith, and Vandeburie, 57.
[31] Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia Imperialia*, eds. and trans. Banks and Binns, Book II Ch. 3, 180; 181.
[32] *Radulfi de Diceto decani Lundoniensis opera historica. The Historical Works of Master Ralph de Diceto, Dean of London*, ed. W. Stubbs, 2 vols. (London, 1876), II:82.

Bernard Hamilton, the translation should read 'Georgia', and was in fact a corruption

of *Abasgiae* or Αβασγια, a region of north-west Georgia.[33]

'Abyssinia' was initially established as a separate realm to Nubia no later than the first

decades of the thirteenth century and, in turn, helped to establish two distinct regions.

The appearance of the toponym of Abyssinia, however, can be dated prior to the

thirteenth century. A text attributed to Roger of Howden in the latter half of the

twelfth century does refer to a place called *Abitis* in discussion of places adjacent to

the Red Sea.[34] This is the earliest known example. There is another association which

should also be addressed. Following its 'rediscovery' in 1406, Europeans explicitly

linked Ptolemy's Ἀγίσυμβα in his *Geography* with Abyssinia, with this adoption and

association, and thus the suggestion of an historical etymology, remaining uncritiqued

in current historiography.[35] Whilst it is possible that the etymology of Ἀγίσυμβα is

similar to the medieval usages of Abyssinia in that it stems from the Ethiopian (then

Aksumite) self-describing ethnonym of *Ḥabashat*, there is no evidence, however, that

Ptolemy was actually referring to highland Ethiopia. This is especially as the

Ḥabashat/*Ḥabash*-based toponym does not survive in any form until the unrelated

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[33] This is still a semi-autonomous region today: Cerulli, *Etiopi*, pp. I:38-40. Though Cerulli admitted in believing that it was more likely an understanding for the Georgian region. This view has been taken by subsequent historians; for example Bernard Hamilton: Hamilton, 'Continental Drift', 240; B. Hamilton, 'Latins and Georgians and the Crusader Kingdom', *Al-Masāq*, 23.2 (2011), 121.

[34] *Du Yorkshire à l'Inde*, ed. Gautier-Dalché, De Viis Maris, Ch. 11, pp. 216-7.

[35] Claudii Ptolemaei, *Geographia*, ed. Nobbe, Book I Ch. 8, I:17, Book VII, Ch. 5 §2, II:177. Amongst others, four fifteenth-century examples are Cardinal Fillastre's noting of the 1427 Ethiopian embassy in Valencia, the description of *Abascia* on the Fra Mauro map (c.1450), a geographical description in Benedetto Cotrugli's *De navigatione* (c.1464-5), and Columbus' own handwritten annotations of his personal copy of d'Ailly's *Mappa mundi*: C. M. de La Roncière, *L'Europe au moyen age* (Paris, 1969), 116 (*Agisimba*); P. Falchetta, *Fra Mauro's World Map* (Turnhout, 2006), *134, pp. 208-9 (*agisimba*); P. Falchetta, 'Il trattato "De navigatione" di Benedetto Cotrugli (1464-65). Edizione commentata del ms. Schoenberg 473. Con il testo del ms. 557 di Yale', *Studi Veneziani*, 57 (2009), Book I Ch. 49, pp. 105-6, 222 (*Agisimba*); *Ymago Mundi de Pierre d'Ailly, cardinal de Cambrai et chancelier de l'Universite de Paris, 1350-1420*, ed. M. Buron, 3 vols. (Paris, 1930), Ch. 8, pp. I:206-9 (*agesinba*). Matteo Salvadore, for example, uncritically assesses Fillastre's association of *Agisymba* with Abyssinia: Salvadore, 'Ethiopian Age of Exploration', pp. 611-2. Marianne O'Doherty has, however, correctly made note how Fra Mauro was trying to reconcile Ptolemy's *Agisymba* with temporal translations of Arabic derived toponyms of Abyssinia: M. O'Doherty, 'Fra Mauro's World Map (c. 1448-1459)', *Wasafiri*, 26.2 (2011), 33.

adoption by Roger of Howden of *Abitis*; whilst Ἀγίσυμβα did not feature in Ptolemy's section on "'Ethiopia' below Egypt', instead being a region in central Africa surrounding Lake Chad and being a part of a broader separate land of 'Ethiopia'/Africa given Ptolemy's influences of pre-Christian traditions of locating 'Ethiopia'.

These previous three chapters have shown how contacts between Europeans and Nubians and Ethiopians, as well as with other Eastern groups, over the twelfth to fourteenth centuries, created numerous avenues for potential knowledge dissemination regarding Nubians and Ethiopians, albeit with inconsistent results. Above all, an early absence of European documentation cannot be used to argue an absence of Africans. Instead, daily occurrences would not have necessarily been deemed noteworthy to document. Whilst we cannot be certain for what Europeans knew outside of surviving sources, itineraries are suggestive of the existence of a common 'communal' knowledge built through daily observation amongst residents of the Holy Land. It can be said, for instance, that prior to the first noticing of Nubians being 'baptised by fire' in the early thirteenth century, earlier Europeans would have readily witnessed this fact despite not documenting it. Both undocumented networks and communal knowledge, along with direct experience, developed European knowledge of the Africans which can be witnessed in the texts of Europeans who travelled to the Holy Land. Prior to the thirteenth century, this knowledge served little purpose, but the thirteenth century soon witnessed the implementation of knowledge for a range of purposes; such as in order to preach in distant lands and to search for potential allies in the Crusader fight, particularly following the Fall of Acre in 1291. Nubians and Ethiopians transformed from being obscure peoples in the early twelfth century to

being key components of European crusading discourse in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries due to interactions in the Holy Land.

Section Three

Seeking Nubians and Ethiopians and Where to Find Them

VII: Finding and Searching

Due to the ever increasing contact between Europeans and Africans, the development of knowledge penetrated into various media, including medieval maps.[1] As such, it is no surprise that cartography developed exponentially in this period, both in knowledge and design.[2] Nubia and Ethiopia soon appeared on world maps and portolans, with the most prominent being the Ebstorf *mappaemundi* (thirteenth century), Hereford *mappaemundi* (c.1300), the Dulcert Map (1339), the Catalan Atlas (1375), and the Fra Mauro Map (c.1450).[3] However, a full discussion of Nubia and Ethiopia in medieval maps will not be presented here. This is primarily due to the fact that the historiographical debate regarding when a map becomes a map in our modern sense detracts focus away from a meaningful discussion for when and why Nubia and Ethiopia appear in maps.[4] More importantly for our purposes are the sources for such maps and how the disseminated knowledge from increasing undocumented networks was key for their creation. Each cartographer had one source or many, both written and oral. This is particularly reflected in the Fra Maura Map. The creator of the map explicitly states that:

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[1] On the process of creating maps, see: P. Billion, 'How Did Medieval Cartographers Work? New Insights Through a Systematic Analysis of the Visual Language of Medieval Portolan Charts up to 1439', in *Cartes marines. D'une technique à une culture, 13e-18e siècle*, eds. E. Vagnon and C. Hofmann (Paris, 2013), pp. 33-45.

[2] For a thorough overview, see: P. D. A. Harvey, *Medieval Maps* (London, 1991); B. Englisch, *Ordo Orbis Terrae. Die Weltsicht in den Mappae mundi des frühen und hohen Mittelalters* (Berlin, 2002); E. Edson, 'Mapping the Middle Ages: The Imaginary and the Real Universe of the Mappaemundi', in *Monsters, Marvels and Miracles. Imaginary Journeys and Landscapes in the Middle Ages*, eds. L. Søndergaard and R. T. Hansen (Odense, 2005), pp. 11-26; P. Barber, 'Medieval Maps of the World', in *The Hereford World Map. Medieval World Maps and Their Context*, ed. P. D. A. Harvey (London, 2006), pp. 1-44; E. Edson, *The World Map, 1300-1492. The Persistence of Tradition and Transformation* (Baltimore, 2007).

[3] See above: pp. 18-9n38.

[4] See: Edson, *The World Map*.

Because to some it will appear as a novelty that I should speak of these southern parts which were almost unknown to the Ancients, I will reply that this entire drawing, from Sayto [Asyut in Egypt] upwards, I have had from those who were born there. These people are clerics who, with their own hands, drew for me these provinces and cities and rivers and mountains with their names; all these things I have not been able to put in due order for lack of space.[5]

It is therefore no surprise that this map is the most detailed regarding Ethiopia. That is not to say, however, that Fra Mauro's map was infallible even with these sources he was so proud to proclaim. For example, he did still attempt to reconcile some elements of classical knowledge and new discoveries rather than discredit past traditions, notably regarding the course of the Nile.[6]

One thing that Fra Mauro's map does further allude to is the state of knowledge prior to the map's creation. The map appears to be largely based on an earlier map of an unknown date; the *Carta Borgiana*.[7] Is there the possibility that other 'dress rehearsal' maps which featured the African elements of the map once existed but have now been lost? The Fra Mauro map is much more detailed than the *Carta Borgiana* but, along with the speed at which Fra Mauro was able to make note of recent events such as of Zheng He's mission to East Africa (which Fra Mauro dates to 'around 1420'), it should be seen not as the first map to portray 'new' knowledge regarding Ethiopia, but, rather, the first to codify knowledge that was already available to others who

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[5] Falchetta, *Fra Mauro*, *98, pp. 200-3.
[6] Ibid., *480, pp. 282-3. Fra Mauro also tries to reconcile the name of '*Abassia*' with the prior teachings of Ptolemy: *134, pp. 208-9 (*Questa abasia da i cosmographi fi dita agisimba*).
[7] Ibid., pp. 36-52.

interacted in the undocumented networks which were so influential in the making of the map as its sources.[8] Fra Mauro collected the knowledge of Ethiopian clerics who, whilst travelling in Europe, were his informants, highlighting the importance that otherwise undocumented networks could have on the development of knowledge.

Moreover, there has been a long tradition for African travellers to carry a mental map rather than a paper one.[9] These spoken maps were easily transmissible, with nineteenth-century Europeans recorded to have gained cartographic knowledge from Ethiopians by such a method.[10] With the absence of surviving maps, medieval Africans may have similarly undertook a comparable practice in order to undertake their own travel to the Holy Land. That said, combining different sources, particularly utilising African knowledge itself, allowed for the European identification of Nubia's and Ethiopia's location, both in cartography and elsewhere which fed into a wider corpus of knowledge. It should be assumed that oral geographic sources were available for Europeans and that geographic knowledge was more advanced than what was necessarily recorded.

The question of codification is further reflected when the Nubian capital had been recorded as early as the late thirteenth century, yet remains absent in almost every

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[8] Ibid., *19, pp. 178-81. One other example that represents the speed of Fra Mauro's knowledge accumulation is his note that part of East Ethiopia has been conquered by the king around 1430. If this refers to the campaigns against Arab settlements, it could possibly refer to any period up until 1445 when Zärʾa Yaʿqob reconquered the region which would then reflect the little time needed to disseminate such direct information prior to the map's approximate creation date: *38, pp. 188-9.

[9] T. J. Bassett, 'Indigenous Mapmaking in Intertropical Africa', in *Cartography in the Traditional African, American, Artic, Australian, and Pacific Societies*, eds. D. Woodward and G. Malcolm Lewis (Chicago, 1998), pp. 24-48.

[10] Ibid., 41. However, also note the possibility for earlier written maps based on surviving eighteenth- and nineteenth-century manuscripts, pp. 28-30; S. Dege, '"Remapping Paradise": Manuscript Evidence of Ethiopian Cosmological Models and of Visualizations of the Paradisiacal Garden, or the Quest to Find Examples of Early Ethiopian Mapmaking', in *Movements in Ethiopia/Ethiopia in Movement. Proceedings of the 18th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, eds. É. Ficquet, A. H. Omer, and T. Osmond, 2 vols. (Addis Ababa, 2016), pp. I:103-16.

European source for our period. Ristoro d'Arezzo's 1282 *La composizione del mondo* first stated how the Nile flowed via *Hirrina*, city of *Tiopi*, and *Ducala*, city of *Nubia*.[11] Ristoro is not quite clear how *Nubia* and *Tiopi* are divided with no other information provided, but it is the first use of the toponym Dongola by a European author. The city of *Hirrina* is unidentifiable with no similar place name known in relation to the Nile. Importantly, Ristoro reflected the growing knowledge of those participating in the undocumented Eastern networks and enabled those to increasingly travel to the kingdoms with greater understanding of the place they were venturing to. Names of cities are particularly intimate details to have known without such accessible knowledge. With Europeans known to travel to Dongola, it would be difficult to believe that the capital was as little known as the sources suggest following Ristoro's initial documentation. Building on this developing geographic knowledge Europeans soon sought to seek both African kingdoms. Two key factors which influenced this European desire, and the focus of this chapter, were preaching and military strategy.

<div align="center">1: Preaching</div>

Despite the growing awareness of the presence of Christianity south of Egypt at the turn of the thirteenth century, missionary work began to attempt to convert Africans to the Latin Christian belief. After all, the Africans were heretical to the Latins. Jacques de Vitry was the most notable writer to comment on the perceived errors of the Eastern Christians during the Crusader period. In his *Historia Orientalis* (c.1220) Ethiopians do not appear, but Nubians do amongst his discussion on the Jacobites.[12]

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[11] Ristoro d'Arezzo, 'La composizione del mondo', in MCAA 4.1, 1065.

[12] Jacques de Vitry, *Historia Orientalis*, ed. and trans. Donnadieu, Ch. 76, pp. 304-11. Importantly, his *Historia* remained influential throughout Europe for centuries: J. L. Bird, 'The Historia Orientalis of

Jacques' personal negative views towards non-Latins shines through in his writing and, despite a shared faith, he does not view Nubians or other Christian groups equally. Instead, Jacques' focus was on his perceived ignorance of Eastern Christians towards scripture and how Western clerics had a pastoral duty to reconcile these differences.[13]

In turn, the thirteenth century witnessed large scale missionary activity in the East, largely conducted by the Society of Pilgrim Friars.[14] Missionary work was undertaken to Nubia and Ethiopia with geographical knowledge needing to be known to maximise its success.[15] Not all documented attempts can be judged for their veracity, but the increased interest in Nubia and Ethiopia served a purpose. Consequently, the century witnessed attempts at integrating Nubia and Ethiopia into the Latin *Orbis Christianus*, building upon knowledge accumulated in the East.[16]

Jacques de Vitry: Visual and Written Commentaries as Evidence of a Text's Audience, Reception, and Utilization', *Essays in Medieval Studies*, 20 (2003), pp. 56-74.

[13] A. Jotischky, 'Penance and Reconciliation in the Crusader States: Matthew Paris, Jacques de Vitry and the Eastern Christians', in *Retribution, Repentance, and Reconciliation. Papers Read at the 2002 Summer Meeting and the 2003 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, eds. K. M. Cooper and J. Gregory (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 74-83. This focus on reconciliation was also present in Matthew Paris' further reflections on the supposed errors of the Jacobites based on Jacques' work: MP, pp. III:400-3; Jotischky, 'Penance and Reconciliation', pp. 81-2.

[14] A. Jotischky, 'The Mendicants as Missionaries and Travellers in the Near East in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries', in *Eastward Bound*, ed. Allen, pp. 88-106.

[15] Both Franciscans and Dominicans preached in Africa: J. Hollnsteiner and H. K. Mann, *Lives of the Popes in the Middle Ages. The Popes at the Height of Their Temporal Influence. Innocent II to Blessed Benedict XI, 1130-1305*, 10 vols. (London, 1914-31), pp. IX:131-41; T. Somigli di San Detole, ed., *Etiopia Francescana nei documenti dei secoli XVII e XVIII. Preceduti da cenni storici sulle relazioni con l'Etiopia durante i sec. XIV e XV*, vol. 1 (Florence, 1928), pp. I.I:xi-xci; C. C. Rossini, 'Sulle Missioni domenicane in Etiopia nel secolo XIV', *Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei, Classe di Scienze Morali, Storiche e Filologiche*, 7.1 (1940), pp. 71-98; Richard, 'Les premiers missionnaires'.

[16] A. Simmons, 'Desire, Myth, and Necessity: Latin Attempts at Integrating Nubians into the *Orbis Christianorum* of the Holy Land During the Twelfth to Fifteenth Centuries', in *After the Crusade – Ending the Fight, Re-Organizing Society*, eds. K. V. Jensen and T. K. Nielsen (Odense, forthcoming); B. Weber, 'An Incomplete Integration into the *Orbis Christianus*: Relations and Misunderstandings Between the Papacy and Ethiopia (1237-1456)', *Medieval Encounters*, 21 (2015), pp. 232-49. Similar distant attempts were also made in Asia: F. Schmieder, '*Cum hora undecima*: The Incorporation of Asia into the *orbis Christianus*', in *Christianizing Peoples and Converting Individuals*, eds. G. Armstrong and I. N. Wood (Turnhout, 2000), pp. 259-65.

The increasing influence of the Catholic Europeans also had a political consequence. According to Philip, prior of the Dominican monastery in Jerusalem, the Egyptian Patriarch Cyril Ibn Laqlaq wrote to Pope Gregory IX in 1237 regarding the Alexandrian wish to unite with Rome, particularly important because of Alexandria's jurisdiction over Minor India, *Aethiopia*, and Libya; of which the *Aethiopes* and Libyans were not subject to the rule of the Muslims.[17] Cyril's motives for closer relations are unclear, but he had his own regional ambitions which undoubtedly he viewed the Crusaders as aiding. This included checking potentially rising Ethiopian power which at this time needed a new Abuna to be sent from Egypt.[18] He was said to have reasoned that by sending a new Abuna he would make Ethiopia Greek (روم *Rūm*) which would then become disobedient to both the Patriarch and the Sultan, thus ensuring the support of the Sultan, too.[19] This decision ultimately led to an Ethiopian appearing in the Holy Land in the 1240s wanting to be consecrated by the Jacobite Patriarch Ignatius II of Antioch, despite the rite being reserved only for the Coptic Patriarch.[20] The Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem was outraged as it was beneficial for both the Latin and Egyptian Patriarchs to seek some sort of unity, building upon Cyril's earlier proposition. For the Crusaders it was also important to not anger Egypt as it was through the will of the Egyptian Sultan that they had access to Jerusalem during this time.[21]

In a bid to mis-direct European attempts at contact with Africans and the unknown consequences that that could create, the Mamluks tried to portray their dominance

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[17] C. Baronio, *Annales Ecclesiatici vol. 21* (Paris, 1870), no.87, pp. 166-7. This letter was also recorded by Matthew Paris: MP, pp. III:396-9.

[18] K. J. Werthmuller, *Coptic Identity and Ayyubid Politics in Egypt 1218-1250* (Cairo, 2010), pp. 67-70.

[19] HPEC III.II, 207.

[20] Gregorii Barhebraei, *Chronicon Ecclesiasticum*, eds. and Latin trans. J.-B. Abbeloos and T. J. Lamy, 3 vols. (Leuven, 1872-7), pp. II:654-64. See also: Cerulli, *Etiopi*, pp. I:62-76; Hamilton, *The Latin Church*, pp. 349-51.

[21] Hamilton, 'Crusades and North-East Africa', 177.

over Nubia to the Europeans to suggest that Nubia was a lost cause. In 1290, the Egyptian Mamluk ruler Qalāwūn described himself as the 'Sultan of the Nubians' in a letter to Alfonso III of Aragon after the establishment of the puppet king in Nubia.[22] This declaration could have been in reaction to European activity in and around North-East Africa, particularly by missionaries. For instance, a letter from Pope Nicholas IV, dated 3rd September 1288, was sent to brothers preaching in the *terras infidelium*, in both non-Christian lands and Christian lands who were not subject to the Pope. The missionaries were desired 'to convert and unite them to the Christian faith, receive and baptise them, and add them as children to the prevailing Church' (*converti ad unitatem christiane fidei cupientes, recipere, baptizare et aggregare ecclesie filiis valeatis*).[23] Likewise, in July 1289, Nicholas IV sent letters to each of the Patriarchs, bishops, and 'other prelates' of the Jacobites, Nestorians, Georgians, Armenians, the *archiepiscopo Ethiopiae*, and *episcopis et aliis Ethiopiae praelatis* praising the Christian world and alluding to a sense of ecumenicalism.[24] This is further highlighted in other letters sent in the same month to the *populo Ethiopiae*, *imperatori Ethiopiae*, all the Nestorian peoples, Demetry, King of *Georgiae*, and David, King of *Yberorum*, seeking a Christian union.[25] Such communications certainly stoked Mamluk fears of a grand alliance.

By the late thirteenth century, European preaching in the East had been occurring for decades. Pope Innocent IV had reissued the papal bull of *Cum hora undecima*,

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[22] Holt, *Early Mamluk Diplomacy*, 132.

[23] *Les registres de Nicholas IV (1288-92)*, ed. E. Langlois, 2 vols. (Paris, 1886-1905), I:no.611, pp. 120-1. The list of given nations are: *terras Sarracenorum, Paganorum, Grecorum, Bulgarorum, Cumanorum, Ulacorum ubicumque existentium, Ethiopum, Syrorum, Iberorum, Alanorum, Gazarorum, Gothorum, Zirorum, Ruthenorum, Jacobitarum, Nubianorum, Nestorianorum, Georgianorum, Armenorum, Indorum, Moscelitorum, Tartarorum, Hungarorum Majoris Hungarie, christianorum captivatorum apud Tartaros, aliarumque exterarum nationum Orientis*.

[24] Ibid., I:nos.2218-27, pp. 391-2.

[25] Ibid., I:nos.2234-39, 393.

originally declared in 1235 by Gregory IX, in 1245, which listed a host of Eastern

nations in which European friars were to travel to preach and convert to Catholicism.

Innocent's version became the most copied form and targeted specific groups, both

infidel and Eastern Christian, for missionary activity.[26] The issuing of *Cum simus*

super, also in 1245, re-emphasised church unity, albeit under the primacy of Rome.

Interestingly, it was addressed to only Nubians amongst a long list of Eastern

Christians, and had no mention of Ethiopia proper or, indeed 'Ethiopia'.[27] It was said

that in one response to Pope Innocent by the Jacobite Patriarch of the East, the

Patriarch declared the unity of the faith between Egyptians, Armenians, Libyans, and

Ethiopes.[28] Not long after, a bull issued to the Dominicans in 1253 listed the

Ethyopum (this should be read as Africans more generally, possibly locatable in north-

east Africa, but not linked to the specific kingdom in any case) and *Nubianorum*

amongst the realms in which to preach.[29] The Christian regions south of Egypt were

increasingly a prominent missionary target, possibly with some success. Indeed,

according to Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, some *Nubiani* had already converted on

account of one miracle in 1205 when

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[26] *Acta Innocentii papae IV*, eds. Haluscynskyj and Wojnar, no.19, pp. 36-42: *Dilectis filiis fratribus de Ordine Fratrum Minorum in terras Saracenorum, Paganorum, Graecorum, Bulgarorum, Cumanorum, Ethyoporum, Syrorum, Iberorum, Alanorum, Gazarorum, Gothorum, Zicorum, Ruthenorum, Jacobinorum, Nubianorum, Nestorinorum, Georgianorum, Armenorum, Indorum, Mesolitorum aliorum infidelium nationum Orientis seu quarum cunque aliarumque partium proficiscentibus*. Each reissue of the bull can be found in: *Acta Honorii III (1216-1227) et Gregorii IX (1227-1241)*, ed. A. L. Tautu, vol. 3 (Vatican City, 1950), no.210, pp. 286-7; *Acta Innocentii papae IV (1243-1254)*, eds. T. T. Haluscynskyj and M. M. Wojnar, vol. 4 (Vatican City, 1962), no.19, pp. 36-42; *Acta Alexandri (1254-1261)*, eds. T. T. Haluscynskyj and M. M. Wojnar, vol. 4.2 (Vatican City, 1966), no.38, 73; *Acta Urbani IV, Clementis IV, Gregorii X (1261-1276)*, ed. A. L. Tautu, vol. 5.1 (Vatican City, 1953), no.7, pp. 26-8; *Acta Romanorum Pontificum ab Innocentio V ad Benedictum XI (1276-1304)*, eds. F. M. Delorme and A. L. Tautu, vol. 5.2 (Vatican City, 1954), no.79, pp. 42-4, no.110, pp. 184-5, no.153, pp. 252-5. The issuing of the Bull falls within Innocent's wider policy towards the East: W. de Vries, 'Innozenz IV. (1243-1254) und der christliche Osten', *Ostkirchliche Studien*, 12, (1963), pp. 113-31.
[27] *Acta Innocentii papae IV*, eds. Haluscynskyj and Wojnar, no.21, pp. 48-9.
[28] Ibid., no.53, pp. 99-102 (quote on 100).
[29] Ibid., no.100, pp. 163-4.

the loaf of leavened bread with which the sacrifice was being made was

changed into a small and beautiful host in the manner of the sacrifice of the

Latins, and the wooden chalice together with the spoons was destroyed when

the true blood was received in a silver chalice

when some Eastern groups were receiving mass from a certain Jonas, Patriarch of

Susa.[30] Although arguably quite fanciful – it is unattested in any other source and the

text dates to the 1240s during missionary activity – this conversion story serves to

suggest that Nubians, and other Eastern Christians, were readily becoming Catholic

and joining the *Orbis Christianus* at least in the belief of some Europeans.

The activity of European preachers in Africa did little to ease Mamluk fears. In 1267

Pope Clement IV sent a letter to the Dominicans to preach in the lands of *Aethiopum*

(again a region rather than the kingdom) and *Nubianorum*, amongst others, and to

make the most of the knowledge of Brother Vasinpace who had travelled to these

places previously.[31] Although it is impossible to say whether Vasinpace had indeed

previously travelled to 'Ethiopia' and Nubia, though Jean Richard has suggested that

the claim was true, the letter highlights the growing desire for such travels to take

place.[32] Likewise, John of Montecorvino was sent to the East, primarily to the

Mongols, but was also said to have gone to 'Ethiopia', though this may be

questionable.[33] With the accumulation of geographical knowledge and developments

in cartography, the kingdoms of Nubia and Ethiopia could be searched for. Whilst

caution is emphasised here, despite the lack of evidence for thirteenth-century

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[30] Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, 'Chronica', in MGH SS XXIII, Anno 1205, 886.
[31] *Bullarium Ordinis Praedicatorum*, ed. T. Ripoll, vol. 1 (Rome, 1729), 482.
[32] Richard, 'Les premiers missionnaires', 325-6.
[33] A. Lechartain, 'Jean de Monte Corvino et l'ambassade éthiopienne', *Revue d'histoire des missions*, 10.1 (1933), pp. 122-7.

missionaries to both Nubia and Ethiopia, Marshall Baldwin has argued that missions should not necessarily be dismissed given the increased references to both Nubia and 'Ethiopia' in papal missionary letters.[34] Indeed, as has been argued by Jean Richard, the creation of the jurisdiction of Africa for the Societas Fratrum Peregrinantium in 1349 could have further nurtured contacts with Ethiopia.[35] Though the extent to which this was the case cannot be proven, it does highlight that all the elements for increasing contacts were in place and the Societas' creation consequently came amidst the many papal missions to the East.[36] Though the news of a Minorite friar being hosted in the kingdom of Navarra in 1391 who had 'lived many years in the realm of Prester John' had reached the king of Aragon may have been linked to the Societas, there is no explicit reference to Ethiopia in the king's letter.[37]

In addition to the Minorite friar, there is also a possible earlier example. We do not know why a certain Beneseg visited the Church of Banganarti across the Nile from the Nubian capital Dongola – whether as merchant or diplomat, or even preacher – but his brief graffito written in Provençal attests to his presence some time between c.1250-c.1350.[38] The text itself reads *pos Beneseg abdeder Rafel* (When/because Benedictus… Raphael (to Raphael)) with no current full understanding of the word *abdeder*.[39] Adam Łajtar and Tomasz Płóciennik tentatively suggest that if the graffito was directed towards the Archangel then the verb should be read as something like

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[34] M. W. Baldwin, 'Missions to the East in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries', in HotC V:513.

[35] Richard, 'Les premiers missionnaires', 329.

[36] J. Richard, *La papauté et les missions d'Orient au moyen âge (XIIIe-XVe siècles)* (Rome, 1977); J. Muldoon, *Popes, Lawyers, and Infidels. The Church and the Non-Christian World 1250-1550* (Philadelphia, 1979).

[37] *Documents per l'historia de la cultura catalana mig-eval*, vol. I, ed. A. Rubió Y Lluch (Barcelona, 1908), 365.

[38] A. Łajtar and T. Płóciennik, 'A Man from Provence on the Middle Nile in the Second Half of the Thirteenth/First Half of the Fourteenth Century. A Graffito in the Upper Church at Banganarti', in *Nubian Voices*, eds. Łajtar and van der Vliet, pp. 95-120.

[39] Ibid., pp. 105-7.

'made an offering, paid homage, prayed, beseeched, made thanksgiving', whilst if it was to the church it should be read as something akin to 'came to, visited'. Whether the graffito was aimed directly at the Archangel or to the church of the saint it would fit with the role of the Archangel Raphael as being the protector of pilgrims if Beneseg should be seen as such.[40] Moreover, another interesting element to the inscription, if it is indeed referring to the Archangel Raphael, is that it would suggest that Beneseg, or a companion to inform him, had to have understood the surrounding Greek and/or Old Nubian inscriptions to align his message to the recipient to that of some of the others, whilst being conscientious enough not to disturb the other graffiti. Such understanding implies that Beneseg or his companions either understood these languages in some capacity or, at least, respected the other graffiti.

Whilst we may never know the full scale of medieval European Nile navigation beyond Cairo we do know it was done. The bigger question is why, not if; especially when neither Beneseg or Johannes Witte de Hese in c.1389 detail why they travelled – in Johannes' case why he boarded a ship for a 'good three months' (*bene per tres menses*) from Damietta to *Ethiopiam*.[41] If Beneseg had been a missionary, he may have been associated with the eight Dominicans who were said to have left Egypt to preach to the south in the lands of the *Aetiopes* (likely Nubia) and the *Abissinos* in 1316.[42] The success of these expeditions is not known, but it is important to state that only a year later the Nubian king was deposed and replaced with a Muslim, and within three years a mosque was built in the Nubian capital Dongola; possibly in retaliation

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[40] Ibid., 107. Alternatively, a hesitant suggestion would be to see *abdeder* as some form of the Latin *abdo* and read the graffiti as a plea by Beneseg for being concealed (read as a rather indirect way of being protected) by Raphael.

[41] S. D. Westrem, *Broader Horizons. A Study of Johannes Witte de Hese's Itinerarius and Medieval Travel Narratives* (Cambridge, MA, 2001), 128; 210.

[42] V. M. Fontana, *Monumenta Dominicana* (Rome, 1675), 172. Andrew Kurt has cast doubt on the missions, primarily due to their late appearance in sources: Kurt, 'Search for Prester John', pp. 311-2n74.

for these contacts. Despite that, Bishop Tivoli was said to have been ordained as bishop of the Nubian capital in 1330.[43] According to Francisco Álvarez in the early sixteenth century, it was because of the death of a Bishop from Rome (presumably to be linked to Tivoli) in Nubia and the subsequent restriction imposed on receiving another one by Muslim Egypt which caused the loss of Christianity in Nubia in his time.[44] Equally, Bishop Tivoli is also associated with a foundation myth of a monastery in Tigre in Ethiopia.[45] How far this can be debated reflects the problematic nature of the sources. Carlo Conti Rossini has rejected the Dominican presence outright, whilst John Phillips has suggested that it was a confusion with Bishop Bartolomeo da Podio of Maragha in Iran.[46] Though the ordination of Bishop Tivoli can be questioned, the ability for clerics, or anyone else for that matter, to travel to Nubia and Ethiopia was, as the case of Beneseg has shown, perfectly feasible.

It should be noted, too, that the Dominicans took an interest in Ethiopian holy men, which would suggest a degree of interaction between Europeans and Ethiopians in order to accumulate such knowledge. For example, the death of Saint Takla Haimanot was recorded in 1336, whilst it was even said that in 1340 martyrs Philip and Thaclavaret had died for the Catholic faith; of whom, Thaclavaret was the nephew of the sister of the Emperor of Ethiopia (*et posterior nepos ex sorore Monarchae Abyssinorum*).[47] Moreover, in 1366 the Dominicans recorded the death of an unnamed

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[43] G. Cavalieri, *Galleria dei sommi pontefici*, 4 vols. (Benevento, 1696), I:137.
[44] Álvarez, Ch. 137, 168.
[45] This was according to the Spanish Dominican Luis de Urreta in 1611, though his often fictitious account should be read with caution given its agenda against the Jesuits: Luis de Urreta, *Historia de la sagrada orden de Predicadores en los remotos reynos de la Etiopia* (Valencia, 1611), Ch. 4, pp. 41-9; M.-A. van den Oudenrijn, 'L'Évêque dominicain Fr. Barthélemy, fondateur supposé don couvent dans le Tigré au 14e siècle', RSE, 5 (1946), pp. 7-16.
[46] Conti Rossini, 'Sulle Missioni domenicane'; Phillips, *Medieval Expansion*, 144.
[47] Fontana, *Monumenta Dominicana*, pp. 207, 211.

Ethiopian inquisitor of 'royal blood' (*ex Regio sanguine*).[48] There is no evidence for this, but Catholic Europe believed it was having an increased religious impact in Africa.[49] According to the *Gadl* Qewstos (c.1400), a certain Emperor Emnet had ruled in the mid-thirteenth century and was said to have accepted the Catholic faith. There is no other evidence for this ruler in other records, with the supposed ruler, instead, being a product of the timing of the production of the *Gadl*, rather than their historicity.[50] The dating should contextualise this ruler within the increased contacts with Europe during the reign of Emperor Dāwīt. However, connections with the converted figures of Philip, Thaclavaret, and the unnamed inquisitor, need not be readily dismissed. Such contacts were certainly feasible and, though undocumented elsewhere, limited conversions should be expected with prolonged exposure between these groups, no matter how small the numbers involved.[51]

Whilst it is true that most European travellers in Africa are only noted from the fourteenth century, it cannot be discounted that some had ventured before then. Indeed, according to the importance placed on the stars for navigating in 'Ethiopia' by Gervase of Tilbury (c.1209-14), it would appear that travel across the deserts of Africa was actively being undertaken:

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[48] Ibid., pp. 232-3.

[49] Despite the lack of evidence it should be noted that this period within Ethiopia witnessed a dramatic shift in the power and influence of individual monks. It is possible that prominent monks could have been known to the Dominicans: S. Kaplan, *The Monastic Holy Man and the Christianization of the Early Solomonic Empire* (Wiesbaden, 1984), pp. 32-69; Derat, *domaine des rois éthiopiens*, pp. 87-206.

[50] Sergew, *Ethiopian History*, 284.

[51] Conversion between Christians, Muslims, and Jews are well-documented throughout the Mediterranean, but there has currently been no study of conversions between Christian groups. Comparatively, similarly it should also be expected that some limited Europeans, particularly those who later settled in Ethiopia, converted to the Ethiopian creed as some Portuguese later did in the sixteenth century.

God also set the stars in the firmament to give light through the night, along

with the moon, for purposes of work, of land travel, and of navigation. They

are especially necessary in the deserts of *Ethiopie* where, on account of the

excessive heat of the sun, the earth is completely turned to dust, and any

travellers' footprints that may have been found are obliterated by a slight gust

of wind.[52]

Although few sources exist to corroborate any travel, with this implication, it would

be impossible to try and calculate the true scale of such European journeys across the

deserts of Africa which possibly included those surrounding Nubia, especially given

the allures of the riches of Trans-Saharan trade during the period.[53]

Even if evidence for named preachers is limited, there are texts which mention

travellers who seemingly did act upon such important disseminated information. One

known venture, likely for trade, was that of the Vivaldi brothers: Vadino and

Ugolino.[54] The voyage did appear to take place, for Jacopo d'Oria wrote in his annals

(presented to Genoa in 1294) that they did so in 1291 along with his nephew and two

Franciscans in two ships, though Philippe de Mézières later dated the trip of these

Genoese to 50 years before him in the 1340s.[55] The problems arise when trying to

determine its results as nothing more was heard from them after they had sailed

through the Straits of Gibralter. This story soon evolved, notably regarding the fate of

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[52] Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia Imperialia*, eds. and trans. Banks and Binns, Book I Ch. 5, 42; 43.
[53] Similar remarks are made by Angelo da Spoleto on his journey to Cairo in 1303-4, suggesting that such navigational tools were widely utilised by travellers: Golubovich, *Bibliotheca*, III:69. Regrettably, the first documented Trans-Saharan European trader was Antonio Malfante who was noted at Tuat in 1447.
[54] F. M. Rogers, 'The Vivaldi Expedition', *Annual Report of the Dante Society, With Accompanying Papers*, 73 (1955), pp. 31-45.
[55] *Annali Genovesi di Caffaro e de' suoi continuatori dal MCCLXXX al MCCLXXXXIII*, ed. C. Imperiale di Sant'Angelo (Rome, 1929), 124; Philippe de Mézières, *Le songe du vieil pelerin*, eds. J. Blanchard, A. Calvet, and D. Kahn, 2 vols. (Geneva, 2015), Book I Ch. 10, pp. I:223.

the brothers. The brothers were said to have reached both West and East Africa. Antoniotto Usodimare rather fancifully described having met decendents of the failed voyage in Guinea in a letter dated to 12th December 1455, whilst in another document concerning Antoniotto, members of the voyage were said to have reached *Ethiopia* and held captive in the city of *Menam* which was on the coast near the *flumen Sion* and *qui sunt cristiani de Ethiopia submissis presbitero Joanni*.[56] The city seemingly corresponds more with Guinea with the reference to the river a confusion with the Senegal River rather to Ethiopia proper. However, according to the *Libro del conoscimiento de todos los reinos* (c.1378-1402) those captured at *Amenuan* (Menam) were brought to the city of *Graçiona* (Geʿez: *Agara Sion* - Aksum), the great city of the Ethiopian emperor, but the other galley escaped so nothing was known of them.[57] Francis Rogers rather optimistically noted how the two texts of Usodimare and the *Libro* appear to show the fates of each ship, one in West Africa and the other in the East.[58] Yet, it is highly improbable that the brothers were taken from Senegal to Ethiopia. Whilst it is likely that the Vivaldis never did make it to Ethiopia – their fate, or existence for that matter, is not mentioned in Ethiopian sources either – the reference to *Graçiona* is most important for our purposes as it suggests notable influence through interaction with Geʿez informants.

No account is comparable to the information penned in the text of the *Libro* and is reflective of the role of secondary and tertiary undocumented knowledge networks on information found in European texts.[59] Nubia and Ethiopia were known to this

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[56] G. Gråberg, *Annali di geografia e di statistica*, vol. 2 (Genoa, 1802), pp. 286-8; Ibid., pp. 290-1.
[57] Marino, *Libro*, Chs. 80-3, 63, 67. The date of composition is debated as early as c1350: pp. xxxii-xxxviii.
[58] Rogers, 'Vivaldi Expedition', 42.
[59] On the question of its authorship, see: Marino, *Libro*, pp. xxxviii-xliv.

anonymous author in great detail, including images of supposed various flags.[60] The *Libro* has been the subject of various debates, both inside and outside of an African context. Carlo Conti Rossini surmised that the description of Dongola as a Christian state indicates the imagined nature of the *Libro*'s description given the increasing Islamification of Nubia at the turn of the fourteenth century.[61] Whether its creator truly travelled so widely does not particularly matter here. More importantly, the *Libro* should be noted for what is contains. In fact, some elements of the *Libro* are reflective of intimate understanding on the part of its author and the sources that they had access to, whether directly or through mediators; such as the naming of the Ethiopian King as 'Abdeselib'. This shows knowledge of ʿĀmda Ṣeyōn's throne name ገብረ፡መስቀል (Gäbrä Mäsqäl – Servant of the Cross) through its Arabic translation of *ʿAbd aṣ-Ṣalīb*. The presence of this fact emphasises the variety and distance of the dissemination of knowledge regarding Ethiopia.

Equally, another who collected information on their travels was Marco Polo (c.1300) who gained intimate knowledge of Ethiopia. His information on the East, particularly on China, has been argued by John Larner to be largely correct and there is no reason to suggest the details on Ethiopia, whether directly gathered or transmitted through a third party, are overtly false either.[62] In fact, Polo appears very well-informed about Ethiopia despite never travelling there and appears to have had direct knowledge, most of which is not found in other works, whereas Nubia only appears in passing.[63]

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[60] Ibid., Chs. 75-7, 80-3, pp. 54-7, 60-7. The Ethiopian elements have been dicussed previously: C. Conti Rossini, 'Il «Libro del conoscimiento» e le sue notizie sull'Etiopia', *Bollettino della Reale Società Geografica Italiana*, 6 (1917), pp. 656-79.

[61] Conti Rossini, 'Libro del conoscimiento', 665. On the question of the *Libro* being a real or imagined journey, see: Marino, *Libro*, pp. xvi-xxvii.

[62] J. Larner, *Marco Polo and the Discovery of the World* (New Haven, 1999).

[63] Due to the lack of a single definitive edition of the *Travels*, the translation referenced here is based on various editions including Latin, Italian, Venetian, Tuscan, German, and French versions, see: Polo, Ch.

For example, he seemingly had contemporary knowledge of Yekūnō ʾAmlāk's expeditions into Ifat, which he calls Aden. If so, the news about the Emperor had disseminated quickly, possibly known by Polo years before his recollection of his travels to Rustichello da Pisa whilst in captivity in c.1300. Polo's intimate description of the emperor reflects the use of reliable informants operating within the expansive undocumented knowledge networks of the East, accessible through his own distant travelling.

Despite Mamluk fears, none of these preachers or travellers show any crusading interest in the Africans they witnessed and came to know about. Yet, did information accumulated in the Holy Land become to be utilised in the Crusader fight? As will be next discussed, knowledge of Nubia became a key component in Crusader plans to reoccupy the Holy Land following the Fall of Acre in 1291. Contemporarily, European kings also began to see themselves as protectors of Eastern Christians, particularly those in Egypt, at the beginning of the fourteenth century despite having inconsistent degrees of knowledge regarding each Eastern group.[64] It is noteworthy that during the same period, Ethiopia, equally, increasingly played a similar role as defender of Egyptian Christians, with the first Ethiopian embassy on the issue arriving in Cairo in 1325.[65] However, Europeans did not show any awareness of this until the fifteenth century. Despite Ethiopia seemingly being more supportive of any action on behalf of Christians and with the Mamluks explicitly declaring their titular power over

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193, pp. I:434-40, list of manuscripts on 509-16; Larner, *Marco Polo*, pp. 184-6. Marco Polo's discussion of Ethiopia has also been the subject of previous discussion: C. Conti Rossini, 'Marco Polo e l'Etiopia', *Atti del Reale Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti*, 99.2 (1940), pp. 1021-39; S. Tedeschi, 'L'Abissinia nel libro di Marco Polo', *Africa*, 25 (1981), pp. 361-83.

[64] F. Lot, 'Essai d'intervention de Charles le Bel en faveur des chrétiens d'Orient tenté avec le concours du pape Jean XXII', *Bibliothèque de l'ecole des Chartes*, xxxvi, (1875), pp. 588-600; G. Bratianu, 'Le conseil du Roi Charles: essai sur l'internationale Chrétienne et les nationalités à la fin du Moyen Âge', *Revue Historique du Sud-Est Européen*, 19 (1942), pp. 291-361.

[65] G. Wiet, 'Les relations Égypto-Abyssines sous les sultans Mamlouks', *Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte*, 4 (1938), pp. 122-5.

Nubia in communications to Europeans, Europeans continued to have hope on utilising Nubia in their Crusade plans following their preaching efforts.

2: The Crusader Need For Military Aid

Following the arrival of the Mongols in 1260, the Crusader States entered a prolonged period of decline. With the fall of Acre in 1291, crusading became increasingly distracted with various aims; though this had also been the case for the majority of the thirteenth century.[66] Despite this ideological fragmentation of crusading aims, the fall of Acre appears to have created a new generation of thinking and openness in regards to Eastern Christians, particularly towards Nubians and Ethiopians.[67] Yet, this had seemingly taken decades to come to fruitition as the Africans did not feature in similar earlier desires with Greeks, Armenians, or Syrians.[68] The African kingdoms had had a military history with the Crusader States since the twelfth century, particularly in the eyes of Muslim writers, which directly or indirectly, proved to be the foundation for the later importance of the crusade treatises. Before the fourteenth century, however, it was primarily Nubia which most often appeared in a military context in relation to the

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[66] A. S. Atiya, *The Crusade in the Later Middle Ages* (New York, 1965); A. Luttrell, 'The Crusade in the Fourteenth Century', in *Europe in the Late Middle Ages*, eds. J. R. Hale, J. R. L. Highfield, and R. Smalley (London, 1965), pp. 122-54; M. Purcell, *Papal Crusading Policy. The Chief Instruments of Papal Crusading Policy and Crusade to the Holy Land from the Final Loss of Jerusalem to the Fall of Acre, 1244-1291* (Leiden, 1975); N. Housley, *The Avignon Papacy and the Crusades 1305-1378* (Oxford, 1986); S. Schein, *Fideles Crucis. The Papacy, the West, and the Recovery of the Holy Land 1274-1314* (Oxford, 1991); N. Housley, *The Later Crusades, 1274-1580. From Lyons to Alcazar* (Oxford, 1992); A. Leopold, *How to Recover the Holy Land. The Crusade Proposals of the Late Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries* (Aldershot, 2000), B. Weber, *Lutter contre les Turcs. Les formes nouvelles de la croisade pontificale au XVe siècle* (Rome, 2013).

[67] Cerulli, *Etiopi*, pp. I:91-101. The geographical enlargement of the crusading idea had been developing prior, but its catalyst was the loss of Acre in 1291: A. Garcia Espada, 'The Geographical Enlargement of the Crusade Theory After 1291. Its Subaltern Roots', in *Les projets de croisade. Géostratégie et diplomatie européenne du XIVe au XVIIe siècle*, ed. J. Paviot (Toulouse, 2014), pp. 109-24.

[68] MacEvitt, *Crusades and the Christian World*, pp. 157-76.

Crusades by both European and Muslim writers. Knowledge of the Africans gained in the Holy Land by the Europeans slowly developed a military purpose.

Early Crusader strategy towards Egypt does not appear to have had any awareness of the Christian kingdoms to its southern border. Following the rise of Zengi in the 1140s, the intensification of Jihad focused on northern Syria which in turn diluted Crusader energy and attentions towards Egypt until Saladin.[69] It was not long, however, until Egypt took centre stage. The 1160s was a time of particular tension, not least due to the five separate campaigns of the Crusaders into Egypt during the decade (1163, 1164, 1167, 1168, 1169). Alongside these tensions, a fear was growing within the Muslim hierarchy. The Nubian king was said to have marched on Egypt as early as 1107-8.[70] Indeed, throughout the twelfth century there was an increase in Nubian-Fatimid hostilities. The accumulation of border tensions apparently led the Egyptian vizier to offer Usāmā b. Munquiḍh the fief of Aswan in c.1154 in order to defend Egypt's southern border against encroaching Ethiopians (Nubians: mistakenly he uses الحبشة, not نوبه) and promised to supply him with men for the cause.[71] Such strained relations between Egypt and Nubia appear to have been the result of a Muslim belief of a growing Christian encirlement.

In his early fifteenth-century history about the Fatimids al-Maqrīzī later noted that within a decade in 1161 'the King of the Nubians marched against Aswan with twelve thousand horsemen and massacred a great multitude of Muslims', though no other

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[69] See most recently: S. A. Mourad and J. E. Lindsay, *The Intensification and Reorientation of Sunni Jihad Ideology in the Crusader Period. Ibn 'Asākir of Damascus (1105-1176) and His Age, with an Edition and Translation of Ibn 'Asākir's The Forty Hadiths for Inciting Jihad* (Leiden, 2013); T. El-Azhari, *Zengi and the Muslim Response to the Crusades. The Politics of Jihad* (Abingdon, 2016).
[70] B. I. Beshir, 'New Light on Nubian-Fāṭimid Relations', *Arabica*, 22.1 (1975), 20.
[71] Usāma ibn Munquiḍh, *Kitāb al-l'tibār*, ed. P. K. Hitti (Princeton, 1930), ٣٤ (text); Usama ibn Munquiḍh, *The Book of Contemplation. Islam and the Crusades*, trans. P. M. Cobb (London, 2008), 43 (trans.).

sources corroborate this.[72] This date is significant if it is to be associated with the numerous excursions by King Amalric into Egypt throughout the decade. However, it should be questioned, not only because of the lack of contemporary evidence to support this event, but also because of the relationship that the Nubian king's father, Giorgios IV, had with Egypt having abdicated in order to retire in Egypt only a few years earlier in 1158.[73] Nevertheless, the Crusader actions towards Egypt in the 1160s did little to quell an increasing Muslim growing fear of encirclement.

Regrettably, little documentation survives for enlightening the Crusader policy towards the Red Sea. This is particularly surprising considering the Kingdom of Jerusalem stretched to the Red Sea throughout most of the twelfth century. Despite the isolation of the castles of Montréal, Li Vaux Moise, and Ayla, compared to those on the Mediterranean coast, their early twelfth-century construction into an otherwise unimportant region highlights their importance for desired Crusader connectivity to the sea. After all, these castles were new constructions, unlike most of Crusader fortifications which were built on existing structures. It is therefore likely that Crusaders did venture into the Red Sea, especially as the Fatimids had previously given the sea little attention, thus creating a potential vacuum of power to exploit.[74]

The failure of Reynald of Chatîllon's 1182-3 expedition, and thus its absence in the sources, limits our understanding of Reynald's motives. No immediate geo-political considerations come to mind either. For example, unlike an expedition led by Reynald

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[72] Beshir, 'New Light', 21.

[73] Additionally, the supposed 1161 raid may have been associated with one of the Muslim retaliatory reasonings for Tūrānshāh's 1172-3 expedition to be discussed next and could be seen as a mistake for 1171.

[74] D. Bramoullé, 'The Fatimids and the Red Sea (969-1171)', in *Navigated Spaces, Connected Places. Proceedings of the Red Sea Project V Held at the University of Exeter 16-19 September 2010*, eds. D. A. Agius, J. P. Cooper, A. Trakadas, and C. Zazzaro (Oxford, 2012), pp. 127-36.

in 1176 noted by Michael the Syrian, the Red Sea 'raid' cannot be suggestive of an attempt to divert Saladin's attention from his ambition of uniting Egypt and Syria in order to surround the Crusader States with a single enemy, as this had been already achieved.[75] Any potential avenue to attack Egypt from the rear would have offered the Crusaders a distinct element of surprise over their enemy. Ultimately, however, any true motive by the Crusaders cannot be deduced without knowing the full strength and scale of the expedition. The 'raid' did, however, focus Egyptian eyes on the Red Sea to avoid further Crusader intrusions. This event was not coincidental for the later Mamluks who took a special interest in the Red Sea, both for trade and protection, likely as a direct result of these fears.

Contemporarily, a potential crusading alliance between Nubia and the Crusaders was explicitly feared by Ibn al-Athīr. Egyptian Nubian slave soldiers were said to have sent a messenger for aid to the Crusader States in 1168 whilst staging a revolt against the Fatimids.[76] The messenger was caught and the letter was found, resulting in the revolt ending soon afterwards. Though these were slave soldiers and not necessarily connected to the kingdom, a Crusader alliance was a Muslim fear. With the inconsistent dating of the Nubian letter, it may or may not have been related to the short Ayyubid conquest of Nubia in 1172-3.[77]

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[75] *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, ed. Chabot, Book XX Ch. 3, IV:713 (text); *Syriac Chronicle of Michael Rabo*, trans. Moosa, 711 (trans.).

[76] Though traditionally dated to 1168 in scholarship, Muslim writers differ between dating the event to between 1168 and 1173. For example, Ibn Wāsil dates the event to 1169: Ibn Wāsil, *Kitāb mufarrij al-kurub fī akhbār Banī Ayyūb*, ed. J. al-Din al-Shayyal, 3 vols. (Cairo, 1954-61), pp. I:174-8; Al-Iṣfahānī dates an uprising, though without the story of a letter, to 1170: C. Cahen, 'Une chronique syrienne du VI/XIIe siècle', *Bulletin d'études orientales*, 7-8 (1937-8), p. 133; whereas Ibn al-Athīr, supported by Abū Shāma, date the event to 1173: Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī 'l-tarīkh*, ed. C. J. Tornberg, 13 vols. (Beirut, 1965-7), pp. XI:345-7, Abū Shāma, *Al-Rawḍatayn fī akhbār al-Dawlatayn*, ed. I. al-Zaybaq, 5 vols. (Beirut, 1997), pp. II:160-2. Al-Maqrīzī, however, dates the uprising to 1168: Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-mawā'iz wa-l-I'tibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-l-āthār*, 4 vols. (Cairo, 1906-8), pp. III:2-3.

[77] Two principal reasons appear in Muslim sources for Saladin's decision to order his brother to invade Nubia; neither explicitly link the event with the Crusaders. One suggests that Saladin feared a Syrian attack and wanted to create a southern refuge in case of a need to retreat, whilst the other explanation

It would appear that the Muslim forces believed that a Nubian-Crusader alliance was possible, if not already established. Moreover, though no sources explicitly state so, this Muslim fear could have been either the direct or indirect cause of the raid into Nubia in 1172-3. This raid is particularly noted by Giovanni Vantini as a turning point in Nubian history due to its destructive impact; he calls the raid the *inizio della fine* for Nubia.[78] It should also be noted how the Frankish garrison stationed in Cairo during 1167-8 cannot be ruled out as facilitators of such a correspondence. It is unlikely that the garrison would have been ignorant of this if the two events and groups did coincide or, indeed, were even avoided by the Nubians wishing to message Amalric in Jerusalem. Consequently, and probably not unrelatedly, the subsequent period between 1171-1269 witnessed tensions due to the *Baqṭ* not being received.[79]

Whilst the Crusaders did not become involved in these affairs, a European memory of the 1172-3 conquest of Nubia is possibly reflected in the transmission of a particular repeated segment of text – the identification of the lands of Saladin's four brothers – further reflecting the growing dissemination of information. Ralph de Diceto, the

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states that it was a retaliatory attack after a Nubian expedition at Aswan. Abū Shāma and Ibn Wāsil, attribute the plan to acquire land for a potential retreat to Tūrānshāh's following conquest of Yemen instead: Abū Shāma, *Al-Rawḍatayn*, I:325 (pp. II:160-162 for the invasion), Ibn Wāsil, *Kitāb mufarrij al-kurub*, pp. I:237-43 (I:228-9 for the invasion). However, Abū-l-Fidāʾ and Al-Maqrīzī appear to suggest that the original plan was to conquer Nubia as Saladin's potential retreat but, upon finding the land unworthy, only then was the subsequent invasion of Yemen ordered: Abū-l-fidāʾ, *Kitāb al-mukhtaṣar fī akhbār al-bashar*, ed. M. al-Din al-Khatib, 4 vols. (Beirut, 1956-61), pp. III:53-4; Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk li-Ma ʿrifat Duwal al Mulūk*, ed. M. 'Abd al-Qadir 'Atta, 8 vols. (Beirut, 1997), pp. I:157-8. Alternatively, Ibn al-Athīr openly states that's the option was always equally either Nubia or Yemen for Saladin with no particular original preference: Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, ed. Tornberg, pp. X:45-7. The importance of the raid differs in accounts too. Some writers, such as Ibn al-Furāt, consider the 1172-3 expedition to be just a raid (غ), with 1275 being the real attempt at an Egyptian conquest (فتح) of Nubia: Ibn al-Furāt, *Taʾrīkh ad-duwal wa-l-mulūk*, ed. C. Ruzayq, 9 vols. (Beirut, 1936-42), VII:45; though Abū Shāma also called Tūrānshāh's invasion a فتح, albeit writing before 1275 and not having the benefit of hindsight to compare and account for both events and their outcomes.

[78] Vantini, *Cristianesimo*, 224.

[79] J. Spaulding, 'Medieval Christian Nubia and the Islamic World: A Reconsideration of the Baqt Treaty', IJAHS, 28.3 (1995), pp. 585-6n26.

Archdeacon of Middlesex, in his *Ymagines historiarum* (c.1202), first simply wrote that: *Quatuor fratres Saladini sub se habent Abesiam, et Leemen, et Mauros, et Nubiam.*[80] Whilst the association of a brother of Saladin with Nubia could be alluding to the short conquest of Nubia, the appearance of Ethiopia (*Abesiam*) cannot be explained. No event during this period would give Ralph a reason to believe that Ethiopia had been conquered as well. Yet, both Nubia and Ethiopia were understood by Ralph to be conquered, arguably as rhetoric to overstate Saladin's power following his victories over the Crusaders. This segment was later copied by both Roger of Wendover, in his *Flores historiarum* (c.1235), and Matthew Paris, in his *Chronica majora* (c.1240s-50s), further providing avenues for such dissemination of the potential memory of Tūrānshāh's conquest.[81]

Crusading was causing wider geo-political tensions, both directly and indirectly. The fears expressed by writers such as Ibn al-Athīr do have substance. As shown in the correspondence of 1173 by King Amalric of Jerusalem, Nubia was known to be under the jurisdiction of the Coptic Patriarch by the king himself.[82] This is of particular importance as it should be noted that Amalric was the same king who was written to by Nubians as described by Ibn al-Athīr. Christian Nubia was known throughout the echelons of Crusader society. Even if nothing of substance came from these events, there was enough potential which could have began the later myths of Nubian power. This fear was likely to have been further compounded by the appearance of the Nubian king in Constantinople in 1203. Despite the lack of any explicit description as such, it remains possible that Nubia had been affected by the 1202 earthquake that

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[80] *Radulfi de Diceto*, ed. Stubbs, II:82.
[81] Roger of Wendover, *Liber qui dicitur Flores Historiarum ab anno domini MCLIV annoque Henrici Anglorum regis secondi primo*, ed. H. G. Hewlett, 3 vols. (London, 1886-9), pp. I:146, 179; MP, pp. II:332, 361.
[82] RRH, no.500, pp. 131-2.

devastated the Near East and the king was making a personal attempt to the Byzantine emperor for aid which he could have done whilst remaining on pilgrimage (as Robert de Clari described him as having undertaken).[83] Whatever the reason for his visit, to many, both Christian and Muslim, his presence in Constantinople likely did little to limit the growing myth of the powerful Nubian king that would be disseminated throughout the thirteenth century.

Intriguingly, potential Crusader influences, possibly connected somehow to these events, can be seen in a wooden plaque found at Attiri in Nubia dated to the second half of the twelfth century. The plaque depicts a dismounted military saint with a prayer in Old Nubian to St. Epimachos on the reverse.[84] The prayer asks for protection, which in itself could be associated with contemporary events, but it is the image that is the most interesting for our purposes here (Fig. 4). Giovanni Vantini first argued for possible Crusader influences in the plaque, though this thought has been later abandoned by others.[85] Despite this, my suggestion is tentative and requires a re-evaluation of the plaque.

The date of the plaque places it within the period of Egyptian aggression, particularly the events of 1172-3. Specifically for consideration is that the depiction of the saint does not imitate other Nubian paintings of military saints; such saints are normally

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[83] On the earthquake, see: N. N. Ambraseys and C. P. Melville, 'An Analysis of the Eastern Mediterranean Earthquake of 20 May 1202', in *History of Seismography and Earthquakes of the World*, ed. W. H. Lee (San Diego, CA, 1988), pp. 181-200; M. R. Sbeinati, R. Darawcheh, and M. Mouty, 'The Historical Earthquakes of Syria: An Analysis of Large and Moderate Earthquakes from 1365 B.C. to 1900 A.D.', *Annals of Geophysics*, 48.3 (2005), 391. Earthquakes consistently devastated the Near East throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and so an accumulative effect could also have been influential in the decision to undertake this possible embassy: S. K. Raphael, *Climate and Political Climate. Environmental Disasters in the Medieval Levant* (Leiden, 2013), pp. 127-63. Suitable data for the damage caused by such earthquakes in Nubia is not currently available.

[84] A. Tsakos, 'Epimachos of Attiri: A Warrior Saint of Late Christian Nubia', *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia*, 9 (2012), pp. 239-57.

[85] Vantini, *Christianity in the Sudan*, pp. 185-6; Tsakos, 'Epimachos of Attiri', 211n.15.

depicted with a spear, not a sword. Moreover, the armour of the saint is more typical of a Crusader, not a Nubian, because of the cross on the chest and the chainmail.[86] There are two possible hypothesese for the plaque's style. The first is that the plaque does indeed show some artistic influences from the Holy Land and may not be a wholly isolated indigenous creation. Alternatively, the depiction of the saint was made in the Holy Land and a Nubian pilgrim brought it back with them and the prayer was added later.[87] Either suggestion suggests a relationship of sorts between Nubia and the Crusaders. A separate artisitic study would need to be undertaken to uncover more regarding any further possible stylistic exchanges, though it should be remembered that such influences are the most fluid and easily exchanged between peoples and could have occurred easily. This plaque is a unique example from this period, however, and it would be too speculative to draw too many conclusions from it alone.

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[86] The influences could, of course, also have been transmitted via Eastern Christian art: M. Immerzeel, 'Divine Cavalry: Mounted Saints in Middle Eastern Christian Art', in *East and West III*, pp. 265-86; P. Ł. Grotowski, *Arms and Armour of the Warrior Saints. Tradition and innovation in Byzantine Iconography (843-1261)* trans. R. Brzezinski (Leiden, 2010). For more general Eastern artistic exchange, see: L.-A. Hunt, *Byzantium, Eastern Christendom, and Islam. Art at the Crossroads of the Medieval Mediterranean,* 2 Vols. (London, 1998-2000); M. Georgopoulou, 'The Artistic World of the Crusaders and Oriental Christians in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', *Gesta*, 43.2 (2004), pp. 115-28. Regardless of the origin, the style is not particularly Nubian and would suggest a foreign influence, and moreso than the more commonly found Byzantine influence in comparative Nubian art. Though this thesis only states an intitial comparison to suggest further study, compare the Nubian style with that of European examples. On Nubian style for warrior saints, see: T. Górecki, 'Z problematyki ikonografii świętych wojowników w malarstwie ściennym katedry w Faras', *Rocznik Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie*, 24 (1980), pp. 173-254. Comparitively, see the statue of St. Maurice (c.1240) in Germany: J. Devisse, 'A Sanctified Black: Maurice', in IBWA I.I, 151.
[87] This would be in stark contrast to Włodzimierz Godlewski's original belief that the placque is one of five examples of local Nubian production. See: Tsakos, 'Epimachos of Attiri', pp. 210-2.

Fig. 4. SNM 20719. 22x10cm, Twelfth Century. Taken from: Taskos, 'Epimachos of Attiri', 213.

The African Inclusion and the Crusader Need to Diversify Their Tactics

Possible Crusader knowledge of Nubian-Egyptian or Ethiopian-Egyptian conflict was likely to fuel later desires for alliances. There is no suggestion that military relations prospered between Europeans and either Nubia or Ethiopia prior to the Crusader hope at the end of the thirteenth century. The Fifth Crusade, however, could be seen as the first potential active engagement initiated by the Crusaders towards the Africans. During the planning of the Fifth Crusade, Pope Innocent IV communicated several times with the Melkite Patriarch of Alexandria, Nicholas I, yet relations with the Coptic Patriarch, John VI, do not appear to have shared a similar amicability. Communication between the Sees survived the failure of the Crusade, though

following John's death in 1216, the Coptic See remained vacant for 19 years and further restricted relations, whilst Nicholas reigned until 1243.[88] Egyptian Christians would have been well-placed to further inform the Crusaders about both Nubians and Ethiopians even though no surviving correspondence of such matters exists. If Arnold of Lübeck was indeed accumulating knowledge in his *Chronica* for the Fifth Crusade, he did not believe information on Nubia, other than copying Bernard of Strasbourg's brief remark on its distance, to be important.[89] Despite access to potentially useful knowledge, neither did later writers attempt similar information gathering during the Egyptian Crusade of King Louis between 1248-54 regarding either Nubia or Ethiopia.

Unlike Nubia, Ethiopia appears to have had little conflict with Egypt during this same period, with one exception, and was not associated with the Crusades until later. During the 1140s Ethiopia desired more consecrated bishops from Egypt but their requests were met with Egyptian fears that they would then become disobedient if they were given scope for religious autonomy.[90] Ethiopia was eventually sent its requested bishops and any fears were quelled. Moreover, any desire for Crusader-Ethiopian relations was non-existent. Communications with the Zagʷé dynasty and the Crusaders were non-existent in any context, whether directly or via the Egyptian Patriarch.[91] In contrast, relations between Zagʷé Ethiopia and Egypt were positive, with Emperor Lalibäla sending an embassy in 1209 containing animals – including an elephant, a lion, a giraffe, possibly a zebra – and gold gifts to the Sultan being one

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[88] J. M. Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade, 1213-1221* (Philadelphia, 1986), 27.
[89] See above: 89n11.
[90] HPEC III.I, pp. 56-7. The event is also found in the Ethiopian Synaxar for the 10th of Miazia: E. A. W. Budge, *The Book of the Saints of the Ethiopian Church*, 4 vols. (London, 1928), pp. III:800-1. Also see: Munro-Hay, *Ethiopia and Alexandria*, pp. 162-3.
[91] Munro-Hay, *Ethiopia and Alexandria*, pp. 165-94.

example of this.[92] This early unimportance and absence of Ethiopia is reflected in the later crusade treatises which focus solely on Nubia. Yet, this was despite the German pilgrim Thietmar stating as early as 1217-8 that the *Issini* held a belief that they should come to Cairo and remove every stone in the city, thus displaying an earlier knowledge of the supposed power of Ethiopia.[93]

The appearance of the Damietta legend regarding the Nubian king would seem like an important reason to ascertain more information about the kingdom. The legend had predicted the terror of Saladin and foretold that 'a certain king of the Christian *Nubianorum* was to destroy the city of Mecca and cast out the scattered bones of Mohammed, the false prophet, and certain other things which have not yet come to pass'; whlst adding that if this king rose up and Damietta were captured, it would lead to the exaltation of Christianity and the defeat of the Muslims.[94] However, this does not appear to have been the case. Instead, it was with the periodic reissuing of the Papal Bull *Cum hora undecima* that Eastern Christians increasingly became an important feature of thirteenth-century papal policy, including, in time, militarily. Though Nubia and 'Ethiopia' appear in the reissuing of the Bull since 1245, it was Gregory X (r.1271-6) who was the first Pope to truly oversee the beginning of the direct association of Nubia and 'Ethiopia' with the Crusading movement; notably at the Second Council of Lyons in 1274. Giovanni Vantini has argued that Nubia, specifically, had become a strategic focus for Europeans as early as the Council which

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[92] HPEC III.II, pp. 189-90.
[93] Koppitz, 'Magistri Thietmari Peregrenatio', Ch. 49, 170; Thietmar, 'Pilgrimage (1217-18)', in *Pilgrimage to Jerusalem*, trans. Pringle, 130.
[94] Oliver of Paderborn, 'Historia Damiatini', ed. Hoogeweg, Ch. 35, pp. 231-2; Oliver of Paderborn, *Capture of Damietta*, trans. Gavigan, pp. 89-90.

led to it being a new target of Mamluk retaliation and brought about its ultimate end.[95]

Had it not been for Pope Gregory's untimely death, Africans could have been sought

more thoroughly as he had chosen to pursue a long preparation period to bring about

an alliance between Western and Eastern Christians and Mongols against the rising

Mamluks.[96]

Unbeknown to the Europeans, however, the diplomacy they were convening with the

Mamluks in the late-thirteenth and early-fourteenth centuries actually enabled the

Mamluks to focus their attentions south towards Nubia before returning to the

Crusaders, removing the possibility of a war on two fronts.[97] Mamluk aggression

towards Nubia can be seen in the archaeological evidence. Nubia had experienced a

vast defensive change, notably the increased appearance of so called castle-houses

which offered greater protection.[98] Likewise, defensive walls were rebuilt in the same

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[95] Vantini, 'Sur l'éventualité'. Increased Mamluk aggression after this period did result in the collapse of the kingdom, though Effie Zacharopoulou has argued that this Mamluk policy was part of a wider Mamluk plan and not specifically linked to the Crusaders: Zacharopoulou, 'Ο σουλτάνος Baybars και η Νουβία'.

[96] See: P. Baldwin, *Pope Gregory X and the Crusades* (Woodbridge, 2014). This policy of embracing the potential of Eastern Christians had been increasing in importance since Pope Honorius III (1216-27) who had taken up the mantel from his predecessor Innocent III: P.-V. Claverie, *Honorius III et l'Orient (1216-1227). Étude et publication de sources inédites des Archives vaticanes* (Leiden, 2013), pp. 193-234.

[97] H. Lammens, 'Correspondances Diplomatiques entre les sultans mamlouks d'Égypte et les puissances chrétiennes', *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien*, 9 (1904), pp. 151-87; A. S. Atiya, *Egypt and Aragon. Embassies and Diplomatic Correspondence Between 1300 and 1330 AD* (Leipzig, 1938); P. H. Holt, 'The Treaties of the Early Mamluk Sultans with the Frankish States', *BSOAS*, 43.1 (1980), pp. 67-76; P. H. Holt, *Early Mamluk Diplomacy (1260-1290). Treaties of Baybars and Qalāwūn with Christian Rulers* (Leiden, 1995). The Mamluks also participated in gift exchange in Africa and the Red Sea region to compartmentalise their potential enemies into political neutrals: D. Behrens-Abouseif, *Practising Mamluk Diplomacy in the Mamluk Sultanate. Gifts and Material Culture in the Medieval Islamic World* (London, 2014), pp. 37-52. Diplomacy was equally beneficial for the Europeans: A. Knobler, 'The Rise of Tīmūr and Western Diplomatic Response, 1390-1405', JRAS Third Series, 5.3 (1995), pp. 341-9. On Nubian-Mamluk hostilities, see: Ḥasan, *Arabs and the Sudan*, pp. 106-28; L. S. Northrup, *From Slave to Sultan. The Career of Al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn and the Consolidation of Mamluk Rule in Egypt and Syria (678-689 A.H./1279=1290 A.D.)* (Stuttgart, 1998), pp. 146-50; Welsby, *Medieval Kingdoms*, pp. 242-55; R. Seignobos, 'La liste des conquêtes nubiennes de Baybars selon Ibn Šaddād (1217-1285)' in *Aegyptus et Nubia Christiana*, eds. Łajtar, Obłuski, and Zych, pp. 553-77.

[98] W. Y. Adams, 'Castle-Houses of Late Medieval Nubia', *Archéologie du Nil Moyen*, 6 (1994), pp. 11-46. More generally on house design changes during the period, see: J. R. Anderson, *Spatial and Temporal Distribution of Domestic and Civil Architecture in Christian Nubia* (Unpublished PhD, University of Toronto, 1996), pp. 88-140.

period suggesting an increased threat.[99] The fear that had existed since the times of Ibn al-Athīr drove the Mamluks to make sure they were not subject to multiple Christian threats and increased their attempts at the Islamification of Nubia.

Nubia in Crusade Treatises

Towards the end of the thirteenth century, proposals were being drawn up in Europe to address the challenges faced as the crusading plans to attack Egypt throughout the century had failed. These works, first written during the last years of the Crusader States, were military treatises designed to reconquer the Holy Land and were primarily concerned with finding an ally in the East, undoubtedly building upon knowledge gained over the previous two centuries.[100] Whilst most crusade treatises do not discuss Eastern Christians at all, let alone feature any reference to either Nubians or Ethiopians, those which do offer grand alternate crusade ideas. Some, such as Fidenzo of Padua's *Liber recuperationis Terre Sancte* describe *Jacobitarum*, along with other Eastern groups, as cowardly. Indeed, they were said to be of no help for any fight because they are not a war-like people (*non sunt bellicosi*). Of note here is that *Jacobitarum* most likely included Nubians given Jacques de Vitry's influence on Fidenzo's work who included Nubians in his discussion regarding Jacobites as noted above.[101] Those in which Nubians and Ethiopians do specifically appear as potential allies, mainly reflect on their potential ability to disrupt and hinder the source of

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[99] Adams, *Qasr Ibrîm. The Late Medieval Period*, pp. 84-8, 250.

[100] Schein, *Fideles Crucis*, pp. 87-91; Leopold, *How to Recover*, pp. 105-36. Schein utilised a list of 26 works dated between 1274-1314, whilst Leopold expanded his study to incorporate earlier and later texts which acted similarly to the principal treatises of Schein: Schein, *Fideles Crucis*, pp. 269-70; Leopold, *How to Recover*, pp. 8-45.

[101] Fidenzio of Padua, 'Liber recuperationis Terre Sancte ([1274] 1290-1291)', in *Projets de croisade (v. 1290-v. 1330)*, ed. J. Paviot (Paris, 2008), Ch. 9, 64.

Mamluk wealth – the Red Sea and Indian Ocean trade.[102] Our focus will be on a minority, but arguably the most influential treatises.

It did take some time for Africans to become important in such texts. For example, at the end of the thirteenth century, Burchard of Mount Sion, resident at the priory in Acre, travelled to Egypt but did not discuss either Nubians or Ethiopians at length. This is notable if we accept Jonathan Rubin's view that, based on an extended edition of Burchard's text, Burchard was in fact actually an envoy to the Sultan.[103] If so, it would further suggest that, much like Burchard of Strasbourg a century earlier, his motives for recording information would most likely have been different to those of an average pilgrim, yet he did not make any note of Ethiopians or Nubians during his stay there. Seemingly no importance was placed on the African Christians. This was also the case of the Military Orders. For instance, there is no reference to Nubians or Ethiopians in the Hospitaller treatise *La devise de Babiloine* (1307), even though the treatise concerns itself solely with an in-depth strategy against Egypt. It is unclear why some writers, particularly those who should probably be expected to have made note of them, ignore the African Christians. However, some manuscripts of Burchard of Mount Sion's text states that he saw the King of *Ethyopie* (which the passage earlier equates to being *Nubia*) whilst in Cairo.[104] King David of Nubia had indeed been captured and taken to Cairo following the fallout of the Mamluk-backed installation of

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[102] See: R. Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages. The Early Mamluk Sultanate, 1250-1382* (Beckenham, 1986), pp. 37-61; Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony*, pp. 212-47; J. L. Meloy, 'Imperial Strategy and Political Exigency: The Red Sea Spice Trade and the Mamluk Sultanate in the Fifteenth Century', JAOS, 123.1 (2003), pp. 1-19; Y. Frenkel, 'The Mamluks Among the Nations: A Medieval Sultanate in its Global Context', in *Everything is on the Move*, ed. Conermann, pp. 61-79.

[103] J. Rubin, 'Burchard of Mount Sion's Descriptio Terrae Sanctae: A Newly Discovered Extended Version', *Crusades*, 13 (2014), pp. 178-9.

[104] This is according to other manuscripts not used in Laurent's more common edition: J. Basnage, *Thesaurus monumentorum ecclesiasticorum et historicorum, sive, H. Canisii Lectiones antiquae*, vol. 4 (Antwerp, 1725), 25; H. Omont, 'Manuscrits de la bibliothèque de sir Thomas Phillipps récemment acquis pour la Bibliothèque nationale', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 64 (1903), 500.

his nephew Shakanda in 1276. Yet, this knowledge of the captured king did not worry later treatise writers, although the Europeans arguably may not have known the full extent of the situation in Nubia to begin to doubt Nubia's potential as an ally so soon before their eventual change in focus in the 1320s and 1330s.

The first crusading proposal which discusses 'Ethiopia' (likely Nubia) appears in the 1273 *Tractatus de statu Saracenorum* written by the Dominican missionary William of Tripoli. In it, William said that *Ethiopia* was south of Egypt and had always been Christian.[105] Despite its brevity, the text highlights the belief in a Christian kingdom south of Egypt. Although William would have gained much knowledge from his trip in Egypt he did not seemingly wish to disseminate any other information that he had learned about the Christian Africans and focused largely on Egypt itself. It would not be until the early fourteenth century that treatises specifically focused on the Africans, particularly on Nubians.

Whilst it remains true that the majority of crusade treatises do not discuss either Nubia or Ethiopia, those that do, do so at some length, particularly in regards to Nubia. For the most part, intimate knowledge of the military capacity of either the Nubians or Ethiopians does not feature, possibly a reason why they did not appear in the majority of treatises. However, some military prowess is alluded to by some, such as Hayton of Corycus and Marino Sanudo, even if specific details were not known. Indeed, William of Adam, the French Dominican missionary who wrote the *De modo Sarracenos extirpandi* (c.1316-7), which was personally delivered to Cardinal Raymond William

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[105] William of Tripoli, '*Tractatus de statu Saracenorum*', in William of Tripoli, *Notitia de Machometo. De statu Sarracenorum*, ed. P. Engels (Würzburg, 1992), Ch. 4, 278.

of Farges, nephew of Pope Clement V, exclaimed the importance of not forgetting *Ethiopia* and allowing it to be cut off from the memory of Europeans.[106]

This warning was to be taken especially seriously, as William said that he had travelled to *Ethiopia* and preached there at some point during the twenty months that he had been in the Red Sea region.[107] William's *Ethiopia* was said to be willing to aid in the blocking of trade in the Red Sea as part of his proposed plan to cut off Egypt from its source of wealth.[108] It is difficult to ascertain whether the text refers to either Nubia or Ethiopia, as William only describes his 'true Ethiopia' (*verum Ethiopiam*) to be west of the Red Sea and that it post-dates the rise of Solomonid self-descriptions as Ethiopians.[109] It would appear to be describing Nubia, if we understand it in the context of the formative years of Ethiopian appropriation of the toponym of Ethiopia, and the text could be read as a warning by William regarding the increasing decline of Nubia at the hands of the Mamluks. Not only was Nubia's position beneficial to the Europeans, it had equally been suffering from the ever increasing Mamluk threat. Unbeknown to the Crusaders, however, two important events happened in Nubia around the time of William's treatise: that of the installation of the Muslim Kanz ed-Dawla as King; and the conversion of the cathedral at Dongola into a Mosque. The Crusaders were not aware that time to build any alliance was limited.

Yet, Nubia remained thought of as a potential ally and appeared as such amongst the most influential treatises, such as those directly presented to Popes Clement V and John XXII. Whether they were the result of a period of European focus towards Nubia

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[106] William Adam*, Defeat*, Ch. 5, 104; 105.
[107] Ibid., Ch. 5, pp. 102-105
[108] Ibid., Ch. 5, pp. 114-7.
[109] Ibid., Ch. 5, 98.

stemming from the Second Council of Lyons, as Vantini suggested, will not be investigated here. Instead, they will be used to highlight the growing presence of Nubia in European knowledge and how that was then utilised. The first to explicitly make the Nubian case was Hayton of Corycus, an Armenian monk and ambassador who, whilst in France, wrote *La Flor des Estoires de la Terre d'Orient*, which he presented to Pope Clement V in 1307. Firstly, he reiterated the increasingly standard information that the Kingdom of *Nubie* was Christian and 12 days south of Egypt through all desert and sand.[110] However, unlike other texts, which merely display geographical knowledge, Nubia's location serves a purpose. Following the geographical assertion, Nubia's importance is affirmed by Hayton whilst stating how the *Nubiens* could prevent the Sultan from moving into Syria if he were to be preoccupied to the south, so that the Crusaders could re-occupy and re-fortify the cities of the Holy Land to such a degree that they would not fall again.[111] Building on that notion Hayton makes the powerful statement directly addressing the Pope:

> Holy Father, you should write to the King of the *Nubiens*, who are Christians and were converted to the Christian faith by St. Thomas the Apostle in the land of *Ethiope*, so that they wage war against the Sultan and his men. I greatly believe that these *Nubiens*, for the honor of Our Lord Jesus Christ and out of reverence to Your Holiness, would make war against the Sultan and his men and would cause damage to their power, creating great trouble for the Sultan and his men…

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[110] Hayton of Corycus, 'La Flor des Estoires de la Terre d'Orient', Ch. 10, 232.
[111] Ibid., Ch. 16, pp. 239-40, Ch. 18, 241.

before then suggesting that messengers from Armenia could act as intermediaries.[112]

The acknowledgment of these possible intermediaries suggests that Armenians had the

potential to be important brokers of exchange between Crusaders and the Africans, as

stated earlier. Most importantly, in Hayton's mind, Nubia was more than willing to

fight alongside the Crusaders and, indeed, should be engaged with. Nubia's power is

not explicitly stated by Hayton, but he alludes to the fact that he believes Nubia to be a

strong military power, and one strong enough to play a major role against Egypt.

Similarly, Marino Sanudo Torsello, a Venetian statesman and geographer who wrote

and updated his *Liber Secretorum Fidelium Crucis* up until 1321, sees *Nubia* as an

important potential ally to reach out to who would be willing to fight against Egypt.

After making the case that Nubia was in trouble, Marino again suggests Nubia's

potential strategic importance as a fellow enemy of Egypt; though also seemingly

acknowledging the limitations of supplying any army coming from the south due to

the deserts and scarcity of all things surrounding Egypt.[113] Yet, this did not undermine

Sanudo's proposed plan. Practical information about Nubia also appears, for Sanudo

states specific distances and towns: there were 140 miles between Cairo (Babylon)

and Syene (on the border of Nubia) and then 240 miles then onto Meroë. He adds that

there is a journey of over 12 days across the desert between Egypt and Nubia, but does

suggest that Nubia is easier to reach via the Red Sea, for he tells his reader that the

Eastern Desert of Egypt only takes three days to traverse to reach Beronike.[114] Not

only was Nubia more clearly understood by Sanudo, he also was aware of its potential

function in the Christian fight. In contrast to Hayton, Sanudo is much more detailed in

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[112] Ibid., Ch. 23, 247.
[113] Marino Sanudo Torsello, *Liber secretorum*, ed. Bongars, Book I Part V Ch. 2, 32, Book II Part I Ch. 3, 36, Book II Part III Ch. 4, 53; Marino Sanudo Torsello, *Book of Secrets*, trans. Lock, pp. 65, 71, 97.
[114] Marino Sanudo Torsello, *Liber secretorum*, ed. Bongars, Book III Part XIV Ch. 12, pp. 259-61; Marino Sanudo Torsello, *Book of Secrets*, trans. Lock, pp. 413-5.

his words. For example, he states the mercantile importance of 'Ethiopia': 'Since the above [tolls] are imposed all over Egypt, and as far as *Aethiopiam* and India they are of immense use to the Sultan, his people and his merchants'.[115] Sanudo understood the importance of trade as the lifeline of Egypt if the Crusaders could control access to the Nile: 'nor can food or help be brought from the upper Nile, from *Aethiopia* or anywhere else, so great will be the plight of the Egyptians. They will be compelled by extreme necessity to withdraw and give up the land because of famine'.[116]

The *Liber Secretorum* was clearly a powerful case for Nubia becoming an ally of the Crusaders. Apart from the textual information given by Sanudo, this is particularly reflected in the manuscript said to be the one that Sanudo presented to Pope John XXII in 1321. Images, particularly of people, are largely absent in the work but one striking example appears opposite to the discussion of Nubia in Book II Part I Chs. 1 through 3 on fol. 16r. The image depicts what appears to be an idealised crusade on Egypt, with the European Crusaders arriving by sea and Nubian 'Crusaders' attacking the rear of the distracted Egyptian Muslim army, and sharing the same flags and banners (Fig. 5). Given the lack of other images, it would suggest that Sanudo was specifically highlighting this option to the Pope.[117] Sanudo's proposed Crusade was also supported with knowledgeable maps (107r-111r, 112v-113r) which

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[115] Marino Sanudo Torsello, *Liber secretorum*, ed. Bongars, Book I Part I Ch. 4, 24; Marino Sanudo Torsello, *Book of Secrets*, trans. Lock, 53.

[116] Marino Sanudo Torsello, *Liber secretorum*, ed. Bongars, Book II Part IV Ch. 27, 91; Marino Sanudo Torsello, *Book of Secrets*, trans. Lock, 150. Only a few years later in 1324 Jordanus of Severac goes as far as to state that just two ships in the Indian Ocean would disrupt the Mamluk trade: *Annales Minorum Seu Trium Ordinum A S. Francisco Institutorum*, ed. L. Wadding, vol. 3 (Rome, 1636), 256.

[117] Not including the end maps and margin decoration there are arguably only six other comparably decorative images across 107 folios: Vat.Lat. 2972 7v, 11v, 14r, 68r, 93v, 94r. Most of the folios have little or no decoration at all.

indicate the location of Nubia.[118] Nubia was presented as more than a viable potential ally. More importantly, it was an ally that was said to have been able to aid in the conquering of Egypt within four to five years.[119] Any joint Crusade, however, failed to materialise.[120]

Fig. 5. 'Nubians as Crusaders', in Marino Sanudo Torsello, *Liber secretorum*, Vat.Lat. 2972, 15v

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[118] E. Edson, 'Reviving the Crusade: Sanudo's Scheme and Vesconte's Maps', in *Eastward Bound*, ed. Allen, pp. 131-55. Sanudo worked closely with cartographer Paulinus Veneto to create his detailed maps to accompany his plans: B. Degenhart and A. Schmitt, 'Marino Sanudo und Paolino Veneto. Zwei Literaten des 14. Jahrhunderts in ihrer Wirkung auf Buchillustrierung und Kartographie in Venedig, Avignon und Neapel', *Römisches Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 14 (1973), pp. 3-137. For more on the significance of Veneto, see: M. Di Cesare, *Studien zu Paulinus Venetus. De mapa mundi* (Wiesbaden, 2015).
[119] Marino Sanudo Torsello, *Liber secretorum*, ed. Bongars, Book II Part I Ch. 3, 36; Marino Sanudo Torsello, *Book of Secrets*, trans. Lock, pp. 71-2.
[120] On the specific failure of Sanudo's proposals, see: C. J. Tyerman, 'Marino Sanudo Torsello and the Lost Crusade: Lobbying in the Fourteenth Century', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 32 (1982), pp. 57-73.

The Outcome of these Crusade Treatises

It is difficult to judge whether these proposed plans were failures or not. When Pierre de la Palud was appointed Patriarch of Jerusalem in 1329 whilst at the papal court in Avignon, he was soon sent to Egypt with the hope of negotiating a settlement with the Mamluks for access to the Holy Land. The failure of this negotiation then led to the planning of a new crusade.[121] Even before the arrival of the mission, the Pope sent a letter, dated 1st December 1329, to the Magnificent Emperor of 'Ethiopia' (*Magnifico viro Imperatori Aethiopum*), which appears to praise the ruler for their treatment of the preachers, presumably those who left earlier in 1316.[122] Yet, no crusade treastise concerning Nubians was invoked, displaying the lack of Nubian desire to form a grand crusading coalition.

The treatises did have a wider indirect effect, however. Sabino de Sandoli has suggested that Sultan al‑Malik an-Nāṣir gave Nubians their chapel on Mount Calvary in 1333 as he wanted to forestall any possible Christian uprising, by Western and Eastern groups, against the Mamluks.[123] If true, Egypt seemingly did fear their Christian neighbours uniting. It may be related to the fact that Nubia once again appeared in another treastise in the previous year: the *Directorium ad Passagium Faciendum* (1332).[124] Such a donation may have equally have been for the appeasement of Christian Nubians following decades of Mamluk-supported Muslims

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[121] J. Dunbabin, *A Hound of God. Pierre de la Palud and the Fourteenth Century Church* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 164-78.

[122] *Annales Minorum Seu Trium Ordinum A S. Francisco Institutorum*, ed. L. Wadding, vol. VII (Rome, 1733), no.15, pp. 102-3. The letter to the Emperor also had additional praise for his 'passionate zeal' (vo*tis zelemur ardentibus*).

[123] S. De Sandoli, *The Peaceful Liberation of the Holy Places in the XIV Century* (Cairo, 1990), pp. 54-5.

[124] Pseudo-Brocardus, 'Directorium ad Passagium Faciendum', in RHC Doc. Arm. II, De tercio motivo ad passagium faciendum, 388.

being installed on the Nubian throne since 1286 as well as to quell fears of Nubians engaging with the Crusaders following a recent Nubian focus in crusade treatises, though this then begs the question of why the Sutlan, who was in to his third decade of his third reign, would have cared when Nubia was in decline because of Mamluk actions.

Increasing fears from Egypt, particularly following the rise of the Mamluks, would lead to greater pressures on Nubia resulting in its eventual collapse at the turn of the sixteenth century. Muslim fears of a Nubian-Crusader alliance undoubtedly added to the motives for this greater pressure. Building on increasing southern Mamluk incursions, the first half of the fourteenth century witnessed numerous claimants to the Nubian (Makurian) throne seeking assistance from Egypt to support their cause. Following the conversion of the cathedral in Dongola into a mosque in 1317, the process of Islamisation in Nubia was thoroughly underway. The true extent of the story of the decline of medieval Nubia is still unknown, but the call for Egyptian aid in the usurpation of 1365 appears to have been a pivotal event. The nephew of the king usurped the throne with the aid of Arab tribes: mainly the Banū Jaʾd, but also the Banū ʿl-Kanz, and the Banū ʿl-ʿIkrima. As the king was killed in the ensuing battle those loyal to him wrote to the Mamluks in Egypt for help. Egypt came to the aid of Nubia, but the damage had been done and Nubia effectively became a vassal state of Mamluk Egypt.[125] In 1365-6 Dongola ceased to be the Makurian capital and the royal court had moved to Daw. The Mamluk-initiated decline of Nubia during the fourteenth century does not appear directly in any European textual accounts of the period despite its focus in treatises, however.

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[125] Welsby, *Medieval Kingdoms*, pp. 248-9.

Instead, Nubia, the ally proposed by numerous treatise writers, dwindled into obscurity in European discourse. This was possibly aided by Europeans hearing certain information from Muslims, such as that of the fourteenth-century author al-ʿUmarī who repeated the narrative that Nubia was found to be a wasteland and uninhabitable by Tūrānshāh in 1172-3 and, additionally, that the king had actually become a Muslim, despite the fact that the last named Christian king was Joel who reigned during 1484.[126] That said, though no acknowledgment appears in European textual accounts, some understanding of the changing situation in Nubia did appear on maps. The Dulcert Map (1339), for example, indicates that the Sultan of Nubia (labelled as *Nubia saracenorum*) was always at war with the Christians of Nubia, with this likely to be an understanding of the puppet kingdom Nubia had increasingly become in the earlier decades of the century.[127] In turn, Nubia's stature suffered greatly. Certainly, after 1365 no more crusades were aimed towards Egypt. This, along with the increasing Arabisation of the country, could be key elements in the switch of European attention from Nubia to Ethiopia. In this regard, European interest in Nubia remained superficial and this subsequent disinterest is likely a consequence of the rise of Ethiopia in European discourse.

The 1320s appear to be the key turning point in the gradual evolution of European-Nubian and European-Ethiopian relations, after Sanudo's plans were not acted upon. Whilst Nubia greatly suffered at the hand of Egypt, Ethiopia appears to have avoided

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[126] Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-abṣār*, eds. Sezgin, Jokhosha, and Neubauer, pp. IV:٣٢-٣٣; al-ʿOmarī, *Masālik el abṣār*, trans. Gaudefroy-Demombynes, Ch. 9, pp. 47-51.
[127] Nordenskiöld, *Periplus*, pl. V. Equally, Marco Polo (c.1300) notes that Ethiopia was at war with Nubia, which, as no other source suggests this, may reflect conflict with the Mamluks who had increasingly gained a presence in Nubia from the 1270s onwards rather than Christian Nubia itself: Polo, Ch. 193, I:436. Symon Semeonis (1323) also appears to comment on some Nubians not being Christians: *Itinerarium*, ed. and trans. Esposito, Ch. 72, 92; 93.

initial Mamluk aggression. The early years of Mamluk-Solomonid relations had witnessed numerous delegations and gift exchanges which served the interests of both parties following the first known correspondence in 1274.[128] After all, Mamluk interests were to the north with the Crusaders whilst the Solomonids' focus was to the south with their increasingly rebellious tributaries, primarily Ifat. These close ties are highlighted by the role of the Mamluk sultan as mediator for Emperor Yagbe'ä Seyon's letter to the Ethiopian community in Jerusalem in 1290.[129] That is not to say, however, that there were no tensions, particularly regarding religious authority, between Ethiopia and the land of their Patriarch.[130]

It has long been recognized that an embassy was said to have been received in Europe in 1306, though the earliest reference to this delegation only dates to 1483.[131] Giacomo Filippo Foresti da Bergamo, an Augustinian monk, who wrote his *Supplementum chronicarum*, was said to have taken his account from the now lost works of Giovanni da Carignano (d. c.1329-30).[132] Verena Krebs has highlighted how the overwhelming lack of earlier evidence for the delegation, particulary of Ethiopian origin, produces problems for its authenticity, and should be seen more akin to a 'phantom embassy'. [133] In fact, the only known comparable embassy noted in sources

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[128] Wiet, 'relations Égypto-Abyssines'; Cuoq, *L'Islam en Ethiopie*, pp. 105-14; Tadesse, *Church and State*, pp. 129-30.

[129] Cerulli, *Etiopi*, pp. I:88-90; Munro-Hay, *Ethiopia and Alexandria*, pp. 195-9.

[130] Munro-Hay, *Ethiopia and Alexandria*, pp. 199-207.

[131] P. Lachat, 'Un ambassade éthiopienne auprès de Clement V, à Avignon, en 1310', *Annali Pontificio Museo Missionario archeologico già Lateranensi*, 31 (1967), pp. 9-21; C. F. Beckingham, 'An Ethiopian Embassy to Europe c. 1310', JSS, 14 (1989), pp. 337-46. However, see: Krebs, *Windows onto the World*, pp. 9-14. Instead, the first well-documented embassy arrived in Europe in 1402: Ibid., pp. 35-44. For a traditional overview of Ethiopian embassies, see: L. Hansberry, 'Ethiopian Ambassadors to Latin Courts and Latin Emissaries to Prester John', *Ethiopia Observer*, 9.2 (1965), pp. 90-9.

[132] Giacomo Filippo Foresti da Bergamo, *Supplementum Chronicarum* (Venice, 1483), Book VIII, fols. 17v-18r; R. A. Skelton, 'An Ethiopian Embassy to Western Europe in 1306' in *Ethiopian Itineraries Circa 1400-1524*, ed. O. G. S. Crawford (Cambridge, 1958), pp. 214-5.

[133] Krebs, *Windows onto the World*, pp. 9-14. Adam Knobler has also questioned the existence of the embassy: Knobler, *Mythology*, 36.

was said to arrive in Rome in 1351, though it is only referred to as from 'Prester John'.[134] Instead, the text of Bergamo should be seen within its late-fifteenth context, setting a precedent for the arrival of later Ethiopian embassies.

Although I agree that the 1306 embassy cannot be accepted as plausible, one other source has to be taken into consideration, particularly for what it can tell us of knowledge dissemination. An Italian forgery later in the fourteenth century sought to take advantage of increasing knowledge regarding Ethiopia and new attempts at launching a crusade. Some time in the mid-century, a letter was addressed to the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV supposedly from the Ethiopian *negus* Wədəm Räʿad (*Voddomaradeg*) about launching a new, joint crusade.[135] Yet, whilst Wədəm Räʿad was the *negus* at the time of the supposed 1306 embassy, Charles IV did not reign until between 1355-78, showing that it was a forgery. The importance placed on this forgery here is not to legitimise the 1306 embassy but to emphasise the growing influence of Ethiopia in European mentality, so much so that a near-contemporary forgery of a supposed document was a desired creation. In his far-ranging 1983 article entitled *Forgery and Plagiarism in the Middle Age*s, Giles Constable described successful forgers as those who produced works that would 'attune their deceits so closely to the desires and standards of their age'.[136] Indeed, the document reveals more about why it was made more so than regarding what it actually says. It would appear that knowledge of an Ethiopian embassy, whether fictional or real, or at least a

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[134] John of Hildesheim, *Three Kings of Cologne*, ed. Horstmann, Ch. 34, pp. 259-60. There is, however, some confusion to the identity of the embassy. The text does not explicitly state Nubians but does appear amongst a passage concerning Melchior of Nubia and Prester John. They could also have been Ethiopians, but Nubians appear more likely in the context of the text.

[135] *Lettera inedita del presto Giovanni all'imperatore Carlo iv, ed altra di Lentulo ai senatori romani sopra Gesu Cristo, secondo il volgarizzamento citato dagli accademici della Crusca Diverso*, ed. L. Del Prete (Lucca, 1857), pp. 9-22. See the analysis in Krebs, *Windows onto the World*, pp. 13-4.

[136] See: G. Constable, 'Forgery and Plagiarism in the Middle Ages', *Archiv für Diplomatik, Schriftgeschichte, Siegel- und Wappenkunde*, 29 (1983), pp. 1-41, quote on 1.

hope in one, did circulate in Europe throughout the century and was of interest to those in crusading circles: an audience the forger could infiltrate with their work. Above all, the gradual evolution of the European preference for Ethiopia over Nubia can be witnessed in this document.

Indeed, the power shift between Nubia and Ethiopia in European mentality apparently occurred primarily during the expansionist reign of ʿĀmda Ṣeyōn (r.1314-44). ʿĀmda Ṣeyōn undertook a relatively long period of Ethiopian expansion and was the first to really consolidate Ethiopian power since the arrival of the Solomonids.[137] News of his victories would have travelled quickly, including to the ears of pilgrims. Aside from his references to Nubians, Niccolò da Poggibonsi goes as far as to say that the Ethiopians (*Tiopi*) 'love us Franks more so than the other Christian groups, and would willingly unite with us Latins. But the Sultan of Babylon never allows a Latin to go to them in case they ally to make war against him'. Additionally, he says that Ethiopians can traverse Egypt and the Holy Land without paying tribute to the Sultan unlike any other group because he fears their lord as the world's greatest.[138] It is possible that, due to his emphasis on Ethiopia rather than Nubia (considering Niccolò did seemingly distinguish between the two), he reflects the shifting power between the two kingdoms during the fourteenth century and another potential avenue of opportunity.

The fourteenth-century shift in the decreasing importance of Nubia compared to the rising importance of Ethiopia can also be evidenced in the texts of Marco Polo and the anonymous *El Libro del conoscimiento* either side of ʿĀmda Ṣeyōn's reign. Polo was

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[137] Tadesse, *Church and State*, pp. 98-106. ʿĀmda Ṣeyōn focussed on reaffirming Ethiopia's northern and eastern borders and his conflicts are described in a chronicle dedicated to his victories: *Histoire des guerres d'Amda Seyon, roi d'Ethiopie*, ed. J. Perruchon (Paris, 1889)*; The Glorious Victories of Amda Seyon, King of Ethiopia*, trans. G. W. B. Huntingford (Oxford, 1965).
[138] NP, Ch. 257, pp. II:209-10.

the first to prioritise Ethiopia over Nubia in the recollection of his travels to Rustichello in c.1300. Polo's preference for Ethiopia, rather than Nubia, is noteworthy as Nubia was not yet in decline and political attentions were turning to the kingdom in crusade treatises, suggesting that it should still have been of most interest. Moreover, the knowledge of *Graçiona* (Aksum) in the *Libro* appeared important enough for the author to attest it to the fate of the Vivaldis, almost as if to legitimatise their daring legacy reaching a growingly influential kingdom.[139] Most importantly for this later period, informants of Europeans appear to begin to mould European discourse and the contrasting fortunes of the Africans kingdoms within it. This developing discourse of Ethiopian primacy enabled the appropriation of the toponym of Ethiopia to the Ethiopian kingdom as outlined in Chapter I.

Regardless of this developing discourse, although Pope Urban V in 1363 wanted to specifically direct money towards the protection of Eastern Christians, and with the 'universalist' preaching of Peter Thomas on Cyprus noted above, the last crusade to attack Egypt in 1365 appears to have made no particular effort to establish co-operation with either Nubians or Ethiopians.[140] The Alexandrian Crusade led by Peter I of Lusignan, King of Cyrpus, though initially successful, did not utilise the position of the African Christians, somewhat particularly surprising given the relatively positive relations between Christian groups on Cyprus.[141] One explanation for this is

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[139] Marino, *Libro*, Chs. 80-3, 63, 67.
[140] Letter from Pope Urban V to King John II of France on 31st March 1363, in M. Prou, *Études sur les relations politiques du pape Urbain V avec les rois de France Jean II et Charles V (1362-1370)* (Paris, 1888), 101.
[141] Parker, 'Peter I of Lusignan'.

that Peter I's intentions were instead primarily commercial rather than him having any concern for Christian groups.[142]

Trade to Egypt had greatly increased since edicts were lifted in the 1340s.[143] These traders presumably included Nubians and Ethiopians, too, yet neither were utilised as contacts or for knowledge gathering. As concluded by Nicholas Coureas regarding Cypriot trade, Eastern Christians (and I specifically add Nubians and Ethiopians) were surely also participating. but their absence in sources is due to the lack of surviving written documentation when compared to other groups, such as Italians, and most likely the result of differences in documenting exchanges.[144] Such silence on utilising Nubians and Ethiopians, whether directly as allies or indirectly as mediators of knowledge, seemingly damaged the Crusade's chance of success.

Whilst Nubia's decline limited scope for European relations with Nubia, it is possible that Europeans were initially wary of utilising Ethiopians as an alternative. Responding to a letter from a group of Christians of Cyprus in the fourteenth century, Ibn Abī Ṭālib al-Dimashqī suggests, reflecting on Hadith, that the Christians of Ethiopia were amongst the People of the Book closest to Muslim affection due to their early sheltering of Muslims and so 'on whom no fear shall come neither shall they

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[142] P. W. Edbury, 'The Crusading Policy of King Peter I of Cyprus', in *The Eastern Mediterranean Lands in the Period of the Crusades*, ed. P. M. Holt (Warminster, 1977), pp. 90-105.

[143] E. Ashtor, *Levant Trade in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1983), pp. 64-102. Also: D. Jacoby, 'Western Merchants, Pilgrims, and Travelers in Alexandria in the Time of Philippe de Mézière (ca. 1327-1405)', in *Philippe de Mézières and His Age. Piety and Politics in the Fourteenth Century*, eds. R. Blumenfeld-Kozinski and K. Petkov (Leiden, 2011), pp. 403-26.

[144] N. Coureas, 'The Structure and Content of the Notarial Deeds of Lamberto di Sambuceto and Giovanni da Rocha', in *Diplomatics in the Eastern Mediterranean 1000-1500. Aspects of Cross-Cultural Communication*, eds. A. D. Beihammer, M. G. Parani, and C. D. Schabel (Leiden, 2008), 233. In terms of Nubia specifically, there has been debate on the geographical scope of Nubian trading. For example compare A. M. S. Osman, *The Economy and Trade of Medieval Nubia* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Cambridge University, 1978), pp. 113-27 and Adams, *Qasr Ibrîm. The Late Medieval Period*, pp. 211-2, 249-50. Giovanni Ruffini's more recent work, however, argues that Nubia was a 'Mediterranean society in Africa', which would suggest here that Nubian traders would have indeed been present on Cyprus, if not also further afield: Ruffini, *Medieval Nubia*.

grieve'.[145] If a comparable belief circulated elsewhere in Europe, it could be suggested that Europeans were somewhat wary of this special place of Ethiopia in Islam, which, thus, enhanced their reliance on an, albeit fading, hope of a Nubian alliance, particularly for the first half of the fourteenth century. However, one text does suggest that there was an understanding between Ethiopia and the Crusade. Bertrandon de la Brocquière noted meeting the Neapolitan Pietro near Constantinople in 1432 who had stayed in Ethiopia for some years and had even married an Ethiopian.[146] Much of his information falls outside of the scope of this study, but one passage is relevant for the Alexandrian Crusade. Bertrandon relates what he was told by Pietro regarding Sayfa ʾArʿad (r.1344-72), the grandfather of the present Ethiopian king:

> [Pietro] told me that when the King of Cyprus conquered Alexandria, the grandfather of the present king left his country to come to Jerusalem, and had three million people with him. And when he reached the River Nile he received news that the King of Cyprus had abandoned Alexandria. He then told me that [the king] had asked how many people he had and found that he had lost two million from mortality and the heat and decided to return [to his kingdom].[147]

Though there is no surviving correspondence between the Crusade leaders and Ethiopia, it would suggest that both Ethiopia and Europe may have been aware of

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[145] *Muslim-Christian Polemic During the Crusades. The Letter from the People of Cyprus and Ibn Abī Ṭālib al-Dimashqī's Response*, eds. and trans. R. Y. Ebied and D. Thomas (Leiden, 2005), Response 50, pp. 286 (text), 287 (trans.). More generally: W. Raven, 'Some Early Islamic Texts on the Negus of Abyssinia', JSS, 33.2 (1988), pp. 197-218; E. van Donzel, '"Leave the Ethiopians Alone as Long as They Leave You Alone": *Utrukū l-ḥabaša mā tarakūkum. Some Reflections on a ḥadīt*', in *Studia Aethiopica*, eds. Böll et al., pp. 109-14; H. Hayajneh, 'Abessinisches aus den arabischen Überlieferungen: Randbemerkungen', in *Multidisciplinary Views on the Horn of Africa*, ed. Elliesie, pp. 497-510.

[146] On the context of his visit, see: Krebs, *Windows onto the World*, pp. 63-8.

[147] *Le Voyage d'outremer de Bertrandon de la Brocquière*, ed. C. Schefer (Paris, 1892), 148.

each other's military plans or desires prior to 1402. However, taking into account that the text dates during a period of greater interaction between Europe and Ethiopia, it may simply reflect an attempt to pre-date the new enthusiasm for crusading by Europeans and desires to ally with the Ethiopians.

Events elsewhere likely prevented any co-operation if any were indeed desired in any case. One such event was the Black Death, which possibly had a similarly devastating effect on both Nubia and Ethiopia as it had in Europe. Despite all but one contemporary Arab writer placing the source of the Black Death in Asia, European writers believed the plague originated in 'Ethiopia' or the Upper Nile.[148] There had been a long history of placing plague origins in 'Ethiopia' since antiquity by both Arab and European writers. The Justinianic Plague, for example, beginning in 541, was a possible cause for the decline and ultimate fall of Aksum over the next century.[149] However, European writers appeared to cling to historiographical traditions, whether true or false. Jacme d'Agramont, a Catalan physician, re-emphasised an 'Ethiopian' origin of the plague, as according to Galen, in the earliest Black Death plague treatise in 1348.[150] Whether his *Ethiopia* should be read as Nubia or Ethiopia, a similar devastation might be expected despite a dearth of evidence for its effect on Africa. If the devastation of Qūṣ in Upper Egypt, an important trade town with Nubia, by the Black Death can be extrapolated, it could be expected that the plague did have a profound effect on Nubia, particularly in the north.[151] Admittedly unlikely, the after effects of the Black Death in North-East Africa should further add

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[148] M. W. Dols, *The Black Death in the Middle East* (Princeton, 1977), 42.
[149] Power, *Red Sea*, pp. 190-1.
[150] *Regiment de preservació de pestilència de Jacme d'Agramont (s. XIV). Introducció, transcripció i estudi lingüístic*, ed. J. Veny i Clar (Tarragona, 1971), Ch. 17, 61.
[151] Dols, *Black Death*, pp. 164-5.

doubt to the likelihood or possibility of large-scale military co-operation with Crusaders during this period.

Whilst physical co-operation evaded the Crusaders, they developed a new zeal for finding African aid. ʿĀmda Ṣeyōn's period of expansion began decades of Ethiopian demonstrations of power. Coupled with the adoption of the toponym of Ethiopia, Ethiopia increasingly sounded like the kingdom the Crusaders had always hoped Nubia would be. This period of Ethiopian expansion is noted by European writers, too, albeit rarely. Johannis Vitodurani, who wrote his *Chronica* in c.1348, appears to have been making reference to the hostile relations between Ethiopia and Egypt during the final years of the reign of the ʿĀmda Ṣeyōn. For his 1341 entry he stated that during his time there was a terrible war (*atrocia bella*) between the kings of *Ethiopie* and Egypt.[152] If this was the case then it would also have required specialist knowledge of the region. Europeans with access to Muslim writings could have readily become acquainted with Ethiopia. For example, Al-ʿUmarī's (d.1348) *Masālik el abṣār fi mamālik el amṣār* (Routes Toward Insight into the Capital Empires) chronicled seven Muslim kingdoms (Awfat, Dawaru, Arababni, Hadiya, Sharka, Bali, and Darah) that neighboured the Christian Kingdom of Amhara and described the geo-political tensions in the region.[153] These details were also copied and expanded on with additions by al-Maqrīzī a century later in 1438.[154] The importance of this limited European awareness is its affect on the development of the Prester John myth.

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[152] 'Die Chronik Johanns von Winterthur', in MGH SrG ns III, 194. For Ethiopia and Egypt's relationship during this period, see: Munro-Hay, *Ethiopia and Alexandria*, pp. 207-9.

[153] Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-abṣār fi mamālik al-amṣār*, eds. F. Sezgin, A. Jokhosha, and E. Neubauer, 27 vols. (Frankfurt am Main, 1988-9), pp. IV:١٦-٣٠ (text); Ibn Faḍl Allah al-ʿOmarī, *Masālik el abṣār fi mamālik el amṣār. I L'Afrique, moins l'Egypte*, trans. M. Gaudefroy-Demombynes (Paris, 1927), Ch. 8, pp. 1-39 (trans.).

[154] He details the seven kingdoms neighbouring Christian Ethiopia and proceeds to tell of the relations between Christians and Muslims in the country between c.1300 to 1435-6: *Macrizi Historiae*, ed. and

Emperor Dāwīt I (r.1382-1411) was the first Ethiopian ruler accredited with the first direct communication between Ethiopia and Europe since late antiquity. His reign witnessed the exchange of gifts, notably a silver chalice and a clock.[155] According to the *History of the Patriarchs*, there was also another gift exchange, akin to those a millennium before, between the King of the Franks and the Emperor of Ethiopia.[156] If so, the eminence of the *Kəbrä nägäśt* would appear to have set precedence for these European-Ethiopian exchanges and potential alliances to materialise within Ethiopia to accompany any Crusader desires. In the 1380s the Ethiopian emperor declared that he would destroy Mecca in retaliation for the Mamluk persecutions of Christians in Egypt and, according to some Ethiopic sources, was even said to have desired to liberate Jerusalem.[157] As far as Europe was concerned, Ethiopia appeared to be their steadfast African ally that they had longed for as Nubia quickly became forgotten, though it is important to state that Ethiopia remained primarily concerned with securing its borders rather than, similarly to Nubia before it, participating in any notions of a grand crusading coalition. In order to enable any relations, however, Europe needed to finally contact Prester John.

Latin trans. Rinck, pp. 2-14 (text); al-Maqrīzī, *Book of the True Knowledge*, trans. Huntingford, pp. 1-11 (trans.).

[155] M. E. Heldman, 'A Chalice from Venice for Emperor Dāwit of Ethiopia', *BSOAS*, 53.3 (1990), pp. 442-5; M. Mulugetta, 'A Mechanical Clock from Venice for Emperor Dawit of Ethiopia', *Aethiopica*, 13 (2010), pp. 189-92.

[156] HPEC III.III, pp. 249-50.

[157] HPEC III.III, pp. 267-8; J. Perruchon, 'Légendes relatives a Dawit II (Lebna-Dengel), roi d'Éthiopie', *Revue sémitique*, 6 (1898), pp. 163-4 (text), 170-1 (trans.). As noted by Taddesse Tamrat and Adam Knobler, Perruchon incorrrectly attributed the legend to the wrong Dāwīt: Tadesse, *Church and State*, 255n3; Knobler, *Mythology*, pp. 38-9n30. Emperor Dāwīt I had marched on Egypt early in his reign: *Acta Marqorēwos*, ed. and Latin trans. Conti Rossini, pp. 42-4 (text), OSCN, pp. 741-4 (trans.). See: Wiet, 'relations Égypto-Abyssines', 124; Tadesse, *Church and State*, pp. 255-6.

VIII: African Prester John(s)

Myths evolved on the frontiers of Latin Christendom due to their distance and the perceived alterity of their peoples; the Crusader States were no different.[1] Arguably the most well-known myth of the period was that of Prester John, the mythical Christian king of the East with whom the Crusaders desperately sought an alliance. The early history of the legend of Prester John need not be repeated here, nor his alleged migration through India.[2] Instead, this final chapter seeks to show how Prester John developed as two parallel myths: one regarding Nubia and the other Ethiopia.[3] Building on previous chapters, it should be no surprise that the initial myth centred on Nubia, with the Ethiopian myth developing in the fourteenth century following Nubia's decline and Ethiopia's adoption of the 'Ethiopia' toponym. Both the European desires for preaching and for military alliances were energised by the belief in these African Prester Johns.

The name of *Presbyter Iohannes*, initially described as a Nestorian, first appeared in Otto of Freising's *De Duabus Civitatibus* (1157) whilst narrating events of 1145.[4] His legendary letter circulated throughout the medieval Mediterranean and survives in at

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[1] For example, see: L. B. Mortensen, ed., *The Making of Christian Myths in the Periphery of Latin Christendom (c. 1000-1300)* (Copenhagen, 2006).

[2] On the myth, see most recently: K. Brewer, *Prester John. The Legend and its Sources* (Farnham, 2015). On the movement of Prester John, see: Hamilton, 'Continental Drift'; W. Baum, *Die Verwandlungen des Mythos vom Reich des Priesterkönigs Johannes. Rom, Byzanz und die Christen des Orients im Mittelalter* (Klagenfurt, 1999); C. Rouxpetel, 'La figure du Prêtre Jean: les mutations d'une prophétie Souverain chrétien idéal, figure providentielle ou paradigme de l'orientalisme médiéval', *Questes*, 28 (2014), pp. 99-120. On the specifically African context, see amongst others: R. Lefevre, 'Riflessi etiopici nella cultura europea del medioevo e del rinascimento', *Annali Lateranensi*, 8 (1944), pp. 9-89; F. Relaño, *The Shaping of Africa. Cosmographic Discourse and Cartographic Science in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot, 2002), pp. 51-74; F. Cardini, 'La crociata e il "Prete Gianni d'Africa"', in *Linguistic, Oriental and Ethiopian Studies in Memory of Paolo Marrassini*, eds. A. Bausi, A. Gori, and G. Lusini (Wiesbaden, 2014), pp. 213-24.

[3] For an opposing view, see: Lewy, *Der Apokalyptische Abessinier*. Lewy does not see a particular distinction between Nubia and Ethiopia in medieval European discourse.

[4] Otto of Freising, 'De Duabus Civitatibus', Book VII Ch. 33, in MGH SS RGUS 45, pp. 363-7.

least 469 manuscripts across 20 languages.[5] The text's date in the second half of the twelfth century is important since, as we have seen, this was the initial period of the expansion of knowledge resulting from increasing networks in the Holy Land. This Prester was said to have inspired Pope Alexander III's 1177 letter sent to the mysterious 'King of the Indies' in 1177, although, as noted above, there have been doubts about the veracity of this communication.[6]

The two principal traits of Prester John could have been ascribed to both African kingdoms: being a priest-king and having subordinate kings under him. For example, in Ethiopia, the twelfth-century emperor Yemreḥanna Kristos, who had ruled prior to the Prester's letter, was an ordained priest prior to becoming emperor and was known to celebrate Masses after he became emperor.[7] Moreover, according to his *Gadl*, he ruled in accordance to the 'Apostolic Canons'.[8] No other ruler was recorded as a priest and so it is possible that it was Yemreḥanna's rule which enabled the development of the knowledge of the Ethiopian priest-kings. It is likely that a memory of Yemreḥanna was what led Abū al-Makārim in c.1200 to describe the Ethiopian rulers as priest-kings.[9] Likewise, certain Nubian kings could have been described as priest-kings, with the possible remnants of the influence of Byzantine traditions being present.[10] Equally, both kingdoms had systems that could be seen as having 'sub-kings'. Nubia had eparchs, with the most powerful being the so-called 'Lord of the Mountain' in

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[5] Brewer, *Prester John*, pp. 316-9.

[6] See above: 111n32.

[7] *Gadla Yemreḥanna Krestos*, ed. and trans. Marrassini, pp. 30-2, 45-8 (text), 69-70, 81-3 (trans.). However, Marie-Laure Derat argues that any identification between the king and Prester John is a fifteenth century creation when the *gaḍl* was written: M.-L. Derat, 'Roi prêtre et Prêtre Jean: analyse de la Vie d'un souverain éthiopien du XIIe siècle, Yemreḥanna Krestos', *Annales d'Ethiopie*, 27 (2012), pp. 127-43.

[8] *Gadla Yemreḥanna Krestos*, ed. and trans. Marrassini, pp. 44 (text), 80 (trans.).

[9] *Churches and Monasteries*, ed. and trans. Evetts, pp. ١٢٢-٣ (text), 286 (trans.).

[10] For examples, see: Monneret de Villard, *Nubia Cristiana*, pp. 98-9; Ruffini *Medieval Nubia*, pp. 244-5, 248. On Byzantine priest-kings, see: G. Dagron, *Emperor and Priest. The Imperial Office in Byzantium*, trans. J. Birrell (Cambridge, 2003).

former Nobadia, whilst Ethiopia, particularly following the rise of the Solomonids,

had strong regional governors more akin to a feudal system (the *Gult*), most notably

the coastal Bahr Negash.[11] Whispers of either of these elements of Nubia and Ethiopia

could have helped given rise to the mythical king.

The rise of the African Prester John primarily occurred following the Prester's

increased legendary status during the Fifth Crusade (1217-21).[12] One element of

Prester John's legend was his setting within an apocalyptic background, which was

particularly important for his identification as a Nubian or Ethiopian. The Apocalypse

of Pseudo-Methodius, which told of the meeting of the Roman and Ethiopian kings in

Jerusalem, had long been known in Europe and echoed the alliances of the sixth

century.[13] It was built upon by translations of new works, notably the *Legend of*

Bahira in the early thirteenth century, which also called for the possibility of a distant

Christian ally.[14] Moreover, the fresco of the Six Kings at Qusayr 'Amrah in Jordan,

dating originally to the early eighth century, was potentially viewed by some later

Europeans, and could have further created a sense of wonder about a powerful distant

African king (Fig. 5).[15] That said, detailing when first direct European contact was

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[11] L. V. Žabkar, 'The Eparch of Nubia as King', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 22.4 (1963), pp. 217-9; B. Hendrickx, 'The "Lord of the Mountain". A Study of the Nubian Eparchos of Nobadia', *Le Muséon*, 124.3-4 (2011), pp. 303-55; D. Crummey, 'Abyssinian Feudalism', *Past and Present*, 89 (1980), pp. 115-38; M. W. Aregay, 'Military Elites in Medieval Ethiopia', JES, 30.1 (1997), pp. 31-73.
[12] M. Gosman, 'La Legende du Pretre Jean et la Propagande auprès des Croises devant Damiette (1218-1221)', in *La Croisade, réalités et fictions. Actes du colloque d'Amiens, 18-22 mars 1987*, ed. D. Buschinger (Göppingen, 1989), pp. 133-42; Hamilton, 'Impact of Prester John'.
[13] Importantly, at least 96 of the 196 manuscripts of six Latin recensions, either in part or in full, identified by Marc Laureys and Daniel Verhelst, are dated between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries: M. Laureys and D. Verhelst, 'Pseudo-Methodius, *Revelationes*: Textgeschichte und kritische Edition. Ein Leuven-Groninger Forschungprojekt', in *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, eds. W. Verbeke, D. Verhelst, and A. Welkenhuysen (Leuven, 1988), pp. 112-36.
[14] *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius. An Alexandrian World Chronicle*, ed. and trans. B. Garstad (Cambridge, MA, 2012), pp. 64 (Greek), 132-4 (Latin); J. Bignami-Odier and G. Levi Della Vida, 'Une version latine de l'apocalypse syro-arabo de Serge-Bahira', *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire*, 62 (1950), 145.
[15] Four of the six kings can be identified as: an unknown Byzantine emperor, the Visigothic King Roderic, a Sassanian emperor (probably Khosrow I), and an unnamed Negus of Aksum. On the fresco,

made with 'Prester John' will not be the focus of this section, but, rather, the development of the toponymical origin of this king. Whilst the association of Prester John with Ethiopia is well-attested, particularly for the fifteenth century onwards, the association with Nubia in the fourteenth is not. Instead, this African migration of the Prester should be re-dated to an earlier period.

Fig. 6. Fresco, c.705-15. West wall, hall, Qusayr 'Amra, Jordan. Taken from: A. Musil, *Kusejr 'Amra und Schlösser östlich von Moab*, vol. 2 (Vienna, 1907), pl. XXVI.

The Nubian Prester John

Nubia had maintained a position of power in the eyes of Eastern Christians for centuries. Lutz Greisiger, for instance, has identified the Nubian king motif in Eastern

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see primarily: O. Grabar, 'The Painting of the Six Kings at Qusayr ʿAmrah', *Ars orientalis*, 1 (1954), pp. 185-7; G. Fowden, *Quṣayr ʿAmra. Art and the Umayyad Elite in Late Antique Syria* (Berkeley, 2004), pp. 197-226, esp. 207-13.

apocalypses, particularly associated with the power of 'Kush'.[16] It has also been suggested by Jürgen Tubach, whilst using a similar hypothesis as Daniel Selden regarding Aksum's appropriation of the term 'Ethiopia', that there was also a tradition that Nubia was one of the four great kingdoms discussed in the likes of Mānī's *Kephalaia* (c.400 CE).[17] Coupled with the Eastern Christian memory of the eighth-century Nubian King Cyriacus who sent an army into Egypt following the persecution of Copts, as analysed by Robin Seignobos, the legendary status of Prester John adapted these earlier myths of Nubian kings.[18] There would appear to have been ample elements of tradition to allow for such a myth regarding Nubia. Firstly, however, Nubia was not initially associated directly with Prester John, but instead developed alongside a semi-separate myth about the powerful Nubian king's desire to destroy Mecca.

The first author to show awareness of this separate myth was Oliver von Paderborn, a German preacher and later Bishop of Paderborn, who went on the Fifth Crusade where he wrote the *Historia Damiatini* between 1220 and 1222. A book written in Arabic by a man said to be neither a Christian, Muslim, nor Jew began to circulate amongst the Fifth Crusaders at Damietta, which foretold that a Nubian king would destroy Mecca and scatter the bones of Muhammad. If this came to pass and Damietta was captured,

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[16] L. Greisiger, 'Ein nubischer Erlöser-König: Kūš in syrischen Apokalypsen des 7. Jahrhunderts', in *Der Christliche Orient und seine Umwelt*, eds. S. G. Vashalomidze and L. Greisiger (Wiesbaden, 2007), pp. 189-213. For another example, see: J. P. Monferrer Sala, 'Tradición e intertextualidad en la apocalíptica cristiana oriental. El motivo de los reyes de Etiopía y Nubia en el "Apocalipsis (árabe) del Ps. Atanasio" y sus *testimonia apocalyptica*', *Al-Qantara*, 32.1 (2011), pp. 199-228.

[17] J. Tubach, 'Die Tradition von den vier Weltreichen im christlichen Nubien', in *Die koptische Kirche in den ersten drei islamischen Jahrhunderten. Beiträge zum gleichnamigen Leucorea-Kolloquium 2002*, ed. W. Beltz (Halle, 2003), pp. 199-209.

[18] R. Seignobos, 'Stratigraphie d'un récit. L'intervention égyptienne du roi Ciraque de Nubie dans l'historiographie copte-arabe et éthiopienne (Xᵉ-XVIIIᵉ siècle)', *Hypothèses*, 13 (2010), pp. 49-59.

Christianity would defeat the forces of Islam.[19] A prophecy in the *Book of Clement*
further influenced the creation of this myth. According to the text, when Easter fell on
3rd April the King of the East and King of the West would meet in Jerusalem –
coincidently this would happen in 1222.[20] Bernard Hamilton has suggested that the
importance placed on this *Book* can ultimately be seen as the primary cause for the
defeat of the Crusaders as, due to their keen desire to complete the prophecy, they
ignored the Nile floods on their expedition towards Cairo to disastrous effect.[21]

This new prophecy could have been connected to the arrival to the Nubian king in
Constantinople, though it would appear more likely connected to one of two Eastern
prophecies concerning an Ethiopian king. The first prophecy is found in the Islamic
Hadith concerning *Dhūl-Suwayqatayn* which says that the 'one with bow-legs' from
Ethiopia (الحبشة) will destroy the Ka'ba in Mecca towards the end of time. This
recollection, alluded to briefly in the Qur'an (Al-Fīl 105), is likely to be based on
Abraha's march on Mecca said to be in the Year of the Elephant in 570 CE.[22] Abraha
was the Ethiopian vassal of Yemen, rather than a king which his myth seemingly
evolved into if it did influence later Crusader beliefs, who threatened to destroy the
Ka'ba in response to the vandalism of the new cathedral of Sana'a.[23] Importantly, the
Qur'an had been translated into Latin in the 1140s by Robert of Ketton and, along

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[19] Oliver of Paderborn, 'Historia Damiatini', ed. Hoogeweg, Ch. 35, pp. 231-2; Oliver of Paderborn, *Capture of Damietta*, trans. Gavigan, pp. 89-90.
[20] Oliver of Paderborn, 'Historia Damiatini', ed. Hoogeweg, Ch. 56, 259; Oliver of Paderborn, *Capture of Damietta*, trans. Gavigan, 113.
[21] Hamilton, 'Continental Drift', 246.
[22] The march most likely happened around a decade earlier: M. Charles, 'The Elephants of Aksum: In Search of the Bush Elephant in Late Antiquity', JLA, 11.1 (2018), 170n16.
[23] The two most important collections of the *Al-Sihah al-Sittah* both relate the episode: *The Translations of the Meanings of Sahīh Al-Bukhārī*, ed. and trans. M. Muhsin Khan, 9 vols. (Riyadh, 1997), II:383; *The Translations of the Meanings of Sahīh Muslim*, ed. and trans. N. al-Khattab and H. Khattab, 7 vols. (Riyadh, 2007), VII:306. See also: L. Conrad, 'Abraha and Muhammad: Some Observations Apropos of Literary 'Topoi' in the Early Arabic Historical Tradition', *BSOAS*, 50.2 (1987), pp. 225-40; E. van Donzel, 'Abraha the Abyssinian in Islamic Tradition', *Aethiopica*, 12 (2009), pp. 48-57.

with Hadith becoming known elsewhere, the 'king' could have become known in Europe through this growing intellectual exchange.[24] The other prophecy results from a verse in the Syriac Peshitta Bible (Ps 68:31) which could have become known to the Crusaders in the Holy Land. Though the verse can be translated the same as it is in Latin it can also be open to a different interpretation. The line *as kūsh tashlem ʿīdā l-ʿalâhā* (ܟܘܫ ܬܫܠܡ ܐܝܕܐ ܠܐܠܗܐ) can also be understood as 'Ethiopia will yield the power of God' rather than the traditional 'Ethiopia will reach out its hand to God'.[25] However, the hope of the actual arrival of the Nubian king was always in doubt without comprehensive communication, not least because of the problems of Nile navigation for a co-ordinated attack.[26]

Since the Fifth Crusade and the increasing legend of the rising up of the Nubian king to destroy Mecca, the prestige of the Nubian king had been growing. Steadfast in its influence, throughout the fourteenth century the Damietta prophecy was repeatedly invoked by later writers, too.[27] Despite this, Nubia was not directly linked to Prester

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[24] The Hadiths translated in the Toledan Collection which contains Ketton's Qur'an do not feature any related to Abraha, however. Without wider circulated knowledge it would have been unlikely that Europeans would have associated the Latin translation of Sura 105 naming an '*hominum elephantis*' to a powerful African in isolation, let alone attribute it to the growing myth of Prester John: T. Bibliander, *Machumetis Saracenorum principis, eiusque successorum vitae, doctrina ac ipse Alcoran* (Basel, 1543), 187. It would instead require these translations to be known as part of a wider corpus of knowledge of Islamic traditions; a diverse corpus which we may never know the true extent of. Also see: T. E. Burman, *Reading the Qur'an in Latin Christendom, 1140-1560* (Philadelphia, 2007).

[25] F. J. Martinez, 'The King of Rūm and the King of Ethiopia in Medieval Apocalyptic Texts from Egypt', in *Coptic Studies. Acts of the Third International Congress of Coptic Studies, Warsaw, 20-25 August, 1984*, ed. W. Godlweski (Warsaw, 1990), 253. This is also noted in Knobler, *Mythology*, 34. *Kūsh* should, however, originally be read as Nubia rather than Ethiopia.

[26] For these problems primarily see the recent works of John Cooper: J. P. Cooper, 'No easy option: Nile versus Red Sea in Ancient and Medieval North-South Navigation', in *Maritime Technology in the Ancient Economy. Ship Design and Navigation*, eds. W.V. Harris and K. Iara (Portsmouth, RI, 2011), pp. 189-210; idem, '"Fear God; Fear the Bogaze": The Nile Mouths and the Navigational Landscape of the Medieval Nile Delta, Egypt', *Al-Masāq*, 24.1 (2012), pp. 53-73; idem, *The Medieval Nile. Route, Navigation, and Landscape in Islamic Egypt* (Cairo, 2014), esp. pp. 103-84.

[27] For example, the Damietta prophecy is invoked almost verbatim by Marino Sanudo in his *Liber Secretorum*, a work he presented to Pope John XXII in 1321. Another treatise, the 1332 *Directorium ad Passagium Faciendum* attributed to Pseudo-Brocardus, likewise makes reference to the prophesy heard at Damietta. Similarly, it could also be argued that the prophecy also influenced Ottokar aus der Gaal's early fourteenth-century historical poem the *Österreichische Reimchronik* where he poetically speaks of

John for some time. The association with Nubia culminated in the work of Jacopo of Verona in 1335 who specifically labelled the King of *Nubia* as Prester John, the first writer to give the Prester an explicit African location.[28] A Prester John of *Nubye* would also later be recalled by Jean de Bethencourt, a French explorer who wrote the *l'Histoire de la Conquête des Canaries* between the years 1402 and 1406.[29] Whether through the telling of the Damietta prophecy or through its association with Prester John, Nubia was clearly portrayed to Europeans as a kingdom with a powerful ruler.

According to John of Hildesheim (d.1375), the influence of the Nubian Prester John was said to have been present in Acre since around 1200, as evidenced by the Templar acquisition of a relic of the Wise Man Melchior, King of Nubia.[30] Not coincidently, the identification of Melchior as Nubian coincided with the rise of the black Magi in art, further establishing the fact in European culture.[31] The presence of Nubia in Crusader mentality in Acre was particularly important. David Jacoby has posited that relics were possibly used to rank churches along the pilgrimage route within Acre.[32] If this was the case, Nubia and its Prester had been central to Christian pilgrimage in the city. However, no other evidence is available for this supposed event.

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the *Künig von Ethyopia* as wanting to avenge the defeat of the Christians. Lastly, the prophecy was again told by John of Ypres, writing before his death in 1383, in his *Chronico Sythiensi Sancti Bertini* whilst abbot of Saint-Bertin: Marino Sanudo Torsello, *Liber secretorum*, ed. Bongars, Book III Part XI Ch. 7, pp. 207-8; Marino Sanudo Torsello, *Book of Secrets*, trans. Lock, 329; Pseudo-Brocardus, 'Directorium ad Passagium Faciendum', in RHC Doc. Arm. II, De tercio motivo ad passagium faciendum, 388; Ottokar aus der Gaal, '*Österreichische Reimchronik*', in MGH Dt. Chron., V.i, v.52840-53243, pp. 705-12; Iohannes de Ypra, 'Chronicon S. Bertini', in *Recueil des historiens de la France*, t. XVIII, Anno 1218, pp. 607-8.

[28] LP, Ch. 2, 32.

[29] Jean de Bethencourt, *Le Canarien. Livre de la conquête et conversion des Canaries (1402-1422)*, ed. G. Gravier (Rouen, 1874), Ch. 56, pp. 90-4.

[30] John of Hildesheim, 'Historia trium regum', ed. E. Köpke, in *Mitteilungen aus den Handschriften der Ritter-Akademie zu Brandenburg*, 1 (1878), pp. 10-11.

[31] P. H. D. Kaplan, *The Rise of the Black Magus in Western Art* (Ann Arbor, 1985), pp. 19-78; L. Bisgaard, 'A Black Mystery. The Hagiography of the Three Magi', in *Medieval History Writing and Crusading Ideology*, eds. T. M. S. Lehtonen and K. Villads Jensen (Helsinki, 2005), pp. 120-38.

[32] D. Jacoby, 'Pilgrimage in Crusader Acre: The Pardouns dAcre', in *De Sion exibit lex*, ed. Hen, pp. 105-117.

By the mid-fourteenth century, however, Ethiopia was beginning to replace Nubia in European thought, hence the somewhat limited direct references to a Nubian Prester John. Yet, Nubia had laid the groundwork for the rise of the Ethiopian myth. Between the transfer of Prester John from Nubia to Ethiopia, one reference is difficult to ascertain whether it ascribed Prester John to either Nubia or Ethiopia. Jordanus Catalani, a Catalan Dominican missionary who wrote his *Mirabilia* (c.1330s), attributed the land of *Ethiopia* to Prester John.[33] Jordanus uses the primary toponym of *India tertia*, but his text also alludes to the attribution of Nubia. Most of what he says is fanciful and aligns with the Wonders of the East genre in which 'Ethiopia' is the home of dragons, giant flying birds, unicorns, sweating cats whose scent is collected, other large venomous serpents, and gryphons.[34] These descriptions are not a concern here, but there are some elements of the text that are, especially as by his own admission, Jordanus had not visited *Ethiopia*, but he had heard these things from trustworthy people, albeit most likely a literary device designed to support Jordanus' legitimacy, although some use of informants cannot be discounted.[35] Three specific details given by Jordanus suggest that he was indeed referring to Nubia rather than Ethiopia proper: the first is a reference to two mountains, possibly an understanding of the Bāb al-Nūba shown on medieval maps; the second is a reference to fifty-two sub-kings being subordinate to Prester John, possibly relating to the Patriarchs of Nubia;

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[33] C. De Montbret, 'Description des Merveilles d'une partie de l'Asie par le P. Jordan ou Jourdain Catalani', in *Recueil de Voyages et de Mémoires par la Société Géographie*, 4 (Paris, 1839), 61.

[34] Ibid., pp. 55-7.

[35] Ibid., 55: *De Tertia autem India dicam: quod non vidi, eo quod ibi non fui, verum, a fide dignis audivi*. Jordanus again reiterates that he cannot say any more having not visited the land himself (*Alia de Aethiopia narrare nescio, eo quod non fui ibi*), though he says that he had met many people from there (*Multos vidi et habui notos de partibus illis*): 58.

and, thirdly, a possibly somewhat confused understanding of the *Baqṭ*.[36] Ultimately, however, it is possible, given the absence of the specific toponym of Nubia, that the Ethiopian adoption of the 'Ethiopian' toponym had taken effect by this time and so Jordanus, though being rather fanciful, had become aware of the specific Ethiopian kingdom. Whatever the case, both answers offer interesting results. Either it adds another reference for the declining Nubian myth or it pre-dates the direct textual association with Ethiopia by around 30 years.

The Ethiopian Prester John

According to Constantin Marinescu, who first proposed the notion in 1923, there was a correlation between the Gəʿəz term *zan* or *gan* (lord) and the Venetian name *Gian* or *Zane* (John).[37] He proposed that the Venetians in Egypt misunderstood the Gəʿəz term for addressing the majesty of their monarch with the personal name of 'John', thus, resulting in the growing rumours of Prester John of Ethiopia. Though the full extent of the legend of the Ethiopian Prester John is only witnessed into the fifteenth century, one notable text, the account attributed to Roger of Howden in the latter half of the twelfth century discussed earlier, reveals a much earlier Ethiopian link: before a prester, there was a king. The text makes explicit reference to a King (*rex*) John who ruled the land of *Abitis*, which took eight months to traverse. It mistakenly adds that the land was adjacent to parts of central Asia, but does correctly allude to Ethiopia's continual tension with Aden (if the King of *Melec Sanar*, who fought daily with King John, should be identified as such rather than a further misidentification with a distant

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[36] Ibid., pp. 57-8: *In ista Aethiopia, sunt duo montes ignei; Iste dicitur quod habet quinquaginta duos reges sub se;* and *Isti imperatori Soldanus Babyloniae dat omni anno de tributo quingenta millia duplarum, ut dicitur.*

[37] C. Marinescu, 'Le prêtre Jean. Son Pays. Explication de son Nom', *Académie Roumaine, Bulletin de la Section Historique*, 10 (1923), pp. 101-3.

Asian land).[38] If the author was indeed Roger, he could have learnt such knowledge whilst on the Third Crusade, suggesting that this information had been circulating amongst the Crusaders. Though this link between Ethiopia and a ruler named John pre-dates the common origin of the fourteenth century, it does add some weight to Marinescu's hypothesis. There was no contemporary Ethiopian ruler named John to associate with the text.

Yet, Prester John did not reside in Ethiopia for around 150 years. Even Marco Polo's narration of the great power of the Ethiopian ruler did not connect him to Prester John towards the end of the thirteenth century.[39] It is possible that the first appearance of the Ethiopian Prester John could have been on the Giovanni da Carignano map of c.1306-10. Due to the destruction of the map in World War II, it cannot be known whether Giacomo Filippo Foresti da Bergamo's later depiction of the 'Ethiopian' Prester John, said to have been based on Carignano's reports (and presumably his map), did actually appear on the original map.[40] Instead, the first direct textual reference to an Ethiopian Prester John comes from Johannes de Marignolli in his *Relatio* of his travels (c.1360s), in which he explicitly links the Prester to *Abasty*.[41]

The emerging myth of Ethiopia's supposed control over the Nile floods also coincidently appeared to reach Europe around this time. Since the late eleventh century the legend of the Ethiopian emperor's alleged control of the Nile had been disseminating and was first attributed to the Prester who was 'Lord of *Nubie* and *Ethiopie*' in Jacopo da Verona's 1335 text before its primary association with Ethiopia

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[38] *Du Yorkshire à l'Inde*, ed. Gautier-Dalché, De Viis Maris, Ch. 11, pp. 216-7.
[39] This link is not made in the various versions of Polo's work: Polo, Ch. 193, pp. I:434-40.
[40] See above: 42n64.
[41] Johannes de Marignolli, 'Relatio', Ch. 1, in *Sinica Franciscana. Volumen I. Itinera et Relationes Fratrum Minorum Saeculi XIII et XIV*, ed. A. van den Wyngaert (Rome, 1929), 532.

beginning in the 1360s.[42] Egypt's reliance on the Nile provided a foundation for this

deep-rooted fear to prosper in Europe, and it was this same understanding of the

importance of the Nile for Egypt which had been built upon in the treatises proposed

by crusade planners. This belief remained a key element in the European imagination

during the arrival of the first Ethiopian embassies to Europe in the early fifteenth

century.[43]

Ethiopia's self-identification as the 'Ethiopia' of scripture in the fourteenth century

effectively adopted the identification of Prester John, too. The *Kəbrä nägäśt*

particularly attended to the revelations of Pseudo-Methodius and the meeting of a

'Roman' and Ethiopian emperor.[44] Moreover, other texts further attributed to this new

identification. The Ethiopic version of Pseudo-Shenoute (c.1330), in parallel to the

Kəbrä nägäśt, also ends with passages involving the apocalyptic emperors of Ethiopia

and Rome.[45] Specifically regarding the power of Ethiopia as apocalyptic saviour,

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[42] LP, Ch. 2, 32; Johannes de Marignolli, 'Relatio', Ch. 1, in *Sinica Franciscana I*, ed. van den Wyngaert, 532. On the myth, see: Munro-Hay, *Ethiopia and Alexandria*, pp. 157-60; R. Pankhurst, 'Ethiopia's Alleged Control of the Nile', in *The Nile. Histories, Cultures, Myths*, eds. H. Erlich and I. Gershoni (Boulder, 2000), pp. 25-37; Erlich, *The Cross and the River*, pp. 35-8. Ethiopia did not necessarily replace Nubia as the subject of this myth consistently with Philippe de Mézières in his c.1389 epic *Le songe du vieil pelerine*, for instance, confusing Ethiopia's alleged control of the Nile and wrongfully attributing this ability to the King of '*Nubie*': Philippe de Mézières, *Le songe du vieil pelerin*, eds. Blanchard, Calvet, and Kahn, Book I Ch. 9, pp. I:221-2.

[43] For a brief overview of this importance, see: F. A. Hassan, 'Extreme Nile Floods and Famines in Medieval Egypt (AD 930-1500) and Their Climatic Implications', *Quaternary International*, 173-4 (2007), pp. 101-12. This was well-known to Europeans through the works of Isidore of Seville amongst others: *Isidori Hispalensis Etymologiarum*, ed. Lindsay, II: Book XIV Ch. 3. Into the fifteenth century, John of Sultaniya's record of the 1402 embassy to Venice in c.1404, for example, notes the Ethiopian emperor's power over the Nile: A. Kern, 'Der "Libellus de Notitia Orbis" Iohannes III (De Galonifontibus) O. P. Erzbischofs von Sulthanyeh', *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, 8 (1938), Ch. 17, pp. 120-1. On blockading plans, see: B. Weber, 'Bloquer le Nil pour assécher l'Égypte: un ambitieux projet de croisade?', in *Croisades en Afrique*, ed. Weber, pp. 215-44.

[44] A. Caquot, 'Le nom du roi de Rome dans le *Kebra Nagast*', in *Guirlande pour Abba Jérome. Travaux offerts à Abba Jérome Gabra Musé par ses élèves et ses amis réunis*, ed. J. Tubiana (Paris, 1983), pp. 153-66; A. Caquot, 'L'Ethiopie dans les Révélations du Pseudo-Méthode et dans le livre éthiopien de la gloire des rois', *Revue de la Société Ernest Renan*, 39 (1989-1990), pp. 53-65; A. Caquot, 'Le Kebra Nagast et les Révélations du Pseudo-Méthode', in *Études éthiopiennes. Actes du a Xᵉ conference internationale des études éthiopiennes, Paris 24-28 août 1988*, ed. C. LePage (Paris, 1994), pp. 331-5.

[45] A. Grohmann, 'Die im Äthiopischen, Arabischen und Koptischen erhaltenen Visionen Apa Shenute's von Atripe', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 67 (1913), pp. 248-65.

following Ethiopia's threat to Mecca in the text, the Emperor of Ethiopia is said to have received tributes from the kings of Rome and Egypt and will rule Jerusalem.[46] Although no Ethiopian texts go as far as to mention Prester John as Ethiopia's leader, it can be seen through other Ethiopian literature that the kingdom did not necessarily reject utilising its association with the myth for its own motives.

Rival African Prester Johns were as powerful as each other during the fourteenth century. For Europeans, Ethiopia came to replace Nubia by the fifteenth century, as Nubia's decline resulted in it no longer being a suitable ally in the East. Prester John became firmly Ethiopian. This adoption of a specifically Ethiopian Prester John, rather than a Nubian one, soon led to attempts at direct communication from European rulers who wished for such a meeting. In 1400, Henry IV of England sent a letter to the *magnifico et potenti Principi, Regi Abassice, sive Presbytero Johanni, amico nostro in Christo dilecto*.[47] The letter also marks a new age of Prester John as Henry's Ethiopian Prester John was one to physically meet, whereas the preceeding Nubian Prester remained only one of myth. Prester John began to transfer between the African kingdoms, transversing from myth to physical reality, with the first conclusive embassy from Ethiopia arriving in Europe in 1402.[48]

The Next Progression

Despite the fragmentation of crusading as an enterprise during the fourteenth century, the European desire for victory did not fade. Ultimately, the Crusader defeat to the

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[46] Ibid., pp. 260-3.
[47] *Royal and Historical Letters During the Reign of Henry the Fourth, King of England and of France, and Lord of Ireland*, vol. 1, ed. F. C. Hingeston (London, 1860), pp. 421-2. Further, see: Cerulli, *Etiopi*, pp. I:200-13.
[48] Kern, 'Libellus de Notitia Orbis', Ch. 17, pp. 120-1. See above: pp. 191-3.

Ottomans at the Battle of Nicopolis in 1396 resulted in a change in large scale pan-European crusade enthusiasm, with the battle proving to be one of the last great co-ordinated European crusading coalitions.[49] In turn, the crusades of the fifteenth century rapidly became increasingly global.[50] This is epitomised by the ever-increasing importance of Ethiopia in European mentality, centred on Prester John, encapsulated in Henry IV's letter. The letter is surprising, for English literary references to either Nubians or Ethiopians, especially those concerning contemporary events, are rare. The apparent randomness of Henry's letter is further highlighted in the lack of English contacts with Ethiopia throughout the century (it was mostly the Italian States, France, and Aragon that engaged with Ethiopia). Instead, Henry's letter should be viewed in light of his personal desire to project his image as a warrior, to both his people and other leaders, rather than under the pretence of any real English interest in liaising with Prester John, with Henry's letter ultimately becoming unimportant in the European pursuit of contacting the Prester as no other English attempts were made.[51] Yet, elsewhere in Europe, further letters to Prester John followed in 1406 and 1407, by Charles VI of France and Konrad von Jungingen, Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights, respectively.[52] These letters show the influence that increasing knowledge of the region was having throughout Europe, with the first decade of the fifteenth century witnesseing the so-called 'birth' of relations as coined by Matteo Salvadore.[53]

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[49] A. S. Atiya, *The Crusade of Nicopolis* (New York, 1978); K. DeVries, 'The Lack of a Western European Military Response to the Ottoman Invasions of Eastern Europe from Nicopolis (1396) to Mohacs (1526)', *Journal of Military History*, 63.3 (1999), pp. 539-59. For the direction of the later Crusades, see: A. S. Atiya, *The Crusade in the Later Middle Ages*; N. Housley, *The Later Crusades, 1274-1580. From Lyons to Alcazar* (Oxford, 1992); N. Housley, ed., *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century. Message and Impact* (Basingstoke, 2004).

[50] B. Weber, 'Toward a Global Crusade? The Papacy and the Non-Latin World in the Fifteenth Century', in *Reconfiguring the Fifteenth-Century Crusade*, ed. N. Housley (London, 2017), pp. 11-44.

[51] C. Given-Wilson, *Henry IV* (New Haven, 2016), pp. 398-9.

[52] Brewer, *Prester John*, 284.

[53] Salvadore, *African Prester John*.

As the first Ethiopian embassy approached Venice in 1402, the turn of the fifteenth century produced guides to Ethiopia for Europeans that reflected the increasing numbers of travellers and traders. One itinerary, dated to c.1410, will be discussed here in order to bridge this thesis to studies on fifteenth- and sixteenth-century relations.[54] This text was written around the time that Europeans, such as Pietro Rombulo, began regularly travelling to Ethiopia, the new land of Prester John.[55] Prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, Italians had been present in Ethiopia throughout the century. Writing in c.1485, Francesco Suriano relates how numerous people who spoke Italian were found at the court of the Ethiopian king.[56] Itineraries, such as this one, allowed for such expansive travel whilst also demonstrating some knowledge of three Ethiopian languages: Gəʿəz, Amharic, and Tigrinya.

Within the text, there are useful phrases for travellers to know as well as directions. The phrases are pratical statements, such as *Hospitium ubi est?* (Where is the lodging?) which an Ethiopian was said to understand as *findoc fiain*, accompanied by a list of translated words, such as 'money' (*Argentum*) which an Ethiopian would have understood as *brur* – which closely resembles *birr*, the Ethiopic word for silver. The author appears to confuse sentence structure with *findoc fiain* appearing to be an amalgamation of *fənduq* (lodging) and *ʾay-nu* (where), but following Tigrinyan word

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[54] N. Jorga, 'Cenni sulle relazioni tra l'Abissinia e l'Europa cattolica nel secoli XIV-XV, con un iterario inedito del Secolo XV', in *Centenario della nascita di Michele Amari*, vol. 1 (Palermo, 1910), pp. 146-50. Another version of this itinerary, though with some lacking differences, was printed as 'Iter F' in *Ethiopian Itineraries*, ed. Crawford, pp. 28-39.

[55] C. Trasselli, 'Un Italiano in Etiopia nei XV secolo Pietro Rombulo da Messina', RSE, 1.2 (1941), pp. 173-202. As well as increasing embassies, the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries witnessed many, particular Italian, artisans in Ethiopia: Krebs, *Windows onto the World*, pp. 235-312.

[56] Francesco Suriano, *Il trattato di Terra Santa e dell'Oriente*, ed. G. Golubovich (Milan, 1900), Ch. 35, 86.

order where the verb comes after the noun, unlike in Gəʿəz or Amharic.[57] In contrast the transliteration of nouns given by the author is a mixture of the correct equivalent noun and a confused understanding of an associated verb. For example, the word for 'bread' is given as *choppese*, possibly a mistransliteration of the Gəʿəz word *kobaza* (to bake bread) instead of *ḫəbz* (bread). However, the word for 'fire' is given as *sact*, seemingly a direct understanding of *ʾəsāt* (fire). Other words, such as *vaca* (water) for example, seem to have been better understood in Amharic *waha* (water), rather than its Gəʿəz form: *māy*. Other words, such as *asa* (fish) are practically identical to the Gəʿəz equivalent, in this case: *ʿāśā*. Most importantly to highlight from this itinerary is that this travel was not new, but there were increasingly more aids for helping those who wished to undertake it. The influence of Tigrinya in the text highlights the author's entry via the Red Sea and passage through Tigrinya territory, possibly following similar routes that had developed since the twelfth century if it is to be supposed that earlier European Red Sea traders likely ventured to African ports. It would be reasonable to suggest that similar undocumented geographical and linguistic knowledge found in the text would have been known by numerous Europeans interacting with Ethiopians in the Holy Land since the twelfth century – it was just not codified until later following the arrival of the Ethiopian 1402 embassy at Venice when such knowledge was increasingly more important to disseminate to facilitate prospering diplomatic efforts.

Knowledge accumulation owing to the undocumented networks and communal knowledge of the Holy Land enabled Europeans to develop their policy in the East. Whether it was expanding their missionary activities into Africa, utilising Nubia as a

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[57] Another explanation for '*fiain*' would be an understanding of Arabic by the author, though to ressemble the sound the speaker would have to say 'in where' (*fi ʿayn*) rather than just 'where' (*ʿayn*) which would appear odd phrasing even for a non-native speaker.

potential Crusader ally, or finding their mythical Prester John, developing knowledge about Nubia and Ethiopia was essential. It gave Europeans hope in finding alternative solutions to problems they faced, especially since the fall of Jerusalem in 1187. An understanding of Nubia gradually fed into growing myths regarding Ethiopia, which supported a continued discourse for an African Christian ally. Fifteenth-century European-Ethiopian relations were only able to be conducted because of knowledge regarding both African kingdoms disseminated in the previous centuries. These relations evolved due to earlier concepts of Nubia, which were, in turn, utilised by both Ethiopia and Europe for their own means.

Conclusion – Replacing Nubia with Ethiopia

and a New Era in Diplomacy

Undocumented networks, not easily traced in the historical record, and the formation of communal knowledge were key to the increasing dissemination of information regarding Nubia and Ethiopia to Europeans throughout the Crusading period. Expanding on aspects of the works of Bernard Hamilton, Anna-Dorothee von den Brincken, and Robin Seignobos, amongst others concerned with European developing knowledge of North-East Africans during the Crusades, this thesis has shown how the intellectual evolution within crusading discourse regarding the kingdoms of Nubia and Ethiopia occured as a result of direct and indirect interaction with Europeans. It may be reasonable to presume that stories such as the Venetian who informed Georges Lengherand about the Ethiopian embassy which had arrived in Egypt in 1481 had equally occurred in the previous centuries. Specifically, Georges declared that he knew of the content of the embassy, whose members invoked the power of its emperor and his ability to stop the Nile from flowing into Egypt.[1] Whether Georges relayed exactly what his Venetian informant told him or whether he used a little creative license cannot be ascertained, but his example shows the potential power that networks had for carrying news and information, particularly via encounters in the East. A further example is found in the text of Francisco Álvarez who explicitly noted how a Syrian man told him of the churches of Nubia from his own first-hand

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[1] *Voyage de Georges Lengherand, Mayeur de Mons en Haynaut, à Venise, Rome, Jérusalem, Mont Sinaï et le Kayre*, ed. Marquis de Godefroy Ménilglaise (Mons, 1861), pp. 185-8.

experience.[2] Though direct examples of information networks date towards the very end of the period discussed, there is no reason to discredit their undocumented influence in the earlier decades and centuries.

The sources presented throughout this thesis have shown how the usages of the term *Aethiopia* developed during the medieval period. First millennium knowledge appears to have been replaced by Biblical exegesis. By the twelfth century the epistemological duality of scripture and increasing secular knowledge resulting from the mostly undocumented networks of the Crusader States combined to develop European understanding of an African 'Ethiopia'. Whilst the meaning of 'Ethiopia' took longer to define to specifically mean the kingdom, the increasing utilisation of the toponyms of Nubia and Abyssinia, being (re)discovered and uncovered in the twelfth century respectively, was the direct result of knowledge networks. Importantly, the Crusades, and the exchanges they enabled in the East, were the catalysts for this.

Although not all knowledge remained consistent, its growth can still clearly be witnessed, illustrated in the appeareance of 'Ethiopia' and Nubia in mid-thirteenth-century encyclopaedic works. For example, discussion of 'Ethiopia', not including literary references, can be found on sixteen pages of the modern edition of Roger Bacon's *Opus Majus* (1267), and, additionally along with specific references to Nubia, on thirty-eight pages of the modern edition of Albertus Magnus' *De animalibus* (c.1260).[3] Without a doubt, European understanding of Nubia and Ethiopia greatly

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[2] Álvarez, Ch. 137, 168.

[3] *The Opus Majus of Roger Bacon*, ed. J. H. Bridges, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1900), Pars quarta, Geographia, pp. I:311-4, 318-26, Pars Sexta, Scientia Experimentalis Exemplum II, pp. II:210-1, Pars Septima, Moralis Philosophia Pars Tertia, Ch. IV, II:268; Albertus Magnus, *De animalibus*, ed. H. Stadler, 2 vols. (Münster, 1916-20), Book I Tract. i Ch. 7, I:35, Book II Tract. i Ch. 3, I:236, Book III Tract. ii Ch. 1, pp. I:310-11, Book III Tract. ii Ch. 2, I:313, Book III Tract. ii Ch. 9, I:356, Book VI Tract. iii Ch. 2,

increased through various sources of information in the East. Despite the continual existence of early confusions, it can be said that Nubia, following its (re)discovery, was defined by Europeans first, prior to Ethiopia proper, via Abyssinia. This knowledge of separate kingdoms was in turn utilised, particularly in Crusader attempts to form alliances with both kingdoms and as destinations for preaching enterprises.

Nubia and Ethiopia were both sought as Europeans increasingly believed that there was a powerful mythical king who could aid them in their fight against the Muslims. The expansion of European powers, particularly those trying to find Prester John, would have long-lasting effects on both African kingdoms. Between the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries, both Nubia and Ethiopia experienced opposing outcomes due to their association with Europe, whether this association was desired or not. Regardless of the materialisation of the fabled Nubian king who was said to be ready to rise up and destroy Mecca, his myth would grow alongside the development of a Nubian Prester John. Europeans finally found their Prester John in Ethiopia following four centuries of accumulating knowledge in 1493, yet, whilst earlier knowledge networks disseminated the myth of Prester John, the subsequent physical presence of the Portuguese in Ethiopia soon learnt that their mythical leader did not exist after all.[4] Even though direct co-ordination between the Crusaders and Nubians did not take

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pp. I:487-8, Book VII Tract. ii Ch. 4, I:549, Book VII Tract. ii Ch. 5, I:552, Book VIII Tract. ii Ch. 5, I:608, Book VIII Tract. v Ch. 1, pp. I:657-8, Book XII Tract. i Ch. 4, I:820, Book XII Tract. ii Ch. 6, pp. II:983-4, Book XV Tract. ii Ch. 1, pp. II:1017-8, Book XVI Tract. i Ch. 9, pp. II:1088-9, Book XIX Ch. 6, II:1260, Book XXII Tract. ii Ch. 1, II:1357, Book XXII Tract. ii Ch. 1, II:1368, Book XXII Tract. ii Ch. 1, II:1404, Book XXII Tract. ii Ch. 1, II:1411, Book XXII Tract. ii Ch. 1, II:1420, Book XXII Tract. ii Ch. 1, pp. XX:1422-3, Book XXIII [Ch. 1], pp. II:1446-7, Book XXIII Ch. 24, II:1499, Book XXIII Ch. 24, II:1511, Book XXIV Ch. 1, II:1545, Book XXIV Ch. 1, II:1547, Book XXV Ch. 1, pp. II:1552-3, Book XXV Ch. 2, II:1562, Book XXV Ch. 2, II:1565.

[4] M. Salvadore, 'The Jesuit Mission to Ethiopia (1555-1634) and the Death of Prester John', in *World-Building and the Early Modern Imagination*, ed. A. B. Kavey (New York, 2010), pp. 141-72. More generally, with ever-increasing contact, many European beliefs were challenged due to the narrowing percieved distance between peoples: A. Knobler, 'The Power of Distance: The Transformation of European Perceptions of Self and Other, 1100-1600', *Medieval Encounters*, 19 (2013), pp. 434-80.

place, the myth of such an alliance was not unfounded and was indeed feared by some Muslim writers. It must be stressed, however, that there is no evidence that Nubians actively facilitated or encouraged such beliefs and appear to have remained unconcerned with allying with the Crusaders in a military capacity.

This lack of joint-crusading desire by the Nubians fostered a European belief of a false narrative which led to the Europeans being uninformed about Nubian power. Whether as a result of Nubian disinterest in allying with the Crusaders or the failure of European strategy, Europe appears to have unwittingly watched on as Nubia increasingly succumbed to Mamluk pressure in response to perceived crusading alliances. This decline was not commented on by Europeans, if indeed even known, with the majority of information on this period instead coming from Muslim authors. The fullest account of Nubia during this later period given in a European language – Italian – was Leo Africanus' *Della descrittione dell'Africa et delle cose notabili che iui sono* published in 1550. This work was to be copied and translated many times, but only discussed Nubia in passing.[5] Leo's reasoning for his briefness was due to the fact that it consisted of 15 similar kingdoms ruled by four sovereigns, all similar in landscape, cuture, habits, and ways of living.[6] Judging by this account, the Nile Valley was now home to many similar small kingdoms, but none were worthy enough for an elaborate discussion by Leo – Nubia had finally fragmented. Somewhat ironically, authors initially began to place more emphasis on Nubia as a fellow Christian ally during the exact time when it was being reduced in size and power by the Mamluks

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[5] C. Black, 'Leo Africanus's "Descrittione dell'Africa" and Its Sixteenth-Century Translations', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 65 (2002), pp. 262-72.

[6] Giovanni Battista Ramusio, *Primo volume delle nauigationi et viaggi nel qual si contiene la descrittione dell'Africa, et del paese del Prete Ianni, con varii viaggi, dal mar Rosso a Calicut & infin all'isole Molucche, dove nascono le Spetierie et la navigatione attorno il mondo. li nomi de gli auttori, et le nauigationi, et i viaggi piuparticolarmente si mostrano nel foglio seguente* (Venice, 1550), Della descrittione dell'Africa, Settima parte, 87 (text); OSCN, 774 (trans.).

due to increased fears of budding and potential interaction with the Crusaders. It is too reductive to say that Nubia had no direct interaction with the Crusaders, despite the limited Nubian evidence, as the quote by Derek Welsby to begin this thesis states. Whilst the direct crusading relationship between Nubia and the Crusaders, as postulated by Giovanni Vantini regarding the Second Council of Lyons, has not been centrally argued here, there does need to be an added focus on the Crusades as a factor for the decline of Nubia.

The inability of Nubia to fulfil its potential in Crusader mentality occurred during a shift in crusading in general. Arguably, it was the end of the pan-European enthusiasm which enhanced the Nubian decline following the Mamluk incursions. The European desire to supplement the failed belief in Nubian strength with the new powerful ally of Ethiopia importantly occurred during the new Ottoman threat and rise of Tamerlane. These new threats required a response from European leaders, leaders who were aware of the failure of earlier potential Nubian co-operation. If the alliances proposed in the crusade treatises had been acted upon and the Mamluks had been weakened, the Nubian decline, or at least the speed of it, might well have been avoided and relations with Ethiopia may never have been as expansive. It was arguably during the fourteenth century that Ethiopia adopted the toponym of 'Ethiopia' for its own devices, too, thus creating a specific location for Europeans to pinpoint. Consequently, European-Ethiopian relations prospered, with the first conclusive Ethiopian embassy to reach Europe arriving in Venice in 1402. More embassies followed: in 1427-8 relations between Aragon and Ethiopia were initiated, which offered promise of future

royal marriage proposals, with a five-strong Ethiopian embassy arriving in 1430.[7]

Simultaneously there were multiple attempts at contact by various European leaders.

Most importantly, these attempts were diplomatic in nature, rather than economic,

further emphasising the increasingly powerful and influential role Ethiopia was

developing in European mentality. Interaction and diplomacy with Ethiopia was pan-

European – a feature that relations with Nubia had failed to establish.

Building on the undocumented networks and exchanges of the preceding centuries

facilitated by encounters in the Crusader States, the fifteenth century echoed relations

and alliances witnessed in the sixth. In fact, no less than thirty-two pieces of evidence

for diplomatic correspondences have been recorded between Ethiopia and European

leaders between 1400 and 1500.[8] There are also only five surviving letters between the

Pope and Ethiopia (four Latin and one Ethiopic) for the century which highlights the

independent nature of the European desire for relations with Ethiopia aside from

papal-led preaching enterprises.[9] The Papacy, of course, was not absent in such ever-

increasing relations. Ethiopians were present at the Council of Florence (1438-45), for

example, though Ethiopia was not swayed by many of the theological issues raised.[10]

With the increased Ethiopian presence in Rome, particularly following the donation of

the Church of Santo Stefano, and extended interest by the Papacy in the Ethiopian

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[7] Krebs, *Windows onto the World*, pp. 58-63; Salvadore, *African Prester John*, pp. 36-53. On the broader relations between Aragon and Ethiopia, see: C. Marinescu, *La politique orientale d'Alfronse V d'Aragon, roi de Naples (1416-1458)* (Barcelona, 1994), pp. 13-28.

[8] Krebs, *Windows onto the World*, Table 1.2, pp. 522-6.

[9] *Lettere*, ed. Raineri, pp. 30-43.

[10] On this presence, see: R. Lefevre, 'Presenze etiopiche in Italia prima del Concilio di Firenze del 1439', RSE, 23 (1967-8), pp. 5-26; S. Tedeschi, 'Sulla data della lettera presentata al Concilio di Firenze dalla missione etiopica', in *Guirlande pour Abba Jérome*, ed. Tubiana, pp. 167-77; B. Weber, 'Union religieuse, unité politique et alliance militaire. Les légats pontificaux en Orient au temps du concile de Florence', in *Italy and Europe's Eastern Border. 1204-1669*, eds. J. M. Damian, I.-A. Pop, M. St. Popović, and A. Simon (Frankfurt, 2012), pp. 345-58; Krebs, *Windows onto the World*, pp. 68-73.

community on Cyprus, a web of networks existed, more substantial than any before.[11] All of which owed their existence to earlier networks developed since the twelfth century. Though Ethiopia was known, it was not until the awareness that Nubia was a lost cause that the Europeans transferred their hopes onto the Kingdom of Ethiopia or 'Abyssinia'. In turn, Ethiopia replaced Nubia and a new age of European-African relations prospered, rising from the ashes of the previous centuries. This development in European discourse regarding the two African kingdoms has thus far been ignored and it is this lacuna that this thesis has corrected.

In exploring the 'Global Middle Ages' this thesis has highlighted the extent of global intellectual and physical interaction, both at a centre – the Holy Land – and at the peripheries. Above all, the origins of European-Ethiopian relations, together with European-Nubian relations, should be dated earlier than the fifteenth century and instead placed in the twelfth century at the latest. Additionally, this pre-dating of interaction may even be expanded back further with more work needing to be done to fully understand the extent of interaction between the seventh to tenth centuries given the current absence of evidence. The extent of the 'Global Middle Ages' can be seen to have had many influences upon medieval Europe, particularly on its intellectual development. The later contacts with Ethiopians appear to have been built on the previous European understanding of Nubia and the ideological transformation of power afforded to Ethiopia during the fourteenth century. Specifically, as evidenced by this thesis, the new era of European-Ethiopian relations following 1402 owed much to the earlier accumulation of knowledge and, instead, should rather be seen as the

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[11] R. Lefevre, 'Roma e la comunità etiopica di Cipro nei secoli XV e XVI', RSE, 1.1 (1941), pp. 71-86.

'adolescence' of European-Ethiopian relations, via Nubia, rather than, as posited by

Matteo Salvadore, the 'birth'.

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