indirect influence through a tradition in which Evagrius was ubiquitous. Collins helpfully stresses that the Byzantine monastic tradition was actually a synthesis of Evagrian and Macarian perspectives.

From each of these twelve essays, I benefitted in some way; collectively, they cover an astounding range of Evagrian material. There is no real clunker in the set. On the whole, then, this volume succeeds admirably in its goal of deepening our appreciation of Evagrius and his influence as a Christian thinker.

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The Orthodox Church of Ethiopia: A History. By **John Binns**. London: I. B. Tauris, 2017. xx + 297 pp. $115.00 hardcover.

In his beautifully designed book, John Binns shares a pleasant reading on the history of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and its daily services, written for readers with little-to-no prior knowledge. The history is eloquently narrated in English, as are the challenges of modernity that face the old institution. Ethiopia is defined herein as both a place and an idea. Indeed, the idea of Ethiopianism, derived from ideal Ethiopia, has served as a rallying philosophy for the freedom of black people worldwide who lived in servitude and under the yoke of colonialism. The second chapter adequately describes how Ethiopia as a place has become a meeting ground for Semitic and Cushitic cultures, influencing the lives of the Christian faithful.

The author goes on to discuss the mystifying question of why Judaism is so prominent in Ethiopian Christianity. He notes that the *Kebrä Nägäst*, the legendary history book of the Christian kingdom, "affirms rather than rejects [the church's] continuity, and even identity, with the Old Testament religious tradition" (25). At least two highly celebrated fifteenth-century theologians, *Abba* Giyorgis of Sägla and Emperor Zär'a Ya'eqob, called the Old and New Testaments the two nurturing breasts of the church's faithful. In this connection, the author tells about the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon and the coming of the Ark of the Covenant to Ethiopia. However, the legend is actually about the Queen of Ethiopia, referred to as the Queen of the South (Matthew 12 and Luke 11), although inspired by the story of the Queen Sheba. His presented version is not totally local—received orally or through the *Kebrä Nägäst*—but from Graham Hancock's novel (*The Sign*

and the Seal: A Quest for the Lost Ark of the Covenant [William Heinemann, 1992]).

Binns posits an interesting and plausible solution to the puzzle of whether Ethiopian Semites originated in Africa or came from Arabia, saying they originated in Ethiopia and migrated to the other side of the Red Sea, while their descendants migrated back to Africa (to Ethiopia) a thousand years later (15–18).

The description of the school system in chapter 8 shows how the church endured many hardships to remain alive and active. Students pursued their theological education—the life of the church—by traveling many days to reach the right teacher. This meant living far away from their parents, and begging for meals each day. By highlighting these details throughout the book, the author demonstrates his "long-term commitment to this project and to the people of Ethiopia" (xviii).

Binns's book will be appreciated by the general public. Ethiopicists, on the other hand, will find an adequate number of errors. Here are a few:

"One day [Yared, the sixth-century musician] was singing to King Gäbrä Mäsqäl. As he sang the king lifted his stick which had a cross on the top and a spear at the bottom. He lifted it and then set it to the ground. As he did this it pierced his foot but he was so caught up in the music that he did not feel this" (2). But in the sources and pictorial depictions, it is Yared's and not the king's foot that was pierced. See also the painting in *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica* vol. 2 (Siegbert Uhlig, ed. [Harrassowitz, 2005], 624).

"Menelik [the son of the Ethiopian queen and King Solomon of Israel] returns with his mother to Ethiopia" (21). This makes the son born in Jerusalem, which was not the case according to the legend.

The Syrian who came to Ethiopia was not a merchant, as described on page 8, but the philosopher Meropius of page 41. This mistake comes from confusing the Ethiopic or Ge'ez word *nägadi* (traveler) that describes Meropius (a certain traveler) with the Amharic word *näggade* (merchant, trader, businessman).

"The final chapter [of the *Kebrä Nägäśt*] tells the story of King Kaléb, who reigned from c.500–34, and his son Gäbrä Mäsqäl, who defeated the Jewish king, Dhu Nawwas" (23). But the successful war with Dhu Nawwas was Kaléb's, not Gäbrä Mäsqäl's. See page 27.

"Then there is [Ethiopia's] Semitic roots which gave it a language, spoken by the people who brought the faith from the Middle East" (3). There was no such language. I assume the reference is to Ethiopic or Ge'ez, but there are no sources supporting that notion. If they were Syrians, they spoke a language related to Ge'ez but not Ge'ez itself.

Almost all transcriptions of Ge'ez and Arabic words have errors, for example:

Bildad es Sudan (9) should be Bilad es Sudan; and *wold lalihu qebay, täqebay, qeb* (140) should be *wäld lälihu qäba'i, täqäba'i, qeb'*. See also pages 175–178, where only two out of nine are correctly transcribed.

"Piccador in *EA* vol. 1, pp. 920–1" should be "Piaccadori in *EA* vol. 3, pp. 921–2."

What was published in Hamburg is not *Encyclopedia* (e.g. 4 and 259), but *Encyclopaedia*.

"Much of the recent scholarship about the church has been written by scholars who have been associated with Catholic and Evangelical churches" (5). It seems the author knows mainly about them. Native members of the clergy have written extensively about their church at all ages, and the respected European writers on Ethiopia depended on those writings. For example, Ignazio Guidi, Carlo Conti Rossini, Sebastian Euringer, Kurt Wendt, Enrico Cerulli, Yaqob Beyene, Alessandro Bausi, Tedros Abraha, and this reviewer, to mention only a few, have published their works on theological issues the church grappled with through the centuries. Today, the product becomes deficient if one writes about the Ethiopian Orthodox Church without referencing them. Had Binns incorporated them, he could have avoided the gross error of calling "the *sägga lijj* (sic) . . . a clearly one-nature Christology, affirming the position of Alexandria" (150). Lastly, it should be noted that none of this book's endorsers are known as experts in the field.

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The Scriptural Universe of Ancient Christianity. By **Guy G. Stroumsa**. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2016. 184 pp. $39.95 cloth.

One of the delights of reading the lectures contained in Guy Stroumsa's famous *The End of Sacrifice: Religious Transformations in Late Antiquity* (Susan Emanuel, trans. [University of Chicago Press, 2005]) is the sense that one is seeing only the tips of icebergs—that below the surface of his concise, provocative arguments lies a long engagement with a stunning range of texts and traditions from the late ancient world. How much had to be left out of those sixty-minute talks? The present volume, *The Scriptural Universe of Ancient Christianity*, offers a tour of at least some of that hidden "dazzling