

# **Jun.-Prof. Dr. Verena Krebs**

Professorship “Medieval Cultural Realms and their Entanglements”  
Historical Institute, Department of History  
Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany  
Universitätsstraße 150  
Gebäude GA, 4/136  
44801 Bochum

[Verena.B.Krebs@rub.de](mailto:Verena.B.Krebs@rub.de) <http://www.verenakrebs.com> <http://www.rub.de/realms>

## ACADEMIC POSITIONS

---

### **Current**

- ❖ **W1 / Junior Professor, History Department, Ruhr-University Bochum** (since Oct 2017)
  - Junior Professorship (non-tenure track) “Medieval Cultural Realms and their Entanglements” at the Ruhr-University Bochum.
  - successful mid-appointment evaluation (“Zwischenevaluation”) / *Habilitation* equivalency in September 2020
- ❖ **Assistant Executive Director, Centre for Mediterranean Studies (ZMS), Ruhr-University Bochum** (since January 2019)
  - Member of the Board of Directors and Assistant Executive Director of the ZMS, a leading interdisciplinary research centre focussing on research on the Mediterranean in Germany.

### **Previous**

- ❖ **Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Martin Buber Society of Fellows in the Humanities, Hebrew University of Jerusalem** (Oct 2014–Sept 2017)
  - Post-doctoral position in a bi-national research foundation promoting excellency in independent research projects within the humanities, financed by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and located at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel.
- ❖ **Associate Research Fellow, Centre for Religious Studies, Ruhr-University Bochum** (Sept 2015–August 2018)
  - Associate research fellow in the project ‘Jews and Christians in the East: Strategies of Interaction between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean (JewsEast)’, funded by the European Research Council, specialist for Ethiopia and digital outreach.
- ❖ **Truman Research Fellow, Harry S. Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace, Hebrew University of Jerusalem** (2016–2017)
  - Associate research fellowship for the project: ‘Africounters: Encountering sub-Saharan Africa, Encounters in sub-Saharan Africa’.

## EDUCATION

---

- ❖ **Dr. phil. / PhD with Distinction (“*summa cum laude*”) in History, University of Konstanz, Germany, and Mekelle University, Ethiopia** (Oct 2010–Dec 2014)
  - Bi-national degree (*co-tutelle*) supervised by Prof. Dr. Dorothea Weltecke (Medieval History and History of Religion, Konstanz) and Prof. Dr. Wolbert Smidt (Ethiopian History and Ethnohistory, Mekelle). Thesis title: ‘Windows onto the World: Culture Contact and Western Christian Art in Ethiopia, 1400–1550’.
- ❖ **MA (History and Medieval History), University of Konstanz, Germany** (Oct 2007–April 2010, visiting student at the University of York from October 2008 to May 2009)
  - 2-year German MA degree, half of the credits earned as a visiting student within the MA Medieval History program at the University of York, UK. Special focus on material culture

sources and medieval history of the Levant, Eastern and Oriental Christianity. Dissertation title: 'Das christliche Königreich Äthiopien: Kontakt zur westlichen christlichen Welt'. Awarded with distinction.

- ❖ **BA (Literature, Art and Media Studies), University of Konstanz** (Oct 2004–Jul 2007).
  - Major in Literature, Art and Media Studies, Minor in History. Awarded with distinction.

## PUBLICATIONS

---

### *Monographs*

- ❖ [\*Medieval Ethiopian Kingship, Craft, and Diplomacy with Latin Europe\*](#), Palgrave Macmillan 2021, 319 pages. ISBN: 978-3-030-64933-3, DOI 10.1007/978-3-030-64934-0.

*Medieval Ethiopian Kingship* explores why Ethiopian kings pursued long-distance diplomatic contacts with Latin Europe in the late Middle Ages. It traces the history of more than a dozen embassies dispatched to the Latin West by the kings of Solomonic Ethiopia, a powerful Christian kingdom in the medieval Horn of Africa. Drawing on sources from Europe, Ethiopia, and Egypt, it examines the Ethiopian kings' motivations for sending out their missions in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries – and argues that a desire to acquire religious treasures and foreign artisans drove this early intercontinental diplomacy. Moreover, the Ethiopian initiation of contacts with the distant Christian sphere of Latin Europe appears to have been intimately connected to a local political agenda of building monumental ecclesiastical architecture in the North-East African highlands, and asserted the Ethiopian rulers' claim of universal kingship and rightful descent from the biblical king Solomon. Shedding new light on the self-identity of a late medieval African dynasty at the height of its power, this book challenges conventional narratives of African-European encounters on the eve of the so-called 'Age of Exploration'.

*Press Coverage (March–June 2021)*

[BBC History](#) | [Smithsonian Magazine](#) | [The Medieval Podcast #110](#) | [Spiegel Geschichte #4.2021](#)

- ❖ [\*Ethiopia and the World, 500–1530\*](#), a Handbook. Under contract with Cambridge University Press for their Global Middle Ages Series (eds. Geraldine Heng and Susan Noakes), co-authored with Dr Yonatan Binyam, UCLA.

*Ethiopia and the World, 500–1530*, offers an accessible introduction for non-specialist historians and other interested readers to the history the Ethiopian-Eritrean highland plateau between 500–1530 CE. In line with the series' objectives of providing concise studies that 'introduce researchers and instructors to an interconnected world, c. 500–1500 CE', the book considers the history of both local Muslim and Christian kingdoms in their interrelation to Afro-Eurasia across the medieval millennium. It offers an interdisciplinary synthesis of recent archaeological, historical, and literary research and is structured chronologically into four chapters.

- ❖ *Africa Collecting Europe: Patronage, Religious Material Culture and the Assertion of Local Power in Ethiopia, 1470–1530*, manuscript expected to be submitted to the University of Pennsylvania Press in 2021/22 (editorial supervision by Jerome E. Singerman).

This monograph expands on the topics first explored in *Medieval Ethiopian Kingship* by investigating a wide body of material culture sources from Ethiopia – it investigates how, in the latter half of the 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16<sup>th</sup> century, Ethiopian elites fundamentally changed Ethiopian art by favouring a 'new' and hybrid style of painting that combined foreign iconographic and stylistic elements with Ethiopian visual traditions. It moreover shows that members of the royal court were involved in the direct import of foreign religious material culture, acquiring both post-Byzantine icons from the Eastern

Mediterranean as well as panel paintings that originated as far away as late-medieval Flanders and Germany. By the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, individual Solomonic royals were even engaged in the commissioning of prestige objects in Latin Europe, primarily painted enamels with Gə'əz writing from Limoges in France. The book thus demonstrates the active involvement of a medieval African court involved in a culture and processes of collecting and artistic exchanges long attested-to for Europe and parts of Asia in the medieval world.

**PhD Thesis (microfiche publication)**

- ❖ Krebs, V. 'Windows onto the World: Culture Contact and Western Christian art in Ethiopia, 1402-1543', [Dissertation]. Konstanz: University of Konstanz, 2014.

**Journal Articles and Contributions (peer reviewed):**

- ❖ Krebs, V. and Kribus, B. 2018. 'Betä ʾəsra'el (Ethiopian Jewish) Monastic Sites North of Lake Ṭana: Preliminary Results of an Exploratory Field Trip to Ethiopia in December 2015', *Entangled Religions. Interdisciplinary Journal for the Study of Religious Contact and Transfer*. Special issue "Historical Engagements and Interreligious Encounters — Jews and Christians in Premodern and Early Modern Asia and Africa", 6, 309–344. DOI: [10.13154/er.v6.2018.309-344](https://doi.org/10.13154/er.v6.2018.309-344).
- ❖ Krebs, V. 2019. 'Crusading threats? Ethiopian-Egyptian relations in the 1440s', in *Crusading in Africa*, ed. Benjamin Weber, Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Midi, 245–274.
- ❖ Krebs, V. 2019. 'Re-Examining Foresti's Supplementum Chronicarum and the 'Ethiopian' Embassy to Europe of 1306', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 82/3, 493–515. DOI: [10.1017/S0041977X19000697](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0041977X19000697).
- ❖ Krebs, V. 2020. 'Stanley: Coomassie and Magdala (1874), commented by Verena Krebs', in *Translocations. Anthologie: Eine Sammlung kommentierter Quellentexte zu Kulturgutverlagerungen seit der Antike*, [translanth.hypotheses.org/ueber/stanley](https://translanth.hypotheses.org/ueber/stanley).
- ❖ Krebs, V. 2021. 'Fancy Names and Fake News: Notes on the Conflation of Solomonic Ethiopian Rulership with the Myth of Prester John in Late Medieval Latin Christian Diplomatic Correspondence', in *Orbis Aethiopicus XVII*, 89–124.
- ❖ Krebs, V. 2021. 'A Preliminary Catalogue of Post-Byzantine Icons in Late Medieval Solomonic Ethiopia, in *Orbis Aethiopicus XVII*, 205–248.
- ❖ Krebs, V. 2021. 'Die Plünderung von Mäqdäla', in *Beute. Eine Anthologie zu Kunstraub und Kulturerbe*, eds. Isabelle Dolezalek, Bénédicte Savoy & Robert Skwirblies, Matthes & Seitz, Berlin 2021, 206–214.
- ❖ Krebs, V. 2021. 'Christianity, Ethiopian', *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History: Asia and Africa*. Wiley.

**Currently Under Review**

- ❖ Krebs, V. 'Three 'Italianate' Icons of the Crucifixion? Iconography, Style and Courtly Patronage in Late Medieval Ethiopia', submitted for an edited volume forthcoming with Harvard University Press, April 2021.
- ❖ Krebs, V. 'Distorted Echoes of a Distant Land: Two Latin Christian Accounts on Solomonic Ethiopian geopolitics of the 1440s', submitted to a special issue of the journal *Entangled Religions* on 'Religious Interaction between the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean', July 2021.

### **Academic Book Reviews**

- ❖ Krebs, V. 2018. Rezension zu: Fauvelle, François-Xavier: Das goldene Rhinozeros. Afrika im Mittelalter. München 2017, in *H-Soz-Kult*, [hsozkult.de/publicationreview/id/rezbuecher-28270](https://hsozkult.de/publicationreview/id/rezbuecher-28270).

### **Journal Articles (not peer reviewed):**

- ❖ ‘Äthiopien und Europa: Mittelalterliche Kontakte und ihr Einfluss auf die Äthiopische Kunst’, in: *Kirche und Schule in Äthiopien* 63 (2010).

## SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS AND RESEARCH FUNDING

---

In addition to receiving full scholarships for my PhD and post-doctoral studies as part of various German ‘Excellence Initiatives’, I have successfully applied for close to EUR 55.000 of funding to support my individual projects (equipment, fieldwork and conference attendance) as well as group activities such as organizing joint conference panels, a workshop series and seed funding to support a student excursion to Ethiopia. I was also part of a team jointly writing and winning a European Research Council Consolidator Grant totalling EUR 2.000.000 for the years 2015–2020.

### ❖ **PROMOS / H!BO Funding (2019)**

EUR 8.500 total awarded by the BMBF program PROMOS and the Historical Institute, Bochum, to support a student Excursion to Ethiopia as part of a course taught in the Winter Semester 2018/19 at Ruhr-University, Bochum.

- ❖ **Special Departmental Fund for the Preparation of Third-Party-Funding Applications Type “B”** (2018) EUR 5.000 awarded by the Department of Historical Sciences, Ruhr-University Bochum, to conduct preliminary stable isotope testing of medieval German ivories (in cooperation with Elizabeth Yohannes of the Stable Isotope Group, University of Konstanz).

- ❖ **Interdisciplinary Collaborative Project Grant** (2017) EUR 10.000 awarded by the Zukunftskolleg Konstanz, University of Konstanz, for the Project *Embracing “Otherness”: Medieval Africa – An Interdisciplinary Collaborative Project*, with Felix Girke and Christof Rolker, Konstanz.

- ❖ **DAAD Lecture Tour Travel Grant** (2017) EUR 500 awarded by the DAAD German Academic Exchange Service to give an invited lecture at Princeton University, USA, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2017.

- ❖ **Truman Research Grant** (2016–18) USD 10.000 awarded by the Harry S. Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace, Hebrew University of Jerusalem to lead the project: ‘Africounters: Encountering sub-Saharan Africa, Encounters in sub-Saharan Africa’ to organize a lecture and workshop series on sub-Saharan Africa and the Western World.

- ❖ **European Research Council (ERC) Consolidator Grant** (2015–2020) EUR 2.000.000 research funding for the project “Jews and Christians in the East: Strategies of Interaction between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean” (JewsEast), won by Alexandra Cuffel (PI) with Barbara Roggema, Zara Pogossian, Istvan Perczel, Sophia Dege-Müller and Ophira Gamliel and me as part of the application team.

- ❖ **EXC16 “Cultural Foundations of Integration” Centre of Excellence at the University of Konstanz** (2015) EUR 4.500 awarded to pay for the travel, conference registration and expenses for junior scholars participating in the “Untold Ethiopian Histories” panel at the “19<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Ethiopian Studies”, August 2015 in Warsaw, Poland; organized and chaired together with Felix Girke, Konstanz.

- ❖ **Martin Buber Society of Fellows Scholarship (2014–17)** ILS 468.000 total / ILS 156.000 annually as part of a three-year post-doctoral fellowship at the Martin Buber Society of Fellows in the Humanities and Social Sciences at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel.

- ❖ **Verein der Ehemaligen der Universität Konstanz, Orbis Aethiopicus and EXC 16** (2014) EUR 4.000 travel seed money to organize a student excursion to Ethiopia as part of a seminar taught in the Summer of 2014 at the University of Konstanz.

- ❖ **EXC16 “Cultural Foundations of Integration” Centre of Excellence at the University of Konstanz** (Jan–April 2012) EUR 15.000 in funding for a fieldwork research trip, leading a research team through the highlands of Ethiopia for four months.
- ❖ **DAAD German Academic Exchange Service** (2011–2012) EUR 3.800 travel grant for research in Ethiopia.
- ❖ **EXC16 “Cultural Foundations of Integration” Centre of Excellence at the University of Konstanz** (2011) EUR 2.500 of PhD start-up funding to cover equipment expenses and a preliminary research trip to Addis Ababa and Mekelle, Ethiopia.
- ❖ **Landesgraduiertenförderung Baden-Württemberg** (2010–2013) EUR 33.000 total as part of a PhD scholarship programme.

## ACADEMIC AWARDS

---

2016            Best PhD thesis completed at University of Konstanz in the academic year 2014/15, awarded by the *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Gesellschaft*

## ELECTED ACADEMIC MEMBERSHIPS AND COMMITTEES

---

- since 2021    –Editorial Board Member of *postmedieval*. a journal of medieval cultural studies.
- since 2019    –Advisory Board Member, Routledge Series “Global Histories Before Globalisation”, edited by Nicholas Morton (Nottingham Trent) and Kristin Skottki (Bayreuth).  
 –Member of the Advisory Group and Lead Collaborator, Mellon Project “The Book and the Silk Roads: Phase I” 2019–2021.  
 –Member of the Board of Directors of the ZMS – Centre for Mediterranean Studies, Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany.
- since 2018    –Advisory Board Member, Bloomsbury Medieval Studies, Bloomsbury Publishing.  
 –Advisory Board Member, Princeton’s Ethiopian Miracles of Mary project (PEMM), Princeton University, USA.  
 –Member of the Zentrale Wissenschaftliche Einrichtung CERES – Center for Religious Studies, Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany.

## RESEARCH AND FIELDWORK EXPERIENCE

---

- ❖ **Project leader, *Investigating the Bete Israel monasteries of Ethiopia*** (Nov–Dec 2015)  
 Led a five-person research team (including the PhD students Bar Kribus, Hebrew University, Jerusalem and Semira Mohammed Seid, Addis Ababa University) as part of the ERC-funded research project JewsEast through the Gondar region of Ethiopia
- ❖ **Material Culture specialist, “ETHIO-SPARE: Cultural Heritage of Christian Ethiopia: Salvation, Preservation, Research”** (2012–2015)  
 Visiting scholar/research fellow at the Hiob Ludolf Centre for Ethiopian Studies, University of Hamburg; specialist for object and artwork description for the European Research Council research project “ETHIO-SPARE: Cultural Heritage of Christian Ethiopia: Salvation, Preservation, Research” (Denis Nosnitsin, Hamburg).
- ❖ **Project leader, *Documentation of rural medieval Ethiopian material culture sources*** (Jan–April 2012)  
 Led a four-person research team (including MA student Philipp Mayer) through Tigray and Amhara regions of Ethiopia in search for artefacts of Ethiopian religious material culture (medieval

manuscripts and icons). Documented 100 rural churches and monasteries, produced 20 floor plans of medieval rock-hewn churches in Tigray region; produced inventory and complete photo-documentation of all objects in the Yohannes IV Museum in Mekelle, Tigray, as well as the wall-paintings in 35 medieval rock-hewn and 15 Gondarene-era churches all over Northern Ethiopia.

- ❖ **Project member, Arbeitsgruppe 'Globale und internationale Geschichte' (AGIG)** (2010–2014), member of the research group 'Global and International History' attached to the Chair of Professor Jürgen Osterhammel, Konstanz.
- ❖ **Researcher and Item Evaluation, Karrenbauer Fine Arts Auction House** (2012–2014), evaluation of medieval and early modern material culture objects.
- ❖ **Visiting researcher** (Oct–Dec 2011) at the Department of History and Cultural Studies, Mekelle University, Ethiopia and at the Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia (Mar–April 2011).

## TEACHING (SELECTION)

---

### Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany, academic years 2017/2018, 2018/2019, 2019/20

- ❖ **'Africa/America: Transepocheal Perspectives on the Transatlantic Slave Trade, 1400–1800'** (in English, co-taught with Jun.-Prof. Dr. Rebecca Brückmann, American History), *Oberseminar*, open to MA students in the Department of History.  
**'Desperately Searching for Prester John. Readings on the History of a Myth'** (in English, co-taught with apl.-Prof. Dr. Adam Knobler, Religious History), *Oberseminar*, open to MA students in the Department of History and Religious Studies.
- ❖ **'Transkulturelle Verflechtungen zwischen Mittelmeer und Indischem Ozean im Mittelalter'**, *Vorlesung*, open to BA and MA students in the Departments of History.  
**'Die Pest – globale Geschichte(n) einer Seuche im Mittelalter'**, *Oberseminar*, open to MA students in the Department of History.  
**'West Afrika, 1000 BCE – 1500 CE'** (co-taught with PD Dr. Sonja Magnavita, Archaeology of Africa), *Hauptseminar*, open to BA and MA students in the Departments of History and Archaeology.
- ❖ **'Elfenbein'** (co-taught with JunProf Dr. Rabea Kohnen, Medieval German Philology), *Hauptseminar*, open to BA and MA students in the Departments of History and German Studies.  
**'Exkursion nach Äthiopien'**, *2-week student field trip to Ethiopia*, open to BA and MA students in the Department of History.  
**'Äthiopier, Osmanen und Portugiesen: Das Horn von Afrika im Spannungsfeld imperialer Machtpolitik, 14–16. Jahrhundert'** (co-taught with Prof. Dr. Markus Koller, Ottoman and Turkish History), *Übung für Fortgeschrittene*, open to BA and MA students in the Department of History.
- ❖ **'Genua, Timbuktu, Aden – Handel zwischen Indien, Afrika und dem Mittelmeer im Mittelalter'**, *Hauptseminar*, open to BA and MA students in the Department of History.  
**'Sachquellen für Mediävisten'**, *Übung zu speziellen Methoden und Theorien*, open to BA students in the Department of History.
- ❖ **'Ibn Battuta: Reisen zu den Enden der Welt im 14. Jahrhundert'**, *Hauptseminar*, open to BA and MA students in the Department of History.  
**'Ein geschichtsloser Kontinent? Zugänge zu Afrika im Mittelalter'**, *Übung für Fortgeschrittene*, open to BA and MA students in the Department of History.

### Central European University, Hungary, 2017

- ❖ **'Jews and Christians between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean: Co-existence and Conflict 600–1800 CE'** (July 2017)  
Co-Instructor and Guest Lecturer at a 10-day summer school on religious interaction aimed at advanced MA and PhD students.

### **Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany, 2016 and 2017 respectively**

- ❖ **‘Eurasian Religions in Contact (ERiC) Summer School’** (July–August 2016, July–August 2017)  
Guest Lecturer at a 5/10-day summer school on religious interaction aimed at advanced MA and PhD students.

### **Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel, academic years 2015–17**

- ❖ **‘Global Medieval History? Africa and Europe in the Middle Ages’** (Spring 2015), Seminar, open to advanced BA and MA students in the Department of History.
- ❖ **‘Medieval History and Material Culture’** (Spring 2016), Seminar, open to advanced BA and MA students in the Department of History.
- ❖ **‘Medieval Ethiopia: Religious Encounters’** (Spring 2017, with Bar Kribus, M.A.), Seminar, open to advanced BA and MA students in the Department of History.

### **University of Konstanz, 2014**

- ❖ **‘Just a Christian island in Africa? Exploring the medieval history of Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa.’** (Summer 2014, with Prof. Dorothea Weltecke), Block seminar and 2-week field trip to Ethiopia, open to students of BA, MA and PhD level in History.

## **KEYNOTE LECTURES, INVITED TALKS AND RESEARCH PAPERS (SELECTION)**

---

### **Keynote Lectures**

- June 2017      *Strange and wonderful things from distant lands: a material history of Ethiopia’s contacts with Western Christianity in the late Middle Ages*, Fifth CEMS International Graduate Conference “Building, Bending, and Breaking Boundaries in the Eastern Mediterranean World,” Central European University, Budapest.
- March 2016      *The Ethiopian Exploration of Europe. Reconsidering late medieval intercontinental contacts between the Horn of Africa, the Holy Land and Western Europe on the eve of the “European Age of Expansion”*, Africa-Israel Conference 2016, 7.–9. March 2016, Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace, Jerusalem.
- November 2015      *Royal Ethiopian patronage and hybrid ‘färänġ’ styles: A new approach to art and patronage in Ethiopia, 1470–1530*, 10th International Conference on the History of Arts & Architecture in Ethiopia (ICHAAE), Mekelle University, 30. November–4. Dezember 2015, Mekelle, Ethiopia.

### **Invited Talks**

- May 2021      *Medieval Ethiopian Kingship, Craft, and Diplomacy with Latin Europe*, Book Lunch hosted by HUMA - Institute for Humanities in Africa, University of Cape Town. Respondent: Hewan Semon (Hamburg University), ([online](#)).
- Afrika, das Europa sammelt: Königliche Frauen und elitäre Patronagepraktiken am äthiopischen Hof, 1480 –1530*, Forumsvortrag, Kunsthistorisches Seminar der Universität Basel.
- April 2021      *Medieval Ethiopian Kingship, Craft, and Diplomacy with Latin Europe*, Book Launch hosted by the Anglo-Ethiopian Society, London. Respondents: Felege-Selam Yirga (UT Knoxville) and David Spielman (UCLA), ([online](#)).

- March 2021 *Ethiopian Medieval Diplomacy & Kingship*, Princeton IAS Ethiopian Studies Series: The Turn to the Medieval in Ethiopian Studies – The Turn to Ethiopia in Medieval Studies, ([online](#)).
- November 2019 *Appropriating the Foreign: Material Culture Imports and Patronage Practices at the late medieval court of Solomonic Ethiopia*, 11<sup>th</sup> German–Israeli Frontiers of Humanities Symposium, Israeli Academy of Sciences, Israel.
- May 2019 *Echoes of Exotic Others: Flemish Panel Paintings, Madre della Consolazione Icons, and Limoges Painted Enamels at the Late Medieval Ethiopian Royal Court*, Crossroads Africa: African Engagement in the Making of Early Modernity, Villa I Tatti –The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, Florence, Italy.  
 - also given at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Medieval Ethiopia Conference, University of Toronto, Canada, October 2019.
- April 2019 *Venetian-Ethiopian relations in the very early 15<sup>th</sup> century*, Crossing Boundaries? Trade and Connections on the Medieval Mediterranean Conference, University of Cambridge, England.
- December 2018 *Salomos Erben: Imperiale Stiftungen, Patronagepraxis und Diplomatie in Äthiopien im späten Mittelalter*, Kolloquium Forschungen zur Geschichte der Frühen Neuzeit, University of Bern, Switzerland.  
 - also given at Center for Near and Middle East Studies, Philipps-University Marburg, Germany, November 2018.  
 - also given at Forschungskolloquium Geschichte, FernUniversität in Hagen, September 2018.
- November 2018 *Solomon's Heirs: Courtly Patronage and Diplomatic Contacts with the Christian Mediterranean in late medieval Ethiopia*, Polish Academy of Sciences, Krakow, Poland.
- May 2018 *Simbabwe, Mogadischu, Alexandria, Köln – Gold- und Elfenbeinhandel zwischen Indischem Ozean und Europa im Mittelalter*, Forschungstag der Fakultät für Geschichtswissenschaft, Ruhr-Universität Bochum.
- June 2017 *Gold, Elfenbein, Seide und Ikonen Handels- und Kulturkontakte zwischen Äthiopien, Westafrika und Europa im Mittelalter*, Oberseminar Mittelalterliche Geschichte, Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg.
- March 2017 *Art Not War: African Embassies in Latin Europe in the Late Middle Ages*, Center for African Studies, Princeton University.
- July 2016 *Die Klöster der Bete Israel. Archäologisch-historische Feldforschung nördlich des Tanasees (Äthiopien)*, 4. Volkmar-Fritz-Vortrag, Freundeskreis Biblische Archäologie, Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz.
- Feb 2016 *Afri-Counters: Late medieval intercontinental contacts the eve of the “European Age of Expansion”*, Martin Buber Society of Fellows Lecture, Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
- Feb 2016 *Bete Israel Monasticism in Ethiopia. Investigating the Material Culture History of the Ethiopian Jews*, Kolloquium des Centrums für Religionswissenschaftliche Studien (CERES), Ruhr-Universität Bochum.

### **Research Papers and Presentations**

- March 2019 *Local Politics, Long-Distance Diplomacy: Solomonic Ethiopia and Latin Christianity in the 15th Century*, 2019 Meeting of the Medieval Academy of America, Philadelphia, USA.



- May 2018 *Venetian Traders in Ethiopia, ca. 1410*, at the international workshop *Liminal Trade: Merchants and Their Markets beyond Geographical and Methodological Boundaries in Africa and across the Atlantic Ocean (1350–1600)*, German Historical Institute, Rome.
- March 2018 *The Builder Kings of Ethiopia: Solomonic and Latin Christian Contacts in the Fifteenth Century*, The Renaissance in Africa II, Renaissance Society of America Annual Meeting, 23.–25. March 2018, New Orleans.
- July 2016 “Sail to Suakin, and then go twelve days through the desert.” *Two episodes in Ethiopian-European long-distance contact in the 15<sup>th</sup> century*, International Medieval Congress 2016, 4.–7. July 2016, Leeds.
- June 2016 *How to ask for good wine, alms, and carpets: Medieval recommendations on making the journey from Venice to Ethiopia as revealed in a trilingual 15th century Italian travel guide*, Mobility-Symposium des Zukunftskollegs Konstanz, 27.–28. Juni 2016, Singen/Hohentwiel.
- June 2016 *European Religious Material Culture in Medieval Ethiopia, and the Study of History*, Beyond the Written Word Conference at the Hebrew University, 31. Mai–1. Juni, Jerusalem.
- October 2015 *Bete Israel Monasticism* (mit Sophia Dege-Müller und Bar Kribus), *Der Vordere Orient und die Islamische Welt im Spiegel der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften. Gemeinsame Jahres- und Fachtagung der Deutschen Arbeitsgemeinschaft Vorderer Orient und der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 24.–26. September 2015, Bochum.
- August 2015 *Diplomacy as a means to an end: Solomonic Ethiopian interest and involvement in Western Europe in the 15th and early 16th century*, 19th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, 24.–28. August 2015, University of Warsaw.
9. July 2015 *Prester John's Painters: European Grisaille Illuminations in Late Medieval Manuscripts from the Ethiopian Royal Court*, International Medieval Congress 2015, 6.–9. July 2015, University of Leeds.
26. July 2014 *Die Schwarzen, die Weißen und die Blauen: Hautfarben in der Darstellung des „Anderen“ in Konrad Grünenbergs Wappenbuch*, Workshop: *Heraldik und Geschichte: Das Wappenbuch des Konrad Grünenberg († 1494)*, 25.–26. July 2014, Universität Konstanz/Stadtarchiv Konstanz.

## CONFERENCE AND PANEL ORGANIZATION EXPERIENCE

---

- 2019 *94<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, Medieval Academy of America* – “The Global Turn in Medieval Studies”, University of Pennsylvania, USA, 7. – 9. March, 2019  
 Two panels on ‘Medieval Africa’ (with Sarah M. Guérin, University of Pennsylvania)  
 - ‘Imbrications: Africa and the World in the Middle Ages’  
 - ‘Compelling Objects: Approaches to Medieval African Art History’
- International Medieval Congress 2019*, University of Leeds, UK, 1. – 4. July 2019  
 Four sessions on ‘Medieval Africa’ (with Adam Simmons, Lancaster, Solomon Gebreyes, University of Hamburg).  
 - Medieval Ethiopia, I: Symbolism, Objects, and Depictions in the Solomonic Period  
 - Material Africa, I: Trade and Production  
 - Material Africa, II: Remains and Echoes of the Medieval  
 - Medieval Ethiopia, II: Materiality and Manuscript Studies

- 2018 *International Medieval Congress 2018*, University of Leeds, UK, 2. – 5. July 2018  
 Five sessions on ‘Medieval Africa’ (with Adam Simmons, Lancaster, Meseret Oldjira, Princeton and Vincent van Gerven Oei, punctum books), sponsored by the Faculty of History, Ruhr-University Bochum:  
 - ‘Reclaiming the Middle Ages for Africa, I: From Nubia to Ethiopia’  
 - ‘Reclaiming the Middle Ages for Africa, II: Medieval Mali and the Indian Ocean’  
 - ‘Medieval Ethiopia, I: Muslims and Jews’  
 - ‘Medieval Ethiopia, II: Christians and Pagans’  
 - ‘Medieval Ethiopia, III: Religious Material Culture in Ethiopia’
- 20<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, Mekelle University, Ethiopia, 1. – 5. October 2018:  
 - ‘Trade, Routes and Travel: Ethiopia in the Pre-Modern World’  
 - ‘Entangled Histories and Traditions: Pre-modern Ethiopia and the World’ (with Wolbert Smidt, Mekelle, and Zara Pogossian, Bochum)
- 2017 *International Medieval Congress 2017*, University of Leeds, UK, 3. – 6. July 2018  
 Five sessions on ‘Ethiopia in the Middle Ages’ (with Christof Rolker, Konstanz):  
 - ‘From Egypt to Ethiopia I: Religious plurality in medieval Ethiopia’  
 - ‘Egypt to Ethiopia II: Gospel books and chronicles’  
 - ‘Egypt to Ethiopia III: History, archaeology and the mythical Prester John’  
 - ‘Egypt to Ethiopia IV: The Red Sea as Center and Periphery’  
 - ‘From Egypt to Ethiopia V: Art, religion and apocalypse’
- 2016 *International Conference ‘Beyond the Written Word: Doing History with Non-Traditional Sources’*, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel, 31. May – 1. June 2016 (with Daphna Oren-Magidor, Jerusalem)
- 2015 *19<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, Warsaw University, Poland, 24. – 28. August  
 - ‘Untold Ethiopian histories: Finding and filling vexing gaps in the academic record’ (with Felix Girke, Konstanz, full funding for participants acquired)  
 - ‘Hidden agents? The role of women in Ethiopian history’ (with Margaux Herman, Debre Birhan, and Sophia Dege-Müller, Hamburg)
- 2012–13 Organising Committee and International Conference Committee for the *9<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the History of Art and Architecture in Ethiopia*, 2–6 September 2013, in Vienna, Austria.

## PUBLIC OUTREACH, TV, AND MEDIA APPEARANCES

---

- ❖ TV documentary ‘Weltreisen – Felsen des Glaubens’, which prominently featured and chronicled my PhD research project on medieval Ethiopia in a 45-minute format. It was broadcast nationally on the ARD (German Public Broadcasting Television), with more than 1.5 million initial viewers, and has been re-broadcast many times since (2012–2016).
- ❖ Advisor for Ethiopia to the ARD/WDR (German Public Service TV Broadcasters) for a documentary on the history of Ethiopia; accompanied and advised filming for a week, proofread and helped develop the script (2012).
- ❖ 30-minute radio interview on ‘Medieval Ethiopia’ for the program ‘Past Perfect’ at CEU Medieval Radio and Civil Rádió FM98 (2015/2018).
- ❖ Led discussions on the significance of historiographical narratives for pre-colonial African history at the ‘Africa-Israel Conference’ Truman Institute, Jerusalem, with 50 high-ranking African diplomats, including senators, members of Parliament, opposition leaders, among them Raila Odinga, former Prime Minister of the Republic of Kenya (2016).

- ❖ Ceremonial address *Drei Äthiopier am Bodensee und andere Begegnungen zwischen Afrika und Europa im Spätmittelalter* on the occasion of the sixth centenary of the Latein- und Albeck-Schule in Sulz a.N., Germany (2017).
- ❖ Media outreach and interviews for German and international news outlets, including the *Washington Post* (2018).
- ❖ Radio interview “African History”, SRF (2020). [srf.ch/kultur/wissen/vergessenes-wissen-unser-blick-auf-afrika-ist-lueckenhaft](https://www.srf.ch/kultur/wissen/vergessenes-wissen-unser-blick-auf-afrika-ist-lueckenhaft).

## LANGUAGES

---

Fluent in German and English, proficient in French, reading skills in (medieval) Italian, (medieval) Spanish, (medieval) Portuguese and medieval Latin; A 2 level Arabic, basic knowledge of Gə‘əz, Amharic, Tigrigna as well as Modern Hebrew.