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## “The Dethroning: Prester John’s Demise and The Shaping of Modern Ethiopia”

This thesis examines European perceptions of the Prester John legend after 1600 and how changing perceptions of the Prester John legend reflected European attitudes towards Ethiopia. The Prester John legend dates back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century when tales emerged of a faraway Christian kingdom ruled by a mystical figure named Prester John. The legend was carried down through the centuries until, starting in the 1600s, the legend began to be challenged. This thesis argues that disagreeable and hostile interactions between Europeans and Ethiopians – coupled with ideological shifts among Europeans toward rationalism and imperialism – led to the rejection, disregard, and eventual demise of the centuries old Prester John legend.

*Image citation "Il Prete Ianni, Re D'Ethiopia." Digital image. The British Museum: The Collection Online. 2017. Accessed March 29, 2018.*

[www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=1446925&partId=1](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=1446925&partId=1).

*Note: Attributed to Luca Ciambelano circa 1599*