

*A Nubian Walks into a Christian Bar at Philae and Asks ...*

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During the Roman and Byzantine periods in Egypt, the frontier area at the south of Egypt displayed a number of interesting activities with the long term interactions between various Nubian groups (such as the Meroites, Blemmyes and Nobadae) and the Roman rulers of Egypt. As with many frontier areas, there does not seem to have been a clear distinction of cultural identity, political control and religious affiliation and this often led to serious conflicts with both sides claiming legitimate control of the temples and administrative places in the Aswan area. This was put to the test with the introduction of Christianity to Egypt and how this new religion affected the local populations. This talk will look at these complex interactions and center them through the use of "A man walks into a bar ...". Slides of the speaker's own field research in the Aswan area, especially at Philae temple will be highlighted.