St. Moses the Ethiopian or the Black.
Cult and representation
in the Middle Ages*

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The paper presents extant texts narrating about St. Moses the Ethiopian or the Black written in Greek, Coptic, Ge'ez, Syrian, Arabic and Old Church Slavonic and reviews the cult of the saint connected to the Baramus Monastery in the Scetis Desert or the Nitrian Desert. His preserved images in Egypt, Palestine, Byzantium, and in the countries whose churches used various recensions of the Old Church Slavonic language are listed. The final part of the study proposes some conclusions on his cult and representation.

Keywords: St. Moses, the Ethiopian, the Black, Egypt, Byzantium, Slavic countries, Wallachia

St. Moses the Ethiopian or the Black was portrayed amongst the holy monks and hermits in the churches of the Eastern Christian realm. He is, at least in the representations created in Byzantium and in areas under its direct cultural influence, generally easily recognizable because he is usually shown as dark-skinned and wearing monastic robes.1

The commemoration of the holy father Moses the Ethiopian, as evidenced by the Synaxarium of the Church of Constantinople compiled in the tenth century, is celebrated on August 28th, as the first of the day.2

Numerous and diverse writings composed in the Greek language narrate about this saint.3 There is a story about Moses the Ethiopian, Πέρι Μωυσέως τοῦ Αἰθίοπος (BHG 1309) in the part about the Nitrian anchorites in Palladios’ Lausiac History completed in 420. The author, who spent many years in Egypt, first in the Nitrian Desert and then in Kel- lia, recounts that Moses, a black-skinned Ethiopian, was a house-servant to a government official, but his master dismissed him because of his immorality and brigandage. Moses became the leader of a band of robbers. He bore a grudge against a shepherd who one night had prevented him with his dogs from carrying out a plan. Moses set out to kill him and was informed that the shepherd was keeping his sheep across the Nile. The river was in flood, so he put his sword between his teeth and his clothes on his head and swam to the other side. The shepherd escaped and hid. Moses took four of his best rams, killed and tied them together and swam back again. He came to a little homestead, skinned the rams and ate the best pieces of meat, sold the skin in exchange for wine he then drank, and went off fifty miles further to where his band was waiting for him. Later, he gave himself up to a monastery and embraced repentance. On one occasion, four robbers stormed into his cell and attacked him, and he tied them all together and brought them to the church of his brethren. Realizing that Moses was the famous former brigand, the robbers renounced the world. He was attacked and tempted by the demons of impurity in a bid to plunge him into his old ways. So he went for advice to the great Isidore, the one who lived in Sceate. Moses returned to his cell and from then on practiced asceticism more zealously, refraining from food, accomplishing a great deal of work and completing fifty prayers a day. As he continued to be consumed by fire in his dreams, he asked an experienced monk for advice. Then he returned to his cell and made an oath that he would not sleep all night nor bend his knees in order to avoid being tortured by dreams. He remained in his cell for six years, standing in the middle of his cell every night praying, but he could not overcome the temptation. Therefore he decided to put himself to even greater undertaking. Each night he went out to the cells of the old monks who were no longer able to go far to fetch water and, secretly taking their water-pots, filled them with water. One night, as he bent over the well, a demon struck him with a cudgel across the loins and he lost consciousness. The next day a...
man found him lying there and told the great Isidore, the priest of Scete. He picked Moses up and brought him to the church. For a year he was so ill that his body and soul recovered strength with great difficulty. Isidore the priest told him that there were limits even in the ascetic practice and in the struggle with demons and that from that very moment his impure dreams would cease and to come confidently to receive communion by the holy secrets. Moses again retired to his cell. He died at the age of seventy-five in Scete, having become a priest, leaving behind seventy disciples. Sozomenos, a renowned lawyer known for his extensive Ecclesiastical History dedicated to Emperor Theodosius I, wrote about Moses shortly thereafter. The work recounts the history of the church from 324 to 425. It was completed after 443, when the last event recorded in the preface took place. In Book VI Chapter 29, named ‘On the monks of Thebais’, Περὶ τῶν ἐν Θηβαΐδι μοναχῶν, Sozomenos dedicates one subchapter to Moses. It is apparently based on the narrative in the Lausiac History, which is somewhat summarized there, and does not mention the origin of the saint, but states that he was a slave first and was thrown out of his master’s house because of his perverticy.4 In the Alphabetical Collection of The Sayings of the Desert Fathers, Αποφθέγματα τῶν πατέρων, compiled in the fifth or sixth century, there is a chapter on Abba Moses entitled Περὶ τοῦ ἀββᾶ Μωσῆς (BHG 1310c), which does not include the events that took place before his retreat to the desert. It focuses on his struggle against the temptation of fornication and his conversations with Abba Isidore, describing the advice given to him by Abba Isidore: to look to the west, where he saw an immense crowd of demons, and to the east, where he saw a multitude of holy angels in glory. This text also recounts that a brother in Scete fell into sin, and that he did not condemn him, but instead told a didactic story about sins seeping out like sand through a basket full of holes. Then, when a council assembled in Scete, the fathers wanted to put him to the test and to humiliate him and they asked why an Ethiopian came amongst them. When he was ordained a priest, the archbishop said to him that he had become entirely white and then told the priests to call Moses names and drive him out when he came into the sanctuary, and he accepted that, saying to himself that he was the ash-skinned and black one. When it was ordered in Scete to fast for one week, brothers from Egypt came to visit him, and he cooked a meal for them. Seeing the smoke, his neighbors informed the priests that he had broken the command and cooked in his cell, but the priests understood why he had done it. An official wanted to see him and went to Scete. However, Abba Moses was informed about it and rose to flee to the marsh, but the man and his retinue met him along the way and asked him for Moses’s cell, and he replied that this Moses was a fool (σαλός). The official went to the church and told the priests what had happened. They asked him what the old man he had met looked like. He replied that he was wearing old clothes and that he was tall and black, and they said to him that they had seen Abba Moses himself. Later, Moses told the brethren that the barbarians were coming to Scete and to flee and that he had been waiting for that day for many years so the words of Christ the Lord might be fulfilled that say ‘all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword’ (Mt 26:52). There were seven brothers with him and the barbarians slew them, but one hid behind a pile of rope and saw seven crowns descending and crowning them. Then, some events from his life are recounted in more detail. It is told that Abba Moses, while walking to Petra, asked himself how he would get any water there, but a voice came to him saying not to be concerned. He was visited by some of the fathers and he had only a single flask of water which he used up to cook lentils for them. Entering and leaving the cell, he prayed to God and immediately a rain cloud appeared above Petra and filled all of his receptacles. In the end, many sayings of his are listed. They are dedicated to various issues, such as hesychia, sin, forbearance, fornication, fasting, hospitality, martyrdom, prayer, vigilance, temptation, and misdeemeanour.5

4 Depending on the version, this is recounted in the 22nd or 19th chapter of the Lausiac History. For the Greek text cf. PG 34, 1065–1068; The Lausiac history of Palladius II. The Greek text edited with introduction and notes, ed. C. Butler, Cambridge 1904, 58–62, for an English translation cf. The Lausiac history of Palladius, ed. W. K. Lowther Clarke, London – New York 1918, 86–90; Palladius: the Lausiac history, trans. R. T. Meyer, London 1965, 67–70; O’Brien Wicker, Ethiopian Moses, 335–338 (about the chapter on St. Moses in the text ibid., 329–330, 333, 334), for a Serbian translation cf. Palladije, episkop Helenupolja, Lavaški di kazivanje o životima svetih i blaženih oca, trans. S. Prodić, Šibenik 1992, 29–30. The death of St. Moses is described in other texts, but it should be pointed out right away that he died as a martyr in a barbarian attack, probably in 407 (O’Brien Wicker, Ethiopian Moses, 332). About Palladios in brief cf. Palladios, in: ODB III, 1565 (B. Baldwin), on the writer and his work, as well as about his patron cf. C. Rapp, Palladius, Lausus and the Historia lausiacæ, in: Novum Millenium. Studies on byzantine history and culture edited to Paul Speck, ed. C. Sode, S. Takács, Aldershot 2001, 279–289, with sources and literature. Since all of these texts are rather extensive, their contents are presented here in a summarized form.

5 6 PG 65, 281–289. For the English translation v. The sayings of the desert fathers: the alphabetical collection, trans. B. Ward, London–Oxford 1984, 138–143; O’Brien Wicker, Ethiopian Moses, 339–343 (on the words about St. Moses in the text cf. ibid., 330, 333, 334), for the Serbian translation v. Izreke staraca, Mannastir Hilandar 2008, 162–167. His sayings are also found in the Systematic Collection of the Sayings of the Desert Fathers (The book of the elders: sayings of the desert fathers. The systematic collection, trans. J. Wortley, Collegeville MN 2012, 19, 30, 43–44, 60, 96–97, 127–128, 135, 164–165, 200–201, 217, 225, 235, 252–253, 259, 291–292, 319–320). About The Sayings of the Desert Fathers in short cf. Apostrophegmatum patrum, in: ODB I, 139 (B. Baldwin, A. Cutler). Petra, which is mentioned here, can mean ‘rock’ and even ‘cave’ cf. The book of the elders, 96, n. 4. There is extensive literature on the relationship of ecclesiastic figures, monks particularly, to Ethiopians and Ethiopians and their dark skin, including St. Moses. The following studies are particularly noteworthy: O’Brien Wicker, Ethiopian Moses, 334–335; V. Wimbush, Ascetic behavior and colorful language: stories about Ethiopian Moses, Semeia 58 (Atlanta 1992) 81–90 (starting from ancient Greek and Roman views on different categories of people, gives observations about ascetic piety and the Christian opinion on the racial differences in those times on the example of St. Moses); D. Brakke, Ethiopian demons: male sexuality, the black-skinned other, and the monastic self, Journal of the history of sexuality 10/3–4 (Austin 2001) 501–535 (it underlines that in ancient Rome it was believed that Ethiopian men and women had an increased libido, that in many writings on monks and hermits, especially in Egypt, the demon was mentioned as black and as the Ethiopian demon, particularly the demon of for-
The commemoration of the holy father Moses the Ethiopian, Mnēmē τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Μωσέως τοῦ Ἀθίπος, in the Synaxarion of the Church of Constantinople has already been mentioned. It summarizes the contents of the narrative in the Lausiac History. Firstly, it states that he was from Ethiopia and black, that he was a slave thrown out by his master because of many acts of misdemeanour and theft. Then the dramatic story about how Moses swam the Nile and took revenge on the shepherd and the narrative of the four robbers who attacked him are reported. Finally, it repeats the data listed at the end of Palladios’ text: that he died at the age of seventy-five in Scete, that he was a priest, and that he left behind seventy disciples. Neither Moses’ battle against the demons that tortured him nor his help to the old monks is mentioned.7 There is a Vita of the saint, Bías and polyteia of τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Μωσέως τοῦ Ἀθίπος, in the so-called ‘imperial’ menologia compiled in the eleventh century. There are two versions of this text: the first (BHG 1307z) and the second (BHG 1308), which has an added section in the 7th chapter and a rather short epilogue after the last, 8th chapter. They inform us that Moses was an Ethiopian and that he had previously been the slave of a government official who dismissed him because of many misdemeanours. Although his body was black, his soul shone out like the sun. The text also describes how he swam across the Nile in order to take revenge on the shepherd. Later he repented and retreated to the desert amongst the hermits and afterwards received the monastic habit. He devoted his time to fasting and praying and partook of some bread and water only every three or four days; practiced the deepest humility, shedding unceasing tears of repentance, indescribable sighs, nocturnal vigils. He drove out demons, healed the sick and did much more thanks to the grace of God. The author offers a loose presentation of the life of the saint, relying on Palladios’ narrative more directly only in the episodes about the revenge against the shepherd and the attack of the robbers. In the section attached to the second version there is an echo of the words from the Lausiac History in the stories about bringing water to the old monks and the hard hit by the demon; and from The Sayings of the Desert Fathers in the narratives on the sins seeping out like sand through a basket and about an official who went to Scete to meet him, but Moses replied by describing himself as a fool. Like the note in the Synaxarion of the Church of Constantinople, these Vītae do not mention the priest Abba Isidore.8

Further, in the service dedicated to St. Moses there is a canon marked as the work of Theophanes which would mean that it was composed in the ninth century.9 The memory of the saint is also found in menologia in Greek manuscripts of the Gospels10 and of Stoutride and Sabatic typika,11 as well as in liturgical menaia.12 In the metric calendar compiled by Christopher of Mytilene around the middle of the tenth century, the first iambic couplet for August 28th is the one commemorating Moses the Black. It reads: ‘ψήνεις τῷ ῥητῷ καὶ θανὼν Μωσῆ μέλα, Ἀνθεπίκος ὀψιν, καὶ Θεὸς τὴν καρδίαν’ .13 Finally, several writings on the saint, as far as it is known, still remain unpublished.14

The life of the saint was connected to Egypt and he is honored in the Coptic Church, where his commemoration is celebrated on the 24th day of the month of Paoni, which corresponds to June 18th in the Byzantine calendar.15 It is assumed that Palladios relied on written or oral testimonies on the saints when compiling the Lausiac History, which was translated into the Coptic language. One should not exclude the possibility that this also applies to the story of Abba Moses.16 As stated above, the saint is mentioned in The Sayings of the Desert Fathers, and they were also translated into the Coptic language.17

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7 Delehaye, Synaxarion, 929.18–932.7.
8 Menologia anonymi Byzantini saeculi X quae supersunt II. Fasciculus alter: menses iunium, iulium, augustum continens. Sumptibus Bibliothecae Academiae scientiarum e codice Hierosolymitano S. Sepulcri 17, probably from the twelfth century, and the second based on Ambrosianus No 834 from 1240 (ibid., I, IV, V). The so-called ‘imperial’ menologia were probably compiled during the reign of Emperor Michael IV Papelagon (1034–1041) cf. Menologion, in: ODB II, 1341 (N. Patterson Sevcenko). On the second Vita (sporadically called panegyric), on the Lausiac history and The sayings of the desert fathers as its primary sources of information, the claim that it was written in the tenth century and upon publication attributed to Laurence, a monk in Calabria (Acta Sanctorum Augusti Tomus Sextus, Paris 1688, 199–212), with an English translation, and with no reference to the edition of Latysev, v. O’Brien Wicker, Ethiopian Moses, 330, 333, 335, 344–347.
9 Archhipesipos Sergii Spaskii, Pohny mēstāšāvovostak I. Vostochnái agiologie, Vladimir 1901, 422.
10 Ibid., 429, 433, where two manuscripts from the Synodal Library were published – no. 44 from the tenth–eleventh century and no. 43 from 1055.
11 Ibid., 456, listing the menologia of the Stoudite typikon according to the examples from the twelfth to the fourteenth century and of the Sabatic typikon based on a manuscript from 1298.
12 Ibid., 493, presenting the liturgical menaia for August based on two manuscripts – one from the eleventh century and the other from the twelfth century.
13 U. G. Siberus, Ecclesiae geaeae martyrologium metricum ex menes, Cod. Chifletiani, Lipsiae 1727, 276. Cf. Archhipesipos Sergii Spaskii, Pohny mēstāšāvovostak I, 429. For basic data on Christopher of Mytilene v. Christopher of Mytilene, in: ODB I, 442 (A. Kazhdan).
14 These are the texts listed as: Narratio BHG 1309b (Novum auctarium, 153), Laudatio BHG 1310 (BHG II, 127) and Prophetae de ultima generatone BHG 1310b (Novum auctarium, 153).
15 On the saint in the Coptic milieu, in brief, cf. De Lacy O’Leary, The saints of Egypt in the Coptic calendar, London – New York 1937, 55, 206–207.
16 About the translation into the Coptic language and the hypothesis that the Lausiac History in its present form was based on an earlier text compiled by Palladios during his sojourn in Egypt between 388 and 399 v. Rapp, Palladius, Lausus and the Historia lausia, 285, with literature. About the Coptic translation, with a detailed analysis, v. The Lausiac history of Palladius I. A critical discussion together with notes on early Egyptian monachism, ed. C. Butler, Cambridge 1898, 107–155, where Cuthbert Butler pointed out that the second version had been supplemented (ibid., 123–154, esp. 143) and that the translation could have been made before the Council of Ephesus of 450 (ibid., 154–155). On Arabic translations made in Egypt cf. ibid., 159–170.
17 J. Jarry, Un traduction en copte de certains das apophtegmes des pères: les inscriptions du platfond de l’église de Deir Abu Hennes, Bul.
the Antiphonarium of the Coptic Church, there are hymns dedicated to St. Moses which mention Abba Isidorus and Abba Makari (Makarios) as his spiritual fathers. Liturgical hymns preserved in the Coptic and Arabic language testify to the ardent veneration of the saint. Of great importance are three doxologies in Coptic, especially because the second mentions the body of Abba Moses in his holy cave, and the third one says that the relics would be removed from the cave. It is assumed that they were compiled before the eleventh century, since the relics of the saints had already been translated to the monasteries in the Nitrian Desert by that time. No Vita of the saint in the Coptic language has been found. However, it can be assumed that such writings existed. Several versions of his Vita in Arabic have been noticed in Egyptian manuscripts, and three of them which have been published will be discussed below. The first is the text in the

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Baramus Monastery.22 As already mentioned, three versions of his hagiography in the Arabic language compiled in the Coptic milieu have been published. In the first and third Vita it is noted that he is commemorated on Paoni 24th and that he is named as the Black, while the second Vita records that the commemoration of the saint is held on August 28th referring to him as the Ethiopian.23 The time of creation of any of them has not been determined. The second one will be presented first, followed by the first and the third which reveal a more direct interrelation- ship. The Second version of the Vita first recounts that Moses the Ethiopian was a black Ethiopian on the outside, but ultimately his soul became bright and illuminated. He was Ethiopian by origin and both his face and his body were completely black. The same can be said for his soul. Next, the usual data that appear in the Lausiac History are listed – that he was a pagan, the slave of a rich man who had driven him away on account of robbery and the story about the revenge on the shepherd is repeated. Then he repented, was baptized and became a monk. He fought against demons. He went to live in a monastery of hermits, and then he found a quiet place where nobody knew him to live in reclusion and mourn his sins. In a remote place, he found a cell above a rock in a mountain cave. There he led an ascetic life, struggling zealously against the demon. Then the stories known from The Sayings of the Desert Fathers are narrated – about the hermits who visited him in the cell and his prayer for water and about the official who wanted to see him and receive his blessing, but he did not recognize him. There is also the narrative about the four robbers who stormed into his cell and he tied them and took them to the monastery, which already appeared in the Lausiac History. There are also stories encountered in The Sayings of the Desert Fathers – about a brother who fell into sin and Moses did not condemn him, but instead told him a didactic story about sins seeping out like sand through a perforated basket, and about a bishop who ordained him a priest and then tested his devotion, followed by instructive words addressed to the reader. The data known from the Lausiac History that he died at the age of seventy-five in Scete and had seventy disciples follow. Then, as in The Sayings of the Desert Fathers, his death and the testimony of a monk who hid himself and saw seven crowns descending from the heavens are described. In the end, it is added that the monks returned to the monastery after the barbarians had left, and that the righteous Moses performed many miracles after he died a martyr.24 The First version of the Vita relates the story of the holy Abba Moses the Black by giving the usual data – that he was the slave of an official who worshiped fire and the Sun and who threw him out because of wickedness and many misdeeds, that he became the leader of a gang of robbers, the episode of the revenge on the shepherd is described and it is noted that his wrongdoings continued for a long time. Then his eyes were opened and he rushed to the Scetis Desert, to the priest Isidore. Abba Isidore was on his way from his cell to the church when he saw Moses the Black and was frightened because his appearance was very strange and fearsome, and then they had a long conversation. Moses beseeched the priest to ordain him as a monk. Abba Isidore took him, brought him to the church, baptized him, and dressed him in the schema. The demon attacked Abba Moses and he fervently fought against his craving for fornication. Therefore, Moses promptly retreated to the inner desert and settled in a cave where he dug up a water cistern. At night he went to the cells of the elders and took their pitchers and filled them with water and for four years he did not sleep or sit down and held his hands raised in prayer to God to take away his craving for fornication. This is followed, in a somewhat altered form, by the stories that had appeared in the Lausiac History – about four robbers who entered his cell when he came out to go to church and he surprised them during the night and that, after he had spent six years in devotional practice, the demon hit him so hard and broke his hip and bones and that the brethren found him lying like a corpse by the cistern and took him to the priest Isidore. Then Abba Isidore advised him to take up the middle path. Abba Moses withdrew to his cave and took to weaving palm-fiber baskets and eating more bread, but the thought of fornication became even more obsessive and evil spirits challenged him with many temptations. He went to the priest Isidore and told him about these thoughts, and he gave him some advice. Moses returned to his cave. He ate very little, prayed fifty times during the day and night and made three hundred prostrations. Then he went to Isidore the priest, and he blessed him, consoled him, encouraged him, and sent him off to his cell. Moses spent six years without sleep, standing on his feet all night in vigilance and prayer, and if sleep overwhelmed him, he would walk from one place to another. The priest Isidore advised him not to fight so hard against the demon and told him to enter the holy church with him and to approach the sacraments, and the demons would run away from him. The saint did as Isidore had told him and then retired to his cave. Two months later, Abba Isidore went to see him. Moses told him that he no longer feared demons and they had become like fluttering flies for him. Abba Isidore blessed him and returned to his cell. Then the miracles of Moses follow. Groups of people together with the exhaust- ed, possessed by diabolical spirits and affected by numerous diseases of all sorts came to him in the desert from Cairo and begged him to help them. A few days later Abba Mo-

22 Le synaxaire arabe jacobite (rédaction copte) V. Les mois de Baounah, Abb. Mesori et jours complémentaires, ed. R. Basset, PO 17 (Paris 1923) 591–594, edition in Arabic with a French translation, Fond arabe – no. 256 from the sixteenth century and no. 4780 from the end of the fourteenth century. The announcement of Abba Makarios on the martyrdom and the Berbers as the attackers mentioned in Difnar is found in the text in the Coptic Arabic manuscript available at the already mentioned website https://stmarkla.org/download/Difnar%20%20Antiphonarium/10-Paoni/Paoni%2024.pdf. There are major differences between some parts of the two examples. Here the published version is followed mostly, though it has received criticism.

23 For dates listed cf. Vita di Mosè, 41, 77, 115. On the epithets the Black or the Ethiopian v. ibid., 12–14, 41, 71, 103 et passim.

24 It is found in two manuscripts – B (Oriental Library of the University of Saint Joseph in Beirut, no. 620) from the eighteenth century and M (Library of the Franciscan Centre for Oriental Christian Studies Muski in Cairo, no. 28) from 1746 (ibid., 8, 10–11). For the edition of the text v. ibid., 55–70 (in Arabic), 71–77 (Italian translation).
ses went to the desert and saw a cow that had just calved, but would not allow the calf to suck even a drop of her milk. Abba Moses took some water, poured it on the cow and her little one, who at that very moment went to its mother and took to drinking her milk. Abba Moses approached people obsessed with demons, prayed for them, and they went back in perfect health. This is followed by a description of his ordination as a priest. This account also appears in The Sayings of the Desert Fathers and is attributed to a patriarch in the Coptic Arabic synaxarium, but here the event is moved to Alexandria. Namely, one day Abba Isidore took Abba Moses with him to Alexandria, and, after the already known test, the patriarch asked to have Moses brought before him, laid his hand on him and ordained him a priest. Moses returned to the desert and his name became known in all parts of the earth. He had five hundred brothers, all of them his disciples and all of them obedient to him. The monastery is now called Bara-mus. This is followed by a freely conveyed episode, known from The Sayings of the Desert Fathers, about some monks who visited him, but he did not have any water, and so he prayed to God and water fell from the sky and filled the cistern. Several added narratives follow. Soon after, some brethren came to him and he set up a table for them and put a piece of baked snake on it. The brethren wanted to eat it, but he told them not to touch it because it was an evil animal. Later on, he wanted to retire to the inner desert to dedicate himself to God's service in seclusion, and then the demon told him that there was no water there, but a voice from heaven reminded him of eternal life. Having fallen ill, a brother decided to set off and descend into the delta. Moses came to him and talked to him about the sin of fornication and left. The monk then went down to the delta, and people went to see him and to serve him. A young virgin came to receive his blessing, but he fell into sin with her by taking her virginity, and spent with her not only one but more and more days. The girl became pregnant and gave birth to a beautiful baby. The child was brought to the brother, and he took it in his arms, went to the desert, and took it to the church and laid it down before the elders and told them to judge him according to merit. They applied the prescribed sanctions and he withdrew to the desert to mourn his sin. The narrative known from The Sayings of the Desert Fathers follow. Abba Moses spoke to Abba Isidore about the impure thoughts bothering him, and Isidore answered him to look to the west and to the east, suggesting a moral lesson in this advice. An archon of Egypt wished to talk with Moses and to receive his blessing, but did not recognize him when they met. It is described that Abba Moses and the brethren who remained with him, seven of them in total, were killed by barbarians, without the episode about the brother who had hidden himself. In the end, celebratory verses and instructive words on repentance follow. The story of the holy Abba Moses the Black related in the The Third version of the Vita is similar to that in the First version of the Vita and includes the same episodes. The only major difference appears after the account of the five hundred brethren who had in time gathered around Moses: an added section about four monasteries in the Scetis Mount. It says that the monastery of Abba Moses is called Baramus, the one of Abba Isidore the priest who raised the first church and another one nearby is called the church of Abba Bishoy (St. Paisios the Great); another one (the third) is below it and bears the name of St. John (the Little); and another one (the fourth) is called the church of Abba Makarios the Great. Having become a priest, Abba Moses erected a new church on the site which is still known as the church of Abba Moses. The episodes from his life listed in a different order in the First version of the Vita follow, and here the event with the guests and the snake has a direct eye-witness because it is said to have been related by a Greek priest who had settled there forty years earlier and was one of the brothers who had visited Moses. Then Abba Moses broke away from the group to go further into the inner part of the mount and, exhausted from so much walking, he wondered where he would find water, but a voice came to him and told him to keep going and not to worry. Only after this it is described how he was visited by the elders, and he did not have drinking water, so he prayed and rain fell. The following accounts are presented in the same order. At the end there is the story of how Abba Moses suffered a martyr’s death at the hands of barbarians, mentioning that there were seven brethren with him and that one of them managed to escape and hide and that he saw crowds from heaven coming down on them.

St. Moses was also venerated in Ethiopia, his own country of origin according to the sources. The oldest known writings about this saint were translated into Ge'ez – the Lausiac History and The Sayings of the Desert Fathers. His commemoration in the Ethiopian Church is

25 It was noticed in only one manuscript – G (University Library in Gottingen, collection of Arabic manuscripts, no. 114), which has not been dated (ibid., 8, 12). For the edition of the text v. ibid., 81–102 (in Arabic), 103–115 (Italian translation). Later, Gawdat Gabra pointed out that the same version, with the aforementioned section on four monasteries in the Scetis Mount, was also found in a manuscript kept at the Monastery of the Syrians in the Scetis Desert under no. 308, which dates from 1314. Cf. idem, Dar Anba Musa al-Asswad: das origonale Baramus-Kloster in Wadi al Natran, BSAC 36 (1997) 72–73. Shortly after this, he showed that certain lines at the end of the Vita were the same as those in The Sayings of the Desert Fathers in Coptic (idem, Bemerkungen zu Moses dem Schwartzen, 118–120).

26 It is assumed that he is mentioned as the Ethiopian because of his dark skin, and that he did not actually come from the area of today’s Ethiopia, but that he originally belonged to one of the tribes along the Nile who pursued livestock husbandry and robbery and whose members were usually tall and dark-skinned (O’Brien Wick-er, Ethiopian Moses, 331, 335, n. 44). Regardless of his real origin, he was an Ethiopian by birth according to the texts and was venerated as such in all churches, so this issue, which has no crucial bearing on this study, will be left aside.

27 For the opinion that some chapters of the text were translated rather early, at the time of the Aksumite Kingdom (which will be discussed later) v. G. Lasini, Le monachisme en Ethiopie. Esquisse d’une histoire, in: Monachismes d’Orient. Images, échanges, influences, ed. F. Jullien, M.-J. Pierre, Turnhout 2011, 139. Some important preliminary observations concerning the translation into the Ge’ez language were presented by Butler, The Lausiac history, 155–158.

28 For the publication of the text according to two manuscripts – one from 1586/87 and the second from the eighteenth century – with the additions from the third one v. Geromicon, ed. V. Arras, Louvain 1896 (in the Ge’ez language); Geromicon, ed. V. Arras, Louvain 1986 (translation into Latin).
Moses (Mûsê) of the Scetis Desert for the 3rd day of the Church 1986) has not been available to us. In this case, the commemoration of St. éthiopien. Mois de Maskaram and trans. I. Guidi, PO 1, Paris 1907, 665–670 (comparative edition in 1030–1032. Only the commemoration of this saint is held on that day. Abba Moses arrived there, built by King Άgâbôs, which served as a cemetery for a dweller of the desert, God's servant Samuel. Straightaway would die in three days, and that he would be buried by a ground and wept until his soul wished to be set free from him. God heard his cry. He sent an angel to console him, and he told Abba Moses that his sin was absolved, that he would go to Gehenna. Having said those things, Satan took him into an empty and arid desert, to the top of a hill. The old man and Abba Moses had a long conversation. The elder said that he had committed a sin and that he had a daughter. He could find no one whom she could marry except for Moses, and therefore came to him. The old man made the heart of Abba Moses yield. Abba Moses had a vision that the old man was dead, and he mourned over him and buried him. When he went to comfort the maiden, a mighty wind began to blow and he was driven backwards. When his senses returned, the vision disappeared and he was forced to go back to his dwelling. Later he went out into the desert and met Satan again, this time in the form of an elderly pilgrim who was going to Alexandria, and he took Abba Moses with him and brought him to the city and left him there. Then Satan appeared to Abba Moses in the form of a woman who was carrying water. She took him to her house and told him that she was the daughter of a king who was dead. When she saw that his heart was growing fond of her, she told him that she was a Jewess and then seduced him with many cunning skills until he renounced his faith. She took him into an empty and arid desert, to the top of a mountain, and transformed herself before him and said to him that she was Satan who had taken him away from his faith, that he would die in that desert and that his soul would go to Gehenna. Having said those things, Satan disappeared before him. The holy man fell down to the ground and wept until his soul wished to be set free from him. God heard his cry. He sent an angel to console him, and he told Abba Moses that his sin was absolved, that he would die in three days, and that he would be buried by a dweller of the desert, God's servant Samuel. Straighthway Abba Samuel came to Abba Moses, gave him peace and comforted him, and took him to the church in the desert built by King Agabos, which served as a cemetery for a company of monks. When Abba Moses arrived there, he knelt down on his knees and died straightaway. Abba Samuel buried him and wrote down his story.31 Even on the basis of the briefly presented story, it is evident that this is not the same saint. A common feature of theirs is that they were both monks and hermits and came to Egypt from Ethiopia. This one, however, was tempted by Satan in different forms. He was not a priest and he was buried in an Ethiopian monastery. Finally, although the title of the note in the synaxarium states that he came from the Scetis Desert, there is no reference to this in the text.

St. Moses is also known in nearby Syria. Both the Lausiac History and The Sayings of the Desert Fathers were translated into the Syriac language.32 Late Jakobite menology testifies that the memory of the saint, recorded as Father Moses the Black, was usually held on June 18th, like in the Coptic Church, and less often on August 28th, like in Byzantium.33 Moses is not the only one for that day, but the fifth and the last. According to tradition, King Agabos was the father of Makeda or Azeb, the Queen of Sheba. Cf. I. Boavida, M. J. Ramos, Ambiguos legitimidade: the legend of the Queen of Sheba in popular Ethiopian painting, Annales d’Ethiopie 21 (Addis-Ababa 2005) 85–86, 88, 90, 91. 32 The translation of those texts into English, based on a manuscript from the thirteenth or fourteenth century which was in the possession of the Vicar of the Chaldean Patriarch at Mosul, was published by Ernest A. Wallis-Budge The paradise or garden of the holy fathers I, trans. E. A. Wallis Budge, London 1907, 77–281 (The Lausiac History, in which Moses is listed as an Indian cf. ibid., 215–218); The paradise or garden of the holy fathers II, trans. E. A. Wallis Budge, London 1907, 3–283 (Systematic Collection of The Sayings of the Desert Fathers, with Appendix cf. ibid., 283–336, for St. Moses v. ibid., 7–9, 12–13, 16, 50, 83, 102–103, 112, 122–123, 143, 144, 165–166, 180, 204, 284–285, 289–290, 317, 325). About translations and versions of these two texts in the Syrian language v. The Lausiac history I, 77–96; C. Tavolieri, Historiography and hagiographic texts: the Syriac versions of Palladius’ historia Lausiana, Annali di G’ Toscani, Serie orientale 52 (Venetia 2016) 45–55. Palladios’ work was translated and edited by the monk Anan’ Isho in the beginning or in the middle of the seventh century (The Lausiac history I, 77; The paradise or garden of the holy fathers I, V; Tavolieri, Historiography and hagiographic texts, 46), and the narrative on Moses is found in the second version, completely independent of and no younger than the first (The Lausiac history I, 87). Later, a Syriac translation into Arabic was made (ibid., 159). On numerous unresolved issues and on the current knowledge about the Syrian versions of the translation of the Lausiac History, with an analysis and important observations v. Tavolieri, Historiography and hagiographic texts, 45–57, with sources and literature.

A martyrology and douze ménologes Syriaques, ed. and trans. F. Nau, PO 10, Paris 1915, 80, 96, 100, 111 (edition in Arabic and French). These are late Jakobite manuscripts dating from the sixteenth century on. In them, the memory of the saint is usually recorded on June 18th, but in two copies the commemoration of Mar Moses is marked on August 28th (ibid., 85). In earlier manuscripts published on that occasion, dating from the end of the seventh to the twelfth century, there is no memory of St. Moses (cf. ibid., 31–56). The contents of a Syrian Martyrology (British Museum Orient. 1017) in which the commemoration of Moses the Ethiopian is recorded on August 28th, suggests that some caution is needed when discussing the issue of the date of this saint’s commemoration. Cf. P. Peeters, Le martyrologe de Rabban Sila, AB 27 (1908) 192–193. Rather unusually, a certain St. Moses, a recluse in Scete, is mentioned on May 5th as the seventh of a total of eight saints in one manuscript (cf. ibid., 183). The manuscript was copied by Rabban Sila at the end of the thirteenth century at the latest, and as the name of the famous Syrian writer Jacob of Sarug (+521) appears in the title, it is presumed to be a transcript of his work (ibid., 129–130). About Jacob v. Jacob of Sarug, in: ODB II, 1029–1030 (T. E. Gregory). The story, in which he is named as St. Moses the Robber (Historia S. Moisii Latronis), was published in the Syriac language based on the manuscript Musei Borgiani Cod. Syr. H. V. 5 (without a dating). Cf. H. Gesmondi, Linguistic syriaca grammatica et chrestomathia: cum glossario scholis accommodata, Beirut 1900, 123–127. Only this text dedicated to Moses the Ethiopian has been recorded amongst Syriac writings cf. Bibliotheca hagiographica Orientalis, ed. Socii Bollandiani, Bruxellis 1910, 170–171 (BHO 778). This is also the case with the website providing a bibliography of Syriac resources: http://syria.ac/bho and http://syria.ac/hagiography.

30 Le Synaxaire éthiopien. Mois de Sanê, Hamlê et Nanasê, ed. and trans. I. Guidi, PO 1, Paris 1907, 665–670 (comparative edition in the Geez language and in a French translation); The book of the saints of the Ethiopian church IV, trans. E. A. Wallis Budge, Cambridge 1928, 1030–1032. Only the commemoration of this saint is held on that day.
31 The book of the saints of the Ethiopian church I, trans. E. A. Wallis Budge, Cambridge 1928, 12–14. The more recent edition (Le Synaxaire éthiopien. Mois de Maskaram, ed. and trans. G. Collin, PO 83, Turnhout 1986) has not been available to us. In this case, the commemoration of St.
The saint is known in Slavic countries as well. It is not known exactly when the Lausiac History and The Sayings of the Desert Fathers were translated into Old Church Slavonic. The first translations of some Paterniki are assumed to have been made at the time of the missionary activity of Methodios of Thessalonike († 885). Quotations from The Sayings of the Desert Fathers appear already in the writings of Kosmas the Priest in the second half of the tenth century, and the oldest evidenced story from the Lausiac History is preserved in the Codex Suprasliensis from the eleventh century, one of the earliest extant Cyrillic manuscripts. Apparently, the texts on St. Moses in the Slavic literary heritage have never been published and researched. Therefore, the content of the notes on the saint in the available Serbian manuscripts of synaxaria is summarized here. The first text for August 28th in the older version of the synaxarium concisely presents the life of the holy father Moses the Ethiopian, ͡πουμос (πουμος) ὁ ἁγιος Μωϋσης ὁ Κύριακος. The saint was Ethiopian and black, the slave of a master who threw him out because of his evil temperament. He was strong and led a band of robbers and murderers, but he fell into temptation and after that retreated to a monastery to repent. He put himself to a great undertaking, and he even performed miracles. While he was in his cell, he was attacked by robbers, who did not know that it was the Moses. He tied them all together, put them under his shoulder and took them to the church. He asked the brethren what they thought about them, since he was not worthy to judge others. The robbers did not know that this was the notorious Moses, the leader of brigands. Realizing that, they became monks and were rescued. He was a priest and he pleased God with his virtue. He died in Scete at the age of seventy-five.

Then in the verse synaxarium appears a note which, like the one in the Synaxarium of the Church of Constantinople, also includes a minutely recounted story about the revenge on the shepherd, and mentions that, having brought the robbers to the monastery, Moses asked a certain Kyriakos to pass the righteous verdict. The texts written in Egypt mention the relics of the saint. The second of three doxologies in Coptic records that the body of Abba Moses rests in his holy cave, and the third one says that the relics would be removed from the cave. The note in the Coptic Arabic synaxarium and its translation into Ge`ez state that the body of the saint rests in the Baramus Monastery, while the first and the third version of the Vita compiled in Egypt mention that the monastery of St. Moses is called Baramus. It is the monastery known as Baramus, Paromeos or Baramos (Deir el-Baramus) in the Nitrian Desert or the Scetis Desert. Its name is based on the Arabic pronunciation of the Coptic na Pu`uem, meaning ‘of the Romans’ or ‘of the Roman, since, according to the tradition that existed as early as the seventh century, it was founded in the memory of Maximus and Dometius, sons of the Roman emperor Valentinian I (364–375), who came to Egypt to join Abba Makarios the Great and live as recluse in the desert. However, archaeological findings at the monastery now called Deir el-Baramus are not older than the sixth century, and hence it is usually assumed to have been founded between 533 and 580. In fact, this monastery, with its katholikon dedicated to the Holy Virgin, was erected about 50 meters northeast of the original lavra, which was located at the site named ‘Monastery of Abba Moses the Black’ (Deir Anba Musa-al Aswad). The two monasteries...
ies, both dedicated to the Mother of God, seem to have already existed at the end of the sixth century.44 During the recent excavations at the site of Deir Anba Musa-al-Aswad, remains of the original church were found.45 It is not possible to reliably determine the cause of its destruction. The possibility that it was damaged or destroyed in the second raid of the Sceits Desert in 435 cannot be ruled out. Above it a new church was built, which later underwent architectural changes.46 Anyway, the findings originating from the fifth and even from the late fourth century confirm that the original monastery was located there.47 In the katholikon of the younger monastery, by the northern wall of the choir in a form characteristic of Coptic churches called khuras, a wooden kibotion with the relics of Sts. Maximus and Dometius and Moses the Black is placed.48 It is assumed that the leipsana of Moses were laid there before the eleventh century.49 On the other hand, eleventh-century writers noted that there was a cave of Abba Moses near the monastery, but its site has not been established.50

St. Moses has been portrayed in the region in which he spent his eremitic life and in other areas of the Eastern Christian world. The earliest known extant representations of him in monumental painting probably originate from the seventh century. These are two rather recently published images and both come from Egypt. One, from Ba-wit, can be seen on old photos taken by Jean Clédat only (fig. 1). It was painted on the western wall of Chapel XVI, which was rectangular in shape and had an entrance in the southern wall. Both the hair and the beard of the saint are white and short. Like other holy monks represented in the chapel, he is clad in a dress and a mantle. In his left hand, covered with the cloak, he holds a book, while supporting it with his right hand. He is labeled as ΑΠΑ| ΜΟΥ|ΗΣΗ|Σ, or ‘the liberated,’ or ‘the liberated man.’51 The other image is located in the monastery complex of al-Mansuriya about 25 km northwest of the Pyramids in Giza. In a hermitage named Oratory E during the excavations, a series of busts of saints with Coptic inscriptions were discovered on the west wall. St. Moses is white-haired, with short hair and a thick rounded beard (fig. 2). Just like the other saints represented there, he is dressed in a tunic and a mantle, blessing with his right hand and holding a book in his left hand covered by the cloak. Next to him is the inscription Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΑΠΑ| Μ|ΟΥ|ΗΣΗ|Σ| Μ|ΠΡΜΕΣΕ, marking him as Saint Abba Moses ‘the liberated man.’52 In these two examples he is clad in a dress and a

51 Gabra, Bemerkungen zu Moses dem Schwartzen, 126 and n. 35 (which provides information on the existence of the photo of the portrait and the content of its inscription); J. Clédat, Le monastère et la nécropole de Baouit, ed. D. Bénazeth, M.-H. Rutschowscaya, Le Caire 1999, 156, 161, n. 81, pl. 135. For Coptic words for freedom and liberation (liber, liberare, libertes and etc.) cf. Vocabularium coptico-latinum et latino-copticum e peyroni et tattami lexicis, ed. G. Parthey, Berlin 1844, 381. Abba Moses and his brethren are mentioned among the holy monks in two extensive fresco inscriptions in Bawit – one on the eastern wall of the room 21 (J. Maspero, Fouilles exécutées à Baouit, Le Caire 1931, 33, 132, no. 452, pl. XXXV) and another one on the northern wall of the room 28 (ibid., 138, no. 477).

52 Z. Hawass, G. Gabra, Die Eremitage von Al-Mansuriya, Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum 46 (Münster 2003) 114, 116, 117, where his white clothes are interpreted as a possible echo of the words of the patriarch that Moses became white, recorded in the note in the Coptic synaxarium. A record about the existence of this fresco, on the basis of the information of Dr Zahi Hawass, was provided somewhat earlier by Gabra, Bemerkungen zu Moses dem Schwartzen, 126 and n.

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44 Evelyn White, op. cit., 228; Inemmée, Deir al-Baramus, excavations at the so-called site of Moses the Black, 124.
45 Idem., Excavations at the site of Deir al-Baramus, 56–58.
46 Ibid., 58–65.
47 Idem., Deir al-Baramus, excavations at the so-called site of Moses the Black, 134; Konstantinidou, Potsherds narrate history, 55–61, 63. Findings from the last, third stage, date from the ninth century and to about 905 (ibid., 63).
48 Evelyn White, The monasteries of the Wâdi ’n Natrûn III, 238; Gabra, Coptic monasteries, 39. For the appearance of the katholikon of the new monastery and of the adjoining buildings v. Evelyn White, op. cit., 234–242.
49 Nessim Youssef, Coptic and Arabic liturgical texts, 754–755.
50 Evelyn White, The monasteries of the Wâdi ’n Natrûn II, 360; idem., The monasteries of the Wâdi ’n Natrûn III, 228–229, with sources and a discussion on where the cave could be located, as well as the information that there were twenty monks in the monastery and two in the cave in 1088. On the attitude of the holy men towards the caves cf. A.-M. Talbot, Caves, demons and holy men, in: Le saint, le moine et le paysan, ed. Delouos, S. Métivier, P. Pagès, Paris 2016, 707–718. About early Egyptian monastic cells on the basis of written sources v. D. L. Brooks Hedstrom, The geography of the monastic cell in early Egyptian monastic literature, Church history 78/4 (New York 2009) 756–791.
cloak and does not have a koukoulion, just like the other depicted holy monks and hermits, and his complexion is not darker than the skin of the others.

Attention should be paid to a parchment at the beginning of a seventh–eighth or eighth–ninth century Coptic manuscript brought from the White Monastery and kept in Leiden (Museum van Oudheden, Insinger 71), of which only two leaves are extant. The figure of a saint labeled as Abba Moses the archimandrite, ΑΒΒΑ| ΜΩ|ΥΣ|ΗΣ|| ΑΡΧΗ|ΜΑΝΔΡΙΣ, is painted on it. Some scholars have argued that the title in the inscription allows us to identify him either as Moses the Black or Moses of Tunah who was martyred in Alexandria.53 The title of archimandrite has been used since the fourth century and kept in Leiden (Museum van Oudheden, Insinger n. 524). Therefore, they could be understood in that context. The hermitage is oriented so that the wall which is called the west is in fact on the northwest.

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53 O. Kurz, A Coptic miniature at Leiden, Netherlands Year-book for History of Art 5 (Leiden 1954) 265–269, where the first mentioned date was proposed and Moses was identified as an Egyptian hegoumenos and writer. J. Leroy, Les manuscrits coptes et copistes anciens illustrés, Paris 1974, 91–92, 214, pl. 27, 2, raises the question of which St. Moses was represented. K. C. Innemée, Ecclesiastical dress in the Medieval Near East, Leiden – New York – Köln 1992, 96, pl. 48. 2, proposes a slightly later time of creation, placing the portrayal amongst the examples of the robes of monks who obeyed St. Pachomios’ rule, which are meticulously studied on the basis of written and artistic sources (cf. ibid., 95–107), and notes that a hood or a koukoulion is not seen in them (ibid., 99, 106). Gawdat Gabra suggests that Moses the Black is one of the saints who were portrayed in the manuscripts. Cf. idem, Bemerkungen zu Moses dem Schwartzen, 126 and n. 38, based on Coptic illumination, in: Coptic encyclopedia IV, ed. A. S. Atiya, New York 1991, 1283 (P. du Bourgaut, M. Rosen-Ayalon).

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The remains of eight figures were noticed on the west wall of Cell A (often called Cell 39 later on) during the excavations carried out in 1906–1907. Amongst them, in the central part, a saint with the inscription read as ΠΝΑΠΟΜΟΥΣΗΣ was seen. However, the descriptions of the saints shown were not provided, and it is also unknown whether they were photographed. Therefore, whether St. Moses the Black was shown there remains an open question. About the saints on the west wall v. J. E. Quibell, Excavations at Saqqara (1906–1907), Le Caire 1908, 64; M. Rassart-Debergh, La décoration picturale du monastère de Saqqara. Essai de reconstruction, in: Acta ad archaeologiam et artium historiam pertinentia IX. Miscellanea Coptica, ed. H. Torp, J. Rasmus Brandt, L. Holm Monsen, Roma 1981, 42. There is another holy monk of the same name in the Coptic Church, St. Moses of Abydos, who was active during the first half of the sixth century and whose memory is celebrated on the 25th day of the month of Epip, which corresponds to August 1st. Cf. M. Moussa, The Coptic literary dossier of Abba Moses of Abydos, Coptic Church Review 24/3 (East Brunswick 2003) 67–90.

56 Kurz, A Coptic miniature at Leiden, 265, 266–268.

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the Bedouins long ago, but thanks to the vertically written inscriptions in Greek by the heads of the saints, many of them were identified. The representations of the saints were repainted later by the monks who had re-settled in the koinobion in 1926. On the basis of the inscription which was read as Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΜΩΙΣΗΣ, St. Moses was recognized amongst the figures on the eastern wall of the cave, in its northern part. It was noted only that the upper part of his figure down to the chest was preserved and that he had a violet-gray cloak and a cross in his right hand.57

57 A. E. Mader, *Ein Bilderzyklus in der Grabenhöhle der St. Euthymios-Laura auf Mardes (Chirbet el-Mard) in der Wüste Juda*, OC 34 (1937) 51, Abb. 2, no. 23 (he visited the koinobion before the repainting, read the inscription by the image of the saint, and, thanks to the inscriptions, identified twenty-five out of the thirty-six represented holy monks); J. Patrich, *Sabas, leader of Palestinian monasticism: a comparative study in Eastern monasticism, fourth to seventh centuries*, Washington D.C. 1995, 137–145, esp. 143; M. Marković, *Prvo putovanje svetog Save u Palestinu i njegov značaj za srpsku srednjovekovnu umetnost*, Beograd 2009, 245–247, esp. 247.

In all likelihood he was represented in the katholikon of the new Baramus Monastery. Of course, it is likely that his painted image had existed in the old monastery’s church, which was restored several times. In the katholikon of the new monastery later paintings have been preserved, which date from the period after 1200, sometime during the thirteenth century, and certainly from the time when the relics of the saint were already resting in the edifice. A rather damaged figure of a holy monk with a destroyed face and dark skin can be seen at the east end of the southern wall of the southern part of the *haikal*. It is assumed that he should be identified as St. Moses. He seems to be making a prayer gesture with his
hands set in front of his chest. In the Scetis Desert there is the Monastery of St. Makarios the Great, the famous monk who played an important role in Moses’ endeavour judging by the note in the Coptic Arabic synaxarium and the verses in Difnar and doxologies, and was the key figure in the founding of the Baramus Monastery according to tradition. The time of creation of the paintings in the katholikon of the monastery is widely given, between the eleventh and the thirteenth century. Numerous holy monks and hermits are shown there, but many of their representations are damaged or destroyed. A quite faded full-figure image of a saint next to a multi-winged creature identified as a seraph is visible in the second zone in the northern part of the eastern wall of the northern haikal dedicated to St. Mark. It is assumed that he is Makarios or rather, because of the darker color of his skin, Moses. The saint has a koukoulion and a beard with straight white hairs, medium-length and almond-shaped. He directs his right hand towards the asomatos, while placing his left hand in front of his chest in a gesture of prayer. However, the portrayed saint’s skin is not darker than that of other shown saints and it was St. Makarios who was represented with a cherub because, as his Vita says, this asomatos took him to the place where he was meant to raise his monastery. In fact, the darker color of the skin can be observed on a monk painted in the eastern part of the northern wall in the same register (fig. 3). There are no traces of his accompanying inscription. Since he was represented next to Paul of Thebes, he has been identified as Antony the Great. The lower half of his figure is heavily damaged. He has a koukoulion on his head, and a thick, straight, white beard. His hands are almost completely faded, and it cannot be discerned if he is making a prayer gesture or holding an object. The possibility that he is St. Moses should not be ruled out. In the church of the Monastery St. Antony near the coast of the Red Sea, on the frescoes made perhaps in 1232/33, he is portrayed as a full-figure figure at the western end of the northern wall of the middle bay of the naos. The inscription A[B]-BA[ ][Σ][Η][Σ] is written by his image. He has dark skin, a koukoulion under which his white hair emerges, a rounded beard of straight and white hairs. His elbows are bent so that his hands are in front of his chest. His right hand makes a gesture of a prayer, while he holds a stick with his left hand. The edifices of the nearby ancient Monastery of St. Paul received new frescoes in the

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58 P. van Moorsel, Treasures from Baramous with some remarks on a Milchizdek scene, in: Actes du IVe congrès copiste I. Art et archéologie, ed. M. Rassart-Debergh, J. Ries, Louvain-la-Neuve 1992, 173; Gabra, Coptic monasteries, 42; Pasi, I dipinti, 37–38, 44, Fig. 9, where the only available photo of the fresco has been published, which is of rather poor quality.

59 J. Leroy, Les peintures des couvents du Ouadi Natroun, Le Caire 1982, 42, 111, Diagram D, pl. 77, 78; Tomeković, Les saints ermites et moines, 304 (in both studies he was recorded as St. Makarios or Moses the Ethiopian). For a color photo of good quality cf. M. Zibawi, Koptische Kunst: das christliche Ägypten von der Spätantike bis zur Gegenwart, Regensburg 2004, Abb. 203 (marked as St. Makarios). St. Makarios and a cherub holding his hand are shown on the eastern wall of the southern haikal in the church of the Baramus Monastery (Moorsel, Treasures from Baramous, 173; Pasi, I dipinti, 44). For the earlier representation of St. Makarios and a cherub in the Virgin Church of the Monastery of the Syrians, in the layer of frescoes dated to the year 889 or very shortly afterwards cf. K. C. Innemée, Dayr al-Suryan: new discoveries in: Claremont Coptic Encyclopedia, 20–21, Fig. 18 – http://cccll.claremont.edu/cdm/ref/collection/cecc/id/2137. For the thirteenth century icon of St. Makarios with a cherub kept in the monastery of St. Catherine in Sinai and the reasons for the saint’s portrayal with this asomatos v. G. Peers, Saint Macarius and a cherub, in: Holy image, hallowed ground. Icons from Sinai, ed. R. S. Nelson, K. M. Collins, Los Angeles 2006, 236–237, with sources and literature.

60 For the representation and the identification of the saint as Antony the Great v. Leroy, Les peintures des couvents, 41, 108, Diagram C, pl. 75, 76; Tomeković, Les saints ermites et moines, 305. For a color photo cf. Zibawi, Koptische Kunst, Abb. 205.

61 J. Leroy, Le programme décoratif de l’église de Saint-Antoine du désert de la Mer Rouge, Bulletin de l’Institut français d’archéologie orientale 76 (Le Caire 1976) 361; P. van Moorsel, Les peintures du monastère de Saint-Antoine près de la Mer Rouge I, Le Caire 1995, 118, 149–150, 187, Plan I, 3, no. 22; idem, Les peintures du monastère de Saint-Antoine près de la Mer Rouge II, Le Caire 1997, Pl. 87, 88; Gabra, Coptic monasteries, 80; E. S. Bolman, Scetes at the Red Sea: depictions of monastic genealogy in the monastery of St. Antony, in: Christianity

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thirteenth century. However, the younger paintings of a rather simplified appearance were painted over them in the early eighteenth century, around 1713/1714. At the eastern end of the northern wall of the passage located to the southeast of the central chamber, St. Moses is shown together with the holy monks. They were presented in the older frescoes, as evidenced by the preserved inscriptions in Coptic. The one above St. Moses reads ΠΕΝΙΩΤ ΕΘ ΜΟΥΣΗ[Σ], our father St. Moses.\(^{62}\) On the other hand, there is no indication that his image accompanied by the inscription in Arabic, preserved on the eastern side of the central chamber, on the surface between the entrances to the already mentioned passage in the south and the burial chapel of St. Paul in the north, was painted in the earlier fresco layer.\(^{63}\) In these Coptic representations, despite the fact that many of them have been severely damaged or have lost their inscriptions, some changes can be noticed. He always has dark skin, a rounded and thick beard with straight and white hairs, and a koukoulion on his head.\(^{64}\)

Representations of the saint also appear in the frescoes of churches built in the territory of Byzantium. It is possible to recognize him even if the inscription of his name has not been preserved because he is almost regularly portrayed as an old man of black skin dressed in monastic robes. Therefore, in listing the images of the saint, his facial appearance, which includes short thick curly hair and a rounded wavy beard, and that of his clothing, consisting of a tunic (habit), a cloak (mandyas) and an analabos, except for heavily damaged or exceptional cases, will not be described here. In the basilica of St. Nicholas in Manastir, frescoed in 1271, he is located on the west side of the first western column of the northern colonnade (fig. 4). Represented in full figure, he is marked with the inscription Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ| ΜΩΥΣΗΣ|| Ο ΑΙΘΙΟΨ. He holds an open scroll with both hands.\(^{65}\) The words on measure and moderation are written on it: † Ὀ ΜΕΤΡΩ ΜΕ|ΤΡΕΙΣ ΤΩ ΣΩΜΑΤΙ| ΣΟΥ ΕΠΙΣΤΡΟΦΩ ΠΑΡΑ| ΘΥ ΑΝΩ ΜΕΤΡΙΘΗ|ΣΕΤΑΙ ΣΟΙ|.\(^{66}\) He was also portrayed in the crypt of the church of St. Nicholas in the fields (Ἅγιος Νικόλαος στὰ κάμπια) by Skripou in Boeotia, which was a metochion of the Hosios Loukas Monastery in Phokis. The crypt was decorated with frescoes sometime in the last two decades of the thirteenth century. The saint is located in the first register, on the eastern wall of the southern arm of the cross (fig. 5). He is represented in full figure, which is heavily damaged, especially in the upper part. He is shown in the prayer position with both hands placed before his chest. The inscription on his right reads Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΠΑΥΛΟΣ ΕΠΙΣΤΡΟΦΗΣ ΠΑΡΑ| ΑΠΟΥ ΜΕΤΡΙΟΘΗ|ΣΕΤΑΙ ΣΟΙ|.\(^{66}\) He was also portrayed in the crypt of the church of St. Nicholas in the fields (Ἅγιος Νικόλαος στὰ κάμπια) by Skripou in Boeotia, which was a metochion of the Hosios Loukas Monastery in Phokis. The crypt was decorated with frescoes sometime in the last two decades of the thirteenth century. The saint is located in the first register, on the eastern wall of the southern arm of the cross (fig. 5). He is represented in full figure, which is heavily damaged, especially in the upper part. He is shown in the prayer position with both hands placed before his chest. The inscription on his right reads Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΠΑΥΛΟΣ ΕΠΙΣΤΡΟΦΗΣ ΠΑΡΑ| ΑΠΟΥ ΜΕΤΡΙΟΘΗ|ΣΕΤΑΙ ΣΟΙ|.\(^{66}\) He was also portrayed in the crypt of the church of St. Nicholas in the fields (Ἅγιος Νικόλαος στὰ κάμπια) by Skripou, Boeotia (photo: G. Phousterēs)
there.\(^7\) Later, in the second narthex of the katholikon of the Vatopedi Monastery on Mount Athos, decorated with frescoes in 1311/12, he was placed on the north end of the western wall, above a tall niche, in the upper zone. He is represented as a full-length figure and marked with an inscription which, apparently, should be read as Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΜΩΣΗΣ Ο ΑΙΘΙΟΨ. He blesses with his right hand and in his left holds an open scroll with letters which are no longer visible.\(^6\)

He was also portrayed in various areas of the Eastern Christian realm. In the Annunciation Church of the Gračanica Monastery, frescoed in 1320–1321, he was represented from the waist up in the second register on the southern end of the western wall of the prothesis (fig. 6). He blesses with his right hand while holding a closed scroll with his left hand. The letters preserved mostly as dark traces under the effaced pigments can be discerned alongside his image, and thanks to them the inscription Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΜΩΣΗΣ Ο ΑΙΘΙΟΨ has been read.\(^6\) He was represented in the narthex of the katholikon of the Serbian Athonite Monastery of Hilandar as well. The work on the frescoing of the church could have begun in 1320 and was completed before October 28th, 1321, when its endower, King Milutin, passed away. The church was refrescoed in 1803/4, with the new paintings replicating the original fresco program. St. Moses is located on the northern wall, on the west side of a large bipartite opening in the western bay. He is shown as a full-length figure. Again he blesses with his right hand while holding a closed scroll in his left. Next to him the inscription reads: Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΜΩΣΗΣ Ο ΑΙΘΙΟΨ.\(^7\) The saint is portrayed in the manuscript of the menologion for the whole year Oxford, Bodleian Library Gr. th. f. 1, made in Thessaloniki between 1322 and 1340. The scenes for the days from August 26th to 29th are painted in the miniature on fol. 53r. In the section for August 28th there are numerous martyrs in the foreground, and above them is a hill with four half-length images of saints behind it. The first of them seems to represent St. Moses since by the miniature and beside him it is inscribed ο όνομάτι ΜΩΣΗΣ Ο ΑΙΘΙΟΨ. However, he does not have dark skin, nor is he white-haired and white-bearded.\(^7\) The exonarthex of the Church of the Dormition of the Virgin in the Treskavac Monastery was decorated with frescoes around 1337/1338. A calendar accompanied by the verses of Christopher of Mytilene written in Greek is painted on its walls. Saints for the days from August 23rd to, apparently, the 28th day of the same month, represented from the waist up and arranged from right to left, can be discerned under the arch in the upper zone of the west wall of the northern chamber. The last one of these, at the southern end, is a saint whose inscription has been destroyed, and the image itself is quite damaged. This image is assumed to represent St. Moses the Ethiopian. It can be perceived that he has light skin, short curly hair, either straight in the upper part or tousled, a rounded wavy beard and a brown robe, and that he is making a gesture of prayer with his right hand while holding a closed scroll in his left.\(^7\) St. Moses is also featured in the calendar in the narthex of the Ascension Church of the Dečani Monastery painted around 1343. He is again represented from the waist up, as a man of white skin. His hair is thick and wavy, his beard rounded, and both are short and brown with some gray hairs. A few very faded traces of pigment have remained of the lower part of his portrayal, so only a violet cloak remains discernible. His right hand could be making a blessing gesture, while his left hand is destroyed. Next to him is an inscription that reads ΜΩΣΗΣ Ο ΑΙΘΙΟΨ Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ.\(^7\) In the upper ste-

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\(^6\) M. Panagiotidē, Οι παραγωγές της κρήτης του Αγίου Νικολάου στα Καμπιά της Βοιωτίας, in: Actes du XVe Congrès Internationale d'études Byzantines II, Art et archéologie. Communications B, Athènes 1981, 598, 608; Tomeković, Les saints ermites et moines, 277. The saint is only mentioned in the literature. His description and the reading of the inscription are provided on the basis of the available photos.

\(^7\) N. Toútou, Θ. Φωστερής, Ευρετήριον της μνημειακής ζωής του Αγίου Όρους 10ος–17ος αιώνας, Αθήνα 2010, 129, 130, Σχ. 3.3.1, άρ. 31.

\(^6\) B. Todid, Gračanica: slikarstvo, Beograd–Prizitina 1988, 110; idem, Srpsko slikarstvo u doba kralja Milutina, Beograd 1998, 335; Tomeković, Les saints ermites et moines, 36, 256.
rey of the narthex of the St. Sophia Cathedral in Ohrid, frescoed around 1345, numerous holy monks and hermits were shown in the first register. Among them, as the second from the north on the eastern wall, above the opening toward the naos, is St. Moses, represented from the waist up (fig. 7). He blesses with his right hand while holding an open scroll with the left one. Judging by the available photos, there are no surviving traces of letters beside his image. His scroll reads: ΑΝΟΣ ΟΨΙΝ ΚΑΗ ΘΣ ΤΗΝ ΚΑΡΔΙΑΝ. These are the words of the second verse written by Christopher of Mytilene in honor of the saint, Ἄνθρωπος ὄψιν, καὶ Θεὸς τὴν καρδίαν. In the narthex of the Church of Archangel Michael in the Lesnovo Monastery, decorated with frescoes in 1349, St. Moses was depicted in the first zone in the northern side of the southern pilaster leaning against the western wall (fig. 8). He blesses with his right hand and holds a rolled-up scroll in his left hand. By his image is the inscription Ω ΑΓΙΟΣ ΜΩΗΣΥ | Ο ΑΙΘΗ | ΩΨ. The portrayal of the saint was also found in the Transfiguration Church in Kovalevo Field near Novgorod, frescoed in the 1380s and destroyed during the Second World War. Represented from the waist up, he was painted on the east side of the transversal barrel vault over the northwest corner of the church. Only fragments of his head have survived. They testify that he was shown as white-haired, with dark skin, short and curly hair and a rounded wavy beard, and that, apparently, he was dressed in monastic robes. In the Virgin Church of the Cozia Monastery in Wallachia, painted around 1390, numerous holy monks

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74 C. Grozdanov, Ohridsko zidno slikarstvo XIV veka, Beograd 1980, 76, drawing 18; Gabelić, Manastir Lesnovo, 204, cit. 110; Tomeković, Les saints ermites et moines, 36, 264.

75 Cf. Siberus, Ecclesiae graecae martyrologium metricum, 276.
and hermits were represented as full-length figures in the first register of the narthex. Among them, St. Moses has been identified at the west end of the north wall. He is making a prayer gesture with both hands. An inscription in the Old Church Slavonic language has been preserved alongside his image, but the available photos do not allow its reliable reading.  

Fig. 8. St. Moses, the narthex of the Church of Archangel Michael in the Lesnovo Monastery (photo: G. Phousterēs)
tentative refuge in Lebanon. Representation of St. Moses the Ethiopian, whose commemoration is held on August 28th, is located on a high cliff. According to the local church tradition, it was erected in the sixth century on the site of the tomb of the holy hermit Moses the Ethiopian. Other sources corroborate the dating of the monastery, which had an important scriptorium, but not the original dedication set forth in the oral tradition. The present-day chapel, a small three-aisled basilica, erected, according to the inscription, in honor of the Prophet Moses in 1058, has two layers of frescoes, made in the eleventh century and in 1192 respectively. It contains the only completely preserved program of medieval fresco painting in Syria. However, the name of St. Moses the Ethiopian does not appear in the inscriptions by the depicted saints. Therefore, it should be noted that the monastery was mentioned as Musa or Mar Musa in the sources, so it is assumed to have been originally dedicated to the Prophet Moses and renamed Mar Musa al-Habashi later on, at the time when the architectural changes were made after the arrival of Abyssinian monks who had previously taken temporary refuge in Lebanon.79 Representations of St. Moses the Ethiopian are not found in the frescoes of other reasonably well-preserved medieval churches Syria.80

During the Middle Ages there were direct contacts between the churches in the territories of Lebanon, Syria, Palestine and Cyprus,81 where many Abyssinians, i.e. Ethiopians, arrived, especially at the time of the Jewish rule in their homeland, which began around 1000 and lasted until 1268.82 However, no representation of St. Moses the Ethiopian has been preserved in medieval fresco painting in the territory of Lebanon, which was inhabited by Maronites, Nestorians (East Syrians), Jakobites (Orthodox Syrians, i.e. West Syrians), Melchites, Abyssinians and Orthodox Greeks.83 This also seems to be the case with the frescoes of the medieval churches in Cyprus, which had strong relations with these regions.84 Of course, this does not necessarily mean that he was never portrayed in these territories, but it does suggest that he was not represented often.

A special overview of Ethiopia should be made. Its Christian written heritage, sources, as well as collections of monastic sources have not been critically published extensively enough to allow more in-depth research. An additional problem is that the time of construction of various monasteries and even the locations where many of them once stood are still little known. In the first place it would be necessary to distinguish which monasteries were founded during the Aksumite Kingdom which existed between the fourth and the seventh century, that is, from about 350 AD to the Islamization of the Eritrean coast in the second half of the seventh century. In the search for an answer to the question as to whence Christianity and monasticism came to Ethiopia various directions have been proposed, which range from Byzantium to Syria and Palestine, with the influence of Egypt inevitably implied. Be that as it may, certain texts related to monastic life are known to have been translated into the Ge'ez language probably already in the period of the Kingdom of Aksum.85 The ancient Aksumite dynasty accepted Christianity very early, in the middle of the fourth century. However, monasticism was introduced by the so-called Syrian ‘Nine Saints’ in the sixth century. The ‘dark age’ in the history of Ethiopia began from the seventh century. Preserved sources about this period are very scarce and it is even unknown whether there was a centralized kingdom or a series of local short-term successors of power. The tradition says that in the twelfth century the Zagwe kings

79 On the history of this monastery, inscriptions, monastery complex and the painting of the church cf. E. Cruikshank Dodd, The Monastery of Mar Musa al-Habashi, near Nebek, Syria, Arte medievale 6/1 (Roma 1992) 61–134. For the observation that there is no representation of the saint with the inscription of his name in the frescoes of the church cf. ibid., 62, with the note that no portrayals made before the fourteenth century have been noticed (ibid., 62, 65, 124, n. 3). On the question of the original dedication of the monastery cf. ibid., 65, 66. She believes that the Abyssian monks brought with them a relic of the saint, which was reported to be still in place in the nineteenth century (ibid., 65). For a reading and analysis of the inscriptions – of the saints’ names and of the scenes in the frescoes first and then of the dedicative and commemorative ones – in Syrian, Greek and Arabic languages v. J. den Heijer et al., Deir Mar Musa: the inscriptions, ECA 4 (2007) 133–185. Special attention is paid to the question of the correct reading of the damaged epithe by the name of St. Mar Musa in the inscription 34 from 1058–1059 – the readings ‘the Ethiopian’ and, primarily, ‘the hermit’ have been proposed (ibid., 135, 179–180). It should be noted that the inscriptions usually mention the Mother of Light or the Lady, either alone or before St. Moses, and it could be assumed that the monastery was dedicated to the Mother of God as well. For these inscriptions cf. ibid., 135, 154, 158, 167, 171, 173, 175, 178, 179. It has been reported in the literature that Mat Immerzeel has challenged this opinion in the study idem, Some remarks about the name of the Monastery and an enigmatic scene, ECA 4 (2007) 127–131. However, the study has not been available to us.

80 Cf. Christliche Wandmalereien in Syrien: Qara und das Kloster Mar Yohub, ed. A. Schmidt, St. Westphalen, Wiesbaden 2005, passim.

81 On this issue, in brief, E. Cruikshank Dodd, The Monastery of Mar Musa, 63–64; eadem, Medieval painting in the Lebanon, Wiesbaden 2004, 11–13, with sources and literature.

For basic data on the issue cf. eadem, The Monastery of Mar Musa, 63–64, with sources and literature.

82 Cf. eadem, Medieval painting in the Lebanon, passim, esp. 53–55, 70–84, where the saints represented in the altar and on the walls of the naos are investigated, and special attention is paid to unidentified ones at the end of the study.

83 Cf. A. Stylianou, J. A. Stylianou, The painted churches of Cyprus. Treasures of Byzantine art, Nicosia 1997, passim; Tomeković, Les saints ermites et moines, 289–293. On the artistic connections of Cyprus under the Lusignan dynasty (1192–1474) with Syria and Egypt, on the basis of examples in painting, especially those from the thirteenth century cf. A. Weij Carr, Iconography and identity: Syrian elements in the art of crusader Cyprus, Church history and religious culture 8/1 (Leiden 2009) 127–151. On the two-way artistic influences between the island of Cyprus and the mainland, i.e. Syria and Lebanon, with numerous valuable observations on the historical circumstances, painters, donors who were members of various Christian churches, followed by critical and well-argumed reviews of different views and relevant literature v. B. Snelers, M. Immerzeel, From Cyprus to Syria and back again: artistic interaction in the Medieval Levant, ECA 9 (2012–2013) 79–103.

84 Lusini, Le monachisme en Ethiopie, 133–144, esp. 135, 138–140, 143 (research on the monk as a holy man during the reign of the kings of the Solomonic Dynasty, from 1270 to 1527, with a detailed critical assessment of sources and literature and a very useful review of earlier epochs).
of the ‘usurper’ dynasty founded the capital further to the south, on the site of Rocha which was soon renamed Lalibela after the eponymous king. Ethiopian monks played an important social and economic role in the shaping of the post-Zagwe periods, i.e. during the Solomonic restoration from 1270 on. However, ancient Ethiopian monasteries have not been sufficiently studied yet. It seems that among those known from written sources or traditions there are none dedicated to St. Moses the Black who, according to the texts, was Ethiopian by origin. There is no indication that he was particularly venerated in Ethiopia. Nevertheless, given the strong Coptic cultural influences in the area, we should not rule out the possibility that he was portrayed in Ethiopian art, which has suffered heavy damage over the centuries.

The cult of St. Moses originated in the Scetis Desert, became well-known in Byzantium and the surrounding regions very early, and spread to the entire East Christian realm later on. In the koinobion of Baramus the saint gathered his disciples who were so numerous that, as the Third version of the Vita in Arabic written in the Coptic milieu says, it also became known as the monastery of Abba Moses. His relics were first laid to rest in his cave and subsequently translated to the katholikon of the monastery. The Second version of the Vita mentions that they were miraculous.

Various epithets are listed by his name in the writings. The oldest known texts, written in Greek and translated into the languages used by believers in the eastern part of the Christian realm, note that they narrate of Moses the Ethiopian (Lausiac History) or just Abba Moses (The Sayings of the Desert Fathers). In the Egyptian writings in Coptic and Arabic he is referred to as the Black, and only in the Second version of the Vita, in which the date of his commemoration is noted according to the Byzantine calendar, he is recorded as the Ethiopian. The later Greek texts usually state that their subject is Moses the Ethiopian (the Synaxarion of the Church of Constantinople, the ‘imperial’ menologion) and he is mentioned as Moses the Black only exceptionally (the metric calendar of Christopher of Mytilene). Finally, in the Slavic realm he is known as the holy father Moses χριστιανός, i.e. the Ethiopian.

In the earliest known representations, created in the Coptic region, he is designated as Abba Moses ‘the liberated man’. Therefore, the question arises as to whether he might have had such an epithet in the early writings in Egypt. It should be noted that, as far as is known, no hagiography of the saint in the Coptic language has been found. Such an entry disappears afterwards. In subsequent Egyptian examples inscriptions accompanying his images refer to him only as Abba or the holy father. In the Coptic milieu he regularly has a round beard, straight- and white-haired. Firstly he was painted with white skin, usually with a book in his hand, and later on he was portrayed with dark skin and a koukoulion on his head, most often with both hands placed in a gesture of prayer. The change in representing the color of his skin took place in the period between the seventh and twelfth century. However, the question as to when it occurred cannot be accurately answered. In the portrayals accompanied by Greek inscriptions he is generally marked as the Ethiopian, and in those followed by Slavic inscriptions he is regularly labelled as χριστιανός, the Ethiopian. In the Byzantine Empire and in the countries whose churches held the divine service in the Old Church Slavonic language, he is usually portrayed as a black man with short curly hair and a wavy beard. He is dressed in monastic robes. Although the writings almost regularly mention that he was ordained a priest, he is not represented with the marks of the hieromonk’s rank. Most often he blesses with his right hand while carrying a closed or an open scroll in his left, and very rarely he is making a prayer gesture or holding an unrolled scroll in both hands. Finally, exceptions are noted in three painted calendars: those in the menologion Oxford, Bodleian Library Gr. th. f. 1, in Treskavac and Dečani. In all three examples only the upper part of his figure can be seen. His skin is white. His hair and beard are short and brown, with only a few grey hairs in the forehead. He is dressed in monastic robes. Although the writings almost regularly mention that he was ordained a priest, he is not represented with the marks of the hieromonk’s rank. Most often he blesses with his right hand while carrying a closed or an open scroll in his left, and very rarely he is making a prayer gesture or holding an unrolled scroll in both hands. Finally, exceptions are noted in three painted calendars: those in the menologion Oxford, Bodleian Library Gr. th. f. 1 and Dečani.

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86 Cf. N. Finneran, Hermits, saints, and snakes: the archaeology of the early Ethiopian monastery in wider context, The international journal of African historical studies 45/2 (Boston 2012) 247–271 (about the so-called Syrian ‘Nine Saints’, the emergence and development of monasticism in Ethiopia on the basis of sources and literature, with an emphasis on the underexplored state of the sites and numerous observations on the archaeological remains of the monasteries, the sacral topography of Ethiopia and the attitude of the secular authorities towards monks and hermits). V. also A. Bausi, Kings and saints: founders of dynasties, monasteries and churches in Christian Ethiopia, in: Stifter und Mäzene und ihre Rolle in der Religion. Von Königen, Fürsten, Vordenkern und Laien in Indien, China und anderen Kulturen, ed. B. Schuler, Wiesbaden 2013, 161–185 (a study in which significant observations are presented, based largely on diverse written sources, about the founding activity of Ethiopian kings; especially in times of the Aksumite, Zagwe and Solomonic dynasties, followed by a general overview of the monks and saints as the endowors of monasteries, referencing the rulers, mostly later ones, who were patrons of the book writing and copying, as well as on the temporary and permanent monastic estates bestowed by the rulers, on donations for the sake of commemoration in the liturgy, as well as on many other important issues).

87 In the research of saints who have tabots – stone or wooden consecrated altar tables characteristic of Ethiopia – dedicated to them, none have been found in honor of St. Moses cf. D. Nosnitsin, Introduction, in: Veneration of saints in Christian Ethiopia, ed. D. Nosnitsin, Wiesbaden 2015, XXI–XXXIV.

88 We have not found a single representation of St. Moses in churches in Ethiopia or even in Nubia in the available literature (which is extensive and, in order to avoid a cumbersome scientific apparatus in the note, will not be listed here). His cult seems to have been strong in the northern and central parts of Egypt, close to his home monastery.

89 Gabra, Bemerkungen zu Moses dem Schwartzen, 125.

90 It is only in the burial cave in the koinobion Kastellion that a Greek inscription which reads St. Moses was found long ago alongside the representation of the saint. It should be noted that only the first part of his inscription has been preserved in the church of St. Nicholas in the fields and that apparently there are no remaining traces of the inscription by his image in the upper storey of the narthex of the St. Sophia Church in Ohrid.

91 It should be remembered that the inscription in the Novgorod church had been destroyed and that there are no good quality photos available to provide a reliable reading of the inscription by his image in Cozia.
and with slightly more white hairs in Treskavac. As for his robes, only the cloak is visible. These exceptions can be explained by the fact that the artists who painted these images were not familiar with his iconography. After all, these would not be the only examples of an unusual representation of a saint by the painters of a calendar. Despite the fact that somewhat different images of St. Moses appear in the painted calendars, it can be concluded that after some initial fluctuations in his appearance in the Coptic milieu and the changes in the epithets written by his image, which are to be expected in times of the gradual creation of a fitting iconography, the saint, although rather rarely represented, had a clearly defined and recognizable portrayal based, just like the inscriptions by his images, on the information provided in the writings. Bearing in mind that the medieval fresco painting in Egypt has suffered severe damage, based on the extant representations of the saint it can be concluded that he was portrayed quite often. His leipsana was initially kept in his cave and subsequently translated to the monastery in the Scetis Desert and, except for the tradition of the monastery of Mar Musa al-Habashi in Syria, there is no indication that the particles of his relics were taken to other regions. His cult did not take deep roots outside Egypt, and therefore he was very rarely represented in other areas of the Eastern Christian realm.

92 For some unusual representations in medieval painted calendars, on the example of the month of September v. T. Starodubcev, Ogled o slikanim kalendarima u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji i njihovim pisanim istočnicima. Primer meseca septembra, ZLUMS 45 (2017) 86–87.
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Свети Мојсије Етиопљанин или Црнац.
Поштовање и представљање у средњем веку

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Сењање на преподобног оца Мојсија Етиопљанина обележава у Православној цркви 28. августа. О том бившем робу и разбојнику, који се подвизао на арапском, у египиској рукописима уочено је неколико редакција житија на арапском, а три су објављене.

Везан животом за Египат, свети се прославља у Коптској цркви, у дан који одговара 18. јуну. На коптски језик биле су преведене Лавсаик и Изреке светих отаца. Њему посвећене песме се у антифонаријуму Коптске цркве, а значајне су три објављене Јоханане песме на коптском. Наравно, састав о светом се налази у Коптијском арајском синаксару. Није прорађено ниједно његово житије на коптском. Ипак, може се претпоставити да су такви списи постојали.

В египатским рукописима уочено је неколико редакција житија на арапском, а три су објављене.

Свети Мојсије је поштован и у Етиопији, земљи из које је, према списима, потекао. На језику гиз биле су преведене Лавсаик и Изреке светих отаца. У Синаксару Јоханане песме су преведене и сењање на представљање у средњем веку. У египатским рукописима уочено је неколико редакција житија на арапском, а три су објављене.

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ријски језик. Позни Јаковитски менолози сведоче о томе да је памјат тог светог обележавана обично 18. јуна, а ређе 28. августа.

За њега се знао и у словенским земљама, где су били пренети Лавсаик и Изреке светих отаца. Састави посвећени светом Мојсију у том књижевном наслеђу објављени и истражени. Стога је овде предочен садржај бележака о том светом у доступним српским рукописима пролога.

Списи настали у Египту бележе да је тело светог Мојсија у његовој светој пећини, потом да ће бити пренето из пећине, а затим да почива у манастиру Барамус, у чијој се цркви и данас налази. Претпоставља се да је ту положено пре XI века. Данашњи манастир подигнут је на око 50 м североисточно од првобитне лавре, а два манастира, оба посвећена Богородици, постојала су у Децанима, постојала су већ крајем VI столећа.

Натписи настали у Египту подигнути су вероватно у VII веку и налазе се у Египту: у Капели XVI у Бавиту (сл. 1) и у испосници званој Ораториум Е у монашкој целини Al-Mansuriya код Гизе (сл. 2). Он је био приказан и у киновији Кастелон у Палестини, у пећини намењеној за сахрањивање (VII или VIII век). Био је, по свој прилици, насликан у католикону новог манастира Барамуса (после 1200), као и у цркви суседног манастира Светог Макарија (између XI и XIII столећа, сл. 3). Приказан је и у цркви манастира Светог Антонија у близини Црвеног мора (можда 1232/33). У оближњем манастиру Светог Павла, чији је живопис (XIII век) пресликан (1713/14), у пролазу се види свети Мојсије и над њим натпис на коптском који припада старијем слоју. У раним коптским примерима он не носи кукул и нема тешку косу. У каснијим представама уочавају се промене – свети редовно има тамну пут, облу густу браду равних власи и кукул на глави.

Он се види у живопису храмова подигнутих у Византији. Ту је, осим у ретким изузевима, приказан као стари црне пута са кратком коврџавом косом и облом кудраве браде, одевен у монашко рухо. Такве представе се виде у базилици Светог Николе у манастиру (1271, сл. 4), кршти храма Светог Николе у појмах у Беотији (после деценије XIII века, сл. 5), као и у другој припрати католикона Ватопеда (1311/12). Једнако је приказиван и у различитим областима источнохришћанског света: у цркви у Грачаници (1320/21, сл. 6), припрати католикона Хиландара (1320/21, пресликано 1803/04), на спрату припрасти свете Софије у Охриду (око 1345, сл. 7), у припрати цркве у Леснову (1349, сл. 8), храму Преображења на Коваљову (1380) и у цркви у Козији (око 1390). Међутим, другачије, са светлим теном и тамнијом косом, представљен је у slikanim kalendarima – у рукопису Menologa Oxford, Bodleian Library Gr. th. f. 1 (између 1322. и 1340.), у спољној припрати храма у Трескавцу (између 1334. и 1343.), те у припрати цркве у Дечанима (око 1343) – а то нису једини примери светитеља приказанних на необичајен начин у оквиру календара.

Може се закључити да је, након почетних колебања, свети имао препознатљиво обличје засновано, као и натписи уз његове представе (у коптским примерима „слободан човек” у најранијим и „ава” или „отац” у каснијим, те „Етиопљанин“ у грчким и словенским), на подацима које пружају списи посвећени њему. Имајући у виду то да је средишњовековно сликарство у Египту веома пострадало, на основу очуваних представа може се закључити да је свети био прилично често приказиван у коптској средини. Његове мошти су чуване у Скитској пустињи и нема никаквих назнака, осим у предању о манастиру Mar Musa al-Habashi у Сирији (који је првобитно био посвећен пророку Мојсију), о томе да су честице моштију тог светог ношена у друге крајеве. Његов култ није примно снажнијег корена изван Египта и стога је он ретко представљан у осталим областима источнохришћанског света.