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## St. Michael in the Arts

Ruth Jaenike  
*Eastern Illinois University*

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ST. MICHAEL IN THE ARTS  
(TITLE)

BY

Ruth Jaenike

**THESIS**

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FOR THE DEGREE OF

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DATE

COMMITTEE MEMBER

August 7, 1981  
DATE

DEPARTMENT CHAIRPERSON

## ST. MICHAEL IN THE ARTS

### ABSTRACT

The objective of this thesis is to gather together under one cover samples of the many ways St. Michael is portrayed by creative artists in various locales and at different periods of time.

The first chapter is a condensation of the literature used for the study showing the characteristics attributed to St. Michael. He is portrayed as an Archangel existing in Heaven as the militant leader of the angels of God. He is purported to have appeared on earth as messenger of God, and is often considered judge and caretaker of man's soul after death. St. Michael is to have existed prior to the creation of the world and is scheduled to reappear at the end of the world.

Chapter two contains selected photographic reproductions of twenty works of visual art including drawings, paintings, and sculpture. The works range from classic art to folk art from such generally well-known artists as Raphael and Dürer to relatively obscure and unknown artists. The variety of works cover a period of time from the tenth to the twentieth centuries in Asia, Europe, and America.

In the third chapter music that has been composed with St. Michael as its inspiration is shown. A cantata, an organ solo, a vocal trio, a children's song, hymnody, and portions of liturgical services were selected as examples.

Literature that refers to the Archangel is discussed in chapter four. St. Michael is mentioned in biblical, apocryphal, and apocalyptic literature. He is included in some of the works of Milton, Yeats, and Longfellow and, in addition, is a useful topic for more contemporary writings.

ST. MICHAEL IN THE ARTS

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## PREFACE

Inspiration for this study is an outgrowth of my many years as a church organist in a dozen or more Lutheran congregations in conjunction with unnumbered clergymen. Throughout the years St. Michael's Day was rarely celebrated, although it is listed on the church calendar, and this relatively little-known feast day held fascination for me.

At Immanuel Lutheran Church in Charleston I participated in the first satisfying observance of the day. The service was a cooperative effort between clergy and church-musician complete with a booming delivery of Revelation 12:7-9 and an appropriately militant sermon. Organ and trumpets accompanied choir and congregation in "A Mighty Fortress," "Built on the Rock" and "In the Year King Uzziah Died." I felt like picking up my metaphorical armor, spear and shield to do battle for the cause.

My original project was intended to be a St. Michael's Day service utilizing several art forms. As more and more intriguing facets of the Michael phenomenon were discovered, it seemed fitting to remove the study from a denominational setting to create a larger view of the Archangel via a thesis. My fascination with St. Michael has been intensified by a recent trip to Europe where I visited Mont-Saint-Michael and had an opportunity to view personally many of the works of art used in this study.



I wish to express thanks to my husband, Vaughn, for his support and encouragement; to many friends for their leads and suggestions; to the people at Booth Library for their assistance; to my photographer, Kimberly Trainor; to my typist, Becky Markwell; to my graduate committee, Dr. Janina Kacena Darling and Dr. Glenn Patton Wright; and, to my advisor, Dr. Robert E. Snyder.

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## CHAPTER I

### ST. MICHAEL IN MYTH, MAGIC AND MIRACLE

The archangel loved the dizzying heights. Standing on the summit of the tower that crowned his church, wings outspread, sword uplifted, the devil crawling beneath. .<sup>1</sup> St. Michael held a place of his own in heaven and earth.

Who is this mighty being? What is his significance? The great importance, ingenuity, and reverence invested in this Archangel's existence are manifested in works of art, music, and literature.

Examined in the following chapters are portrayals of St. Michael by creative people from culture to culture and from one century to another. In order to appreciate fully the universal appeal of the Archangel, some historical background will be given in this opening chapter. A selection of visual arts will be examined in Chapter II. This will include photographic reproductions encompassing a wide range of media illustrative of the extent of veneration for St. Michael. Music that has been composed with the Saint as its inspiration will be explored in Chapter III. Hymns and liturgies will be cited from different church denominations, as well as instrumental and vocal music inspired by St. Michael. The fourth chapter will concentrate on literature written about St. Michael including both sacred and secular writings.

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<sup>1</sup>Henry Adams, Mont-Saint Michel and Chartres (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1936), p. 1.

The Archangel St. Michael is surrounded with an aura comprised of religion, myth, and magic. He is a symbol of the universal triumph of good over evil in all of these diverse areas - the only angel honored with a special feast day each year, having special liturgies composed for him alone. Liturgical observances were begun prior to the eighth century and set on September 29th, the day of celebration called Michaelmas.<sup>2</sup>

Mixed with the Christian elements of this celebration were pagan harvest festival rites that included cakes, wines, and dances. Proverbs and folk beliefs grew up around the festival: "So many days old the moon is on St. Michael's day, so many floods after."<sup>3</sup> It became common to use Michaelmas as a convenient date for financial reckonings: "In the year 1223, forty acres of land were sold for an annual payment of one pound of cumin, or, at the option of the Bishop, two pence at the feast of St. Michael. . . around this time a gold coin, the Angel, showing St. Michael spearing the dragon was used for exchange."<sup>4</sup> All of this is vivid testimony of the Archangel's influence in the lives of the people.

In the heavenly hierarchy, angels are divided into three groups:

- 1) Councillors of God: Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones;
- 2) Governors: Dominions, Virtues, Powers;

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<sup>2</sup>Dorothy Spicer, The Book of Festivals (New York: Women's Press, 1937), p. 252.

<sup>3</sup>Dorothy Rushing, The St. Michael Legends in Anglo-Saxon and Middle English (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1948), p. 156.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 157.

3) Messengers of God: Principalities; Archangels; Angels.<sup>5</sup>

Seven Archangels comprise the group to which Michael belongs. The three best known are Gabriel, Michael, and Raphael. Michael, whose name is interpreted "who is like God," has the most visibility, even more than the well-known Gabriel.

The Archangel has been credited by various sources with a variety of earthly appearances. He is identified by the Midrash Rabba as the angel who stayed the hand of Abraham as he was about to sacrifice his son Isaac.<sup>6</sup> Jude 9 states that Michael assisted in the burial of Moses and disputed with the Devil for possession of the body.<sup>7</sup> According to Talmud Berakot Michael is reputed to have appeared to Mary, the mother of Jesus, announcing her approaching death.<sup>8</sup> Although he is not mentioned by name, St. Michael is believed to have appeared to Hagar (Gen. 21:17), put blessings instead of curses in the mouth of Balaam (Num. 22:35), was with Joshua at Jericho (Josh. 13), appeared to Gideon (Judg. 1:11), brought pestilence to Israel (II Sam. 24:16), destroyed the Assyrian army (II Chr. 32:21), delivered the three faithful from the fiery furnace (Dan. 3:25), sent Habakkuk to feed Daniel in the Lion's Den (Dan. 6:22), drove Adam and Eve from

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<sup>5</sup>Detailed explanation of this division of angels can be found in Gustav Davidson, ed., Dictionary of Angels (New York: Free Press, 1969), p. 123.

<sup>6</sup>The Midrash Rabba is an ancient Jewish writing, cited in Davidson Dictionary, p. 124.

<sup>7</sup>In this Biblical reference, Michael is mentioned by name.

<sup>8</sup>Cited by Davidson, Dictionary, p. 124.

the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:24), and fought the prince of the Kingdom of Persia (Dan. 10:13-21).<sup>9</sup>

Beyond this, St. Michael is best known as the leader of the Heavenly Army, the Captain-General of the Celestial Hosts, the Prince Patron of the Church Militant. His greatness was from the beginning of time when he drove Satan from heaven, as written in Rev. 12:7-9:

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.<sup>10</sup>

The culmination of this role will be at the end of the world, the apocalypse. When in this militant role, St. Michael is often pictured dressed in armor spearing a dragon or monster.

Michael, as judge of souls who desire to enter heaven, is shown as young and beautiful and holding a chained scale. Often the scale weighs two naked figures representing souls, the chosen one (beato) clasping his hands in thankfulness, the rejected one (reprobato) expressing horror.<sup>11</sup>

The Archangel is revered in another role, that of psychopomp, tutelary angel, guide and caretaker of the souls. Here he is regarded as approachable, mildly indulgent, and desiring to save souls, if

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<sup>9</sup>Cited by Clara Erskine Clement in Handbook of Legendary and Mythological Art (Boston: Houghton Mifflin and Co., 1881), p. 231.

<sup>10</sup>This is the largest and most explicit reference to Michael in the Bible.

<sup>11</sup>Davidson, Dictionary, p. 193.

possible. In the Koran it is written that the cherubim were formed from the tears Michael shed over the sins of the faithful; so he is often invoked for a good death, and it is a common practice to name cemetery chapels after him.<sup>12</sup>

Michael's approachability makes him a popular choice as patron saint. In early times, he was patron of coopers, hatmakers, swordsmen, sailors, haberdashers, and grocers. He is tutelary angel of New Israel, patron angel of Spain and France, patron of all mariners (since 1941), and in 1950 was proclaimed patron saint of Italy's public discipline and security.<sup>13</sup>

Mythology contained Michael-like heroes. In Scandinavian lore, Heimdall had a great similarity to St. Michael, blowing a horn on the last day, being a watchman on the Holy Bridge, and guarding his children from Loki, a Satan-like figure.<sup>14</sup> Oral Romanian tales tell of hairy night demonesses who were overcome by St. Michael. Medieval accounts of a Greek-based mythology relate a tale of the Archangel descending from Mt. Sinai and fighting Abyzu, the dread witch of all ills, who caused the milk of women to be cold and frightened little children in their sleep.<sup>15</sup>

In magic rites, the name of St. Michael was often used for an invocation or charm. An entreaty could be used in such diverse

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 194.

<sup>13</sup>Omer Englebort, Lives of the Saints (New York: McKay Publishing Company, 1951), p. 76.

<sup>14</sup>Mythology of All Ages, 1932 ed., Vol. II, p. 156.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., Vol. V, p. 366.



activities as the use of a magic carpet or to guarantee the possession of a loved one.<sup>16</sup>

One definite indication of the importance of St. Michael is the number of Christian churches that bear his name. Some of the churches are large and famous, some small and obscure. Churches named for him outnumber all in Christendom, excepting for those dedicated to the Virgin Mary. By the end of the sixteenth century, 687 churches were dedicated to him in England alone.<sup>17</sup> Most Michael churches were built on hills and mountains since St. Michael was considered to be the special protector of high places. According to legend, he had assumed the duties of the mythological Mercury, evolving from a messenger of Olympus to a messenger of God. Many Michael churches were built on the ruins of temples to Mercury.<sup>18</sup>

Legends of St. Michael's appearances on earth provided incentive for the building of many of these churches. He reportedly appeared to command the building of the church of Monte Gargano on the eastern coast of Italy in the sixth century. The legend says: In this century, in the city of Siponte, lived a man named Gargano, very rich in cattle. As his herds pastured on the sides of the mountain, it happened that a bull strayed. Gargano and his servants went out to search for the bull and found him at the entrance to a cave on the summit of the mountain. Gargano ordered his servant to kill the bull. As the

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<sup>16</sup>Davidson, Dictionary, p. 347.

<sup>17</sup>Rushing, Legends, p. 21.

<sup>18</sup>Adolphe N. Didron, Christian Iconography (New York: Frederick Unger Co., 1965), Vol. II, p. 179.

arrow left the bow, it returned and killed the servant. This troubled Gargano and he sent for the Bishop. The holy man prayed and fasted for three days, and then beheld, in a vision, St. Michael saying that the servant had violated holy ground and commanding that a church be built on the site. As the building of the church commenced, a spring of water came gushing forth. The fame of the vision and the healing properties of the spring water brought yearly pilgrimages to the Church of Monte Gargano.<sup>19</sup>

Mont-Saint-Michel in Normandy, France, was built in the eighth century under similar circumstances. Aubert, Bishop of Avranches, desired to attract a portion of the pious pilgrims to his diocese. He claimed to have had a vision in which St. Michael commanded him to build a church on a huge rock off the coast of Normandy. The story also includes a bull and spring water as in the Gargano vision, but has an added item of interest: St. Michael touched the Bishop's forehead to impress him with the urgency of the task. (Two holes are still visible in the preserved skull of St. Aubert.)<sup>20</sup> A small church was built, later to be replaced by a magnificent cathedral in the tenth century and many times thereafter. Mont-Saint-Michel became a shrine to which pilgrims flocked each year for St. Michael's Day Festivals. The visions of the Archangel cited above are only two of the many purported appearances with which Michael is credited.

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<sup>19</sup>Mrs. Jameson, Sacred and Legendary Art (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1898), p. 101.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 102.

Information on St. Michael has been gathered from a variety of sources that contain a great number of viewpoints, the diversity of which warrants great respect. The fact that so much ingenuity, romance, and sincere reverence are invested in artistic portrayals of Michael establishes his significance. St. Michael, militant leader, judge, and caretaker, is an influence in the lives of many people. Manifestations of this influence will be seen in the following chapters.

## CHAPTER II

### ST. MICHAEL, ARCHANGEL, IN WORKS OF ART

Pious belief in St. Michael has inspired man to create numerous objects of Christian visual art. Although the Archangel is mentioned by name only four times in the Bible, his links to pre-Christian legend have supplied a vast treasury of details and attributes.

St. Michael is pictured with or without wings, with or without crown, sometimes holding a scale of judgment, sometimes binding Satan with chains, and often raising a sword of victory over Satan.<sup>21</sup>

In the earliest works of art, he is robed in white, with ample multicolored wings and carries a scepter or lance, surmounted by the cross, as one who has conquered by spiritual might alone. In later representations, he is armed in a dazzling coat of mail, with sword, spear, and shield. He has a lofty open brow, long fair hair floating on his shoulders, which is sometimes bound by a jeweled tiara; sometimes covered by a helmet: an allegory of power.<sup>22</sup>

"One of the earliest representations of Michael is the one in the apse Mosaic of S. Michele in Affricisco in Ravenna, now in the

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<sup>21</sup>New Catholic Encyclopedia, 1967 ed., s.v. "Michael."

<sup>22</sup>Jameson, Sacred and Legendary Art, Vol. I, p. 104.

Museum of Berlin. It is dated 545. You will find a reproduction in  
C. R. Morey's Early Christian Art, figure 184."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Correspondence from Dr. Isa Ragusa, acting director of the  
Dept. of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey.

**A. MINIATURES**

Figure 1



St. Michael, a miniature, from the Hours of Peter II, Duke of Brittany Use of Nantes, Paris, France, 1455-57 A.D. 19 x 13 cm. (7½" x 5¼"). Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

Reproduced from John Harthan, The Book of Hours. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1977).

This miniature shows "St. Michael, the warrior-saint getting the better of the devil."<sup>24</sup> The main interest of this painting is topographical. Mont-Saint-Michel, shown in the lower left-hand corner, is the scene of a pilgrimage with people arriving on foot, horseback and in a large cart. The inclusion of the Mount was especially meaningful for Peter II, who had led a successful campaign against the

<sup>24</sup> John Harthan, The Book of Hours (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1977), p. 102.

British at Fougères nearby. A peacock and St. Michael's feathered wings are shown on a decorative background.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>According to Charles L. Youmans, Medieval Menagerie (Cuba: Fernandez Seone, 1952), p. 29, peacocks were considered a symbol of the change from life into immortality in Persian culture. Youmans also states (p. 102) that the Romans reserved the symbol for royalty and that later it was adopted by Christians.



Figure 2



St. Michael and The Seven Headed Dragon, a miniature from Psaterium aum figuris circa 1000, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

Reproduced from Adolph Didron, Christian Iconography (New York: Frederick Unger Publishing Co., 1965).

Didron states that this miniature portrays St. Michael in the apocalyptic role from the Bible, Revelation 12:3:

And there appeared another wonder in Heaven, and behold a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his head. . .

It is possible to draw a parallel to mythological inspiration for this depiction. Michael, his angel assistant, and the beast in battle bear a strong resemblance to Hercules in the labor of the Hydra.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup>Hercules and his companion Iolaus fought the hydra, a many-headed monster purported to grow back two heads for every one cut off. Clara Clement, Handbook of Legendary and Mythological Art (Boston: Houghton Mifflin and Company, 1881), p. 453.

Figure 3



Michael Slays Dragon, a miniature from The Book of Hours of Henry II. Abbey of Prume inscribed "Magnum Te Michiale" - circa 993 - 1001.

Reproduced from Didron, Iconography.

Didron, in Christian Iconography, comments on the Eastern influence shown in this depiction of St. Michael. Although Michael's costume (robe and sandals) is Roman, the Eastern influence can be seen in the appearance of the dragon. "This glorification of St. Michael can be traced back to primitive Eastern dogma, the perpetual antagonism between the spirit of Good and the spirit of Evil, mixed with the Chaldiac belief in angels and their influences over the destinies of man."<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Didron, Iconography, p. 184.

Figure 4



Michael Slays Dragon, a miniature from a manuscript at Amiens, A.D. 1197. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

Reproduced from Didron, Iconography.

Figure 4 is another interpretation of the battle. Here Michael is clad in a suit of mail. "The beast is a horrible monster in which are combined anatomical forms of a dragon, bird, bull and wolf - a compound of each animal's evil qualities."<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> According to Didron, Iconography, p. 118.

Figure 5



Archangel Michael. 14th century icon, 182 x 120 cm. Kiti, Church of the Virgin Angheloktistos, Cypress.

Reproduced from James Hogarth, Icons of Cypress (New York: Cowles Book Co., 1970).

Cypress can well be called the Island of Saints. The saints, having captured the reverence and imagination of the Cyprian people, were favorite subjects for icons. These icons were cult objects--objects of worship in themselves--used in church and home worship. Archangel Michael, in the following three figures, shows the characteristic facial expression of sobriety, spirituality, and intense melancholy present in these icons. The vivid electric colors, smooth

brush strokes, intense highlights and shadows attest to the rich, full development of this distinct period style of painting.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> More detailed information on this style of painting may be found in James Hogarth, Icons of Cypress (New York: Cowles Book Co., 1910).

Figure 6



Archangel Michael, 14th  
century icon. Nicosia  
Phaneromeini Collection.

Reproduced from Hogarth,  
Icons of Cypress.

Figure 7



Archangel Michael, 16th century icon. Monastery of Ayios Neophytos, Cypress.

Reproduced from Hogarth, Icons of Cypress.

Figure 8



The Archangel Michael Victorious over Antichrist, church banner 1' 10" x 1' 6", School of Moscow, circa 1550. Collection of Dr. S. Amberg, Ettiswil, Switzerland.

Reproduced from Doris Wild, Holy Icons (New York: Tablinger Publishing Co., 1961).

"The dread Vojvode leader of the Hosts of the Lord" is the title of the apocalyptic representation of the Archangel Michael, crowned and in full armor, on a galloping horse shod with gold, a cloud as his stirrup, and a trumpet issuing from his mouth. Trampled beneath is Satan prostrate amid the ruins of cities. St. Michael holds a lance and swings a censer in his right hand, while with the left he holds the book.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>30</sup>Doris Wild, Holy Icons (New York: Tablinger Publishing Co., 1961), p. 11.



This painted banner is a testimony to the imagination of the Russian artist. The changeless subject of the icon is given life in the rhythm of movement and the vigor of color. According to Doris Wild, the quality of the drawing identifies it as a product of the Art School of Moscow.

Figures 9 and 10 are two additional Russian icons of St. Michael, further examples of the Byzantine style of art.

Figure 9



Archangel Michail, circa 1300, School of Yaroslave, Tel-jakow State Gallery, Moscow.

Reproduced from Konrad Onash, Icons (New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1963).

Figure 10



Archangel Michael, circa 1407, Tret-Jakov State Gallery, Moscow.

Reproduced from Onash, Icons.

#### D. RENAISSANCE PAINTINGS

Figure 11



St. Michael and the Dragon  
by Raphael, oil on panel,  
circa 1505. Louvre, Paris.

Reproduced from James  
Beck, Raphael (New York:  
Harry Abrams, 1976).

Raphael's St. Michael and the Dragon, an oil panel painting done in the early sixteenth century, is not typical of the artist's work. Beck and others believe Raphael was influenced by paintings or prints of Netherlandish masters, including Hieronymus Bosch, in depicting this nightmarish vision.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, Raphael portrays St. Michael in this role of conqueror of evil. Sword raised on high, Michael is confidently the victor over the dreadful beast while additional other-worldly creatures observe.

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<sup>31</sup>James H. Beck, Raphael (New York: Harry Abrams, Inc., 1976), p. 11.

Figure 12



St. Michael Vanquishing the Devil by Raphael  
(8' 9½" x 5' 3") circa  
1518. Louvre, Paris.

Reproduced from Beck,  
Raphael.

A later painting by Raphael, St. Michael Vanquishing the Devil, again utilizes the conqueror's role. In this work it is obvious that Michael's evil enemy is Lucifer with horns, wings and writhing tail. The artist employs more dramatic and striking contrasts between lights and darks than in the previous work. These contrasts also emphasize the more human forms typical of Raphael's usual style and that of the Renaissance period.<sup>32</sup> A further comparison of the two poses shows that

<sup>32</sup>Beck, Raphael, p. 168.

in both instances Michael puts full weight on the one foot which is in contact with the victim. However, while the earlier painting gives the impression of a pirouetting Michael, there is no doubt in the later work that Michael is using the position to enable a sure and powerful thrust of his killing spear. Michael's pose totally dominates his victim.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 90.

E. GERMAN GOTHIC ART



Figure 13



Revelation of St. John,  
Albrecht Dürer, 1496,  
Woodcut.

Reproduced from Willi  
Kurth, The Complete  
Woodcuts of Albrecht  
Dürer (New York:  
Dover Publications,  
1963).

Dürer's Revelation of St. John, a series of woodcuts depicting the apocalypse in eloquent detail, was inspired by the illustrations in the Cologne Bible, printed in 1493.<sup>34</sup> The expressive macabre style was typical of Germanic art of the time, as seen in the work of Hieronymus Bosch and Mattheas Gruenewald.

While the violent battle of the angels is being waged above, the tranquil landscape lies beneath, an expression of a time and place where the ferment of the Reformation was rising to express itself.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> James Strachan, Pictures from a Mediaeval Bible (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959), p. 109.

<sup>35</sup> As discussed by Willi Kurth, The Complete Woodcuts of Albrecht Dürer (New York: Dover Publications, 1963).

Figure 14



The Fall of the Angels,  
 altar painting by  
 Christoph Schwartz, 1588.  
 St. Michael's Church,  
 Munich, Germany.

Reproduced from  
 Postcard.

The Fall of the Angels is on the high altar at St. Michael's Church in Munich, Germany. It is one of a series of works by contemporary painters of the late Renaissance period. The artist, Christoph Schwartz, was sometimes called the "German Raffael."

The magnificent church and the religious art it houses emphasize the intention to make the church a symbol of power and a monument to the triumphant Roman Catholic faith after the Reformation.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>E. Steinkopf, ed. Munich, A New Guide (Munich: Brauer Oltsch, 1978), p. 79.

Figure 15



St. Michael Fighting with Satan, bronze group by Martin Frey, 1588. St. Michael's Church, Munich, Germany.

Reproduced from Postcard.

This bronze group of the Archangel Michael fighting with Satan is in a golden niche on the facade of St. Michael's Church, Munich. It was executed by Martin Frey and is a replica of the Michael Statue of Hubert Gerhart. It is considered one of the best metal sculptures of the German Renaissance.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 63.

F. ROMANIAN FOLK ART

Figure 16



St. Nicholas and Archangels Michael and Gabriel,  
 artist unknown. Painting on glass, 19th century,  
 40 x 49 cm. Krukenthal Museum, Sibiu.

Reproduced from Marcella Irimie, Romanian Icons -  
 Painted on Glass (New York: W. W. Norton, 1950).

St. Michael, the center figure in this painting, is shown holding his sword and scale and standing on a row of stylized clouds.

The folk art of painting on glass became popular among the peasants of Romania in the eighteenth century. Irimie reports that these paintings which decorate the homes and churches in the Romanian hills are impressive in their originality and expressiveness. The special brightness of color and alternation of warm and cool hues are an instinctive, creative choice of the artist. The subjects of the paintings are usually set into a background of the local elements

of daily life, and of animals and flowers existing in the region. Since the artists were often illiterate, many inscriptions contain errors. Most of these naive paintings are crudely framed in native fur or walnut wood.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>The facts that are known about this folk art are discussed at length by Marcela Irimie in Romanian Icons (New York: W. W. Norton Publishing Company, 1950).

G. AMERICAN FOLK ART

Figure 17



San Miguel, statue by unknown artist. Height: 28", 19th century. Main altar of Church of San Miguel Del Vado, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Reproduced from Wilder and Brettenbach, Santos. (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1976).

St. Michael, sword raised on high, sets his foot upon the devil in a Roman gesture of victory. The Archangel's gaudy costume in red, green, and yellow is a far cry from the armor in which Medieval artists clothed him. This statue shows the special characteristics of most New Mexican Santos: the strongly emphasized eyes, the carefully drawn eyebrows and the distant expression on the face. Note the theatrical headdress. Native materials were used to create most folk art: cottonwood, homemade glues and dyes, human or horsehair

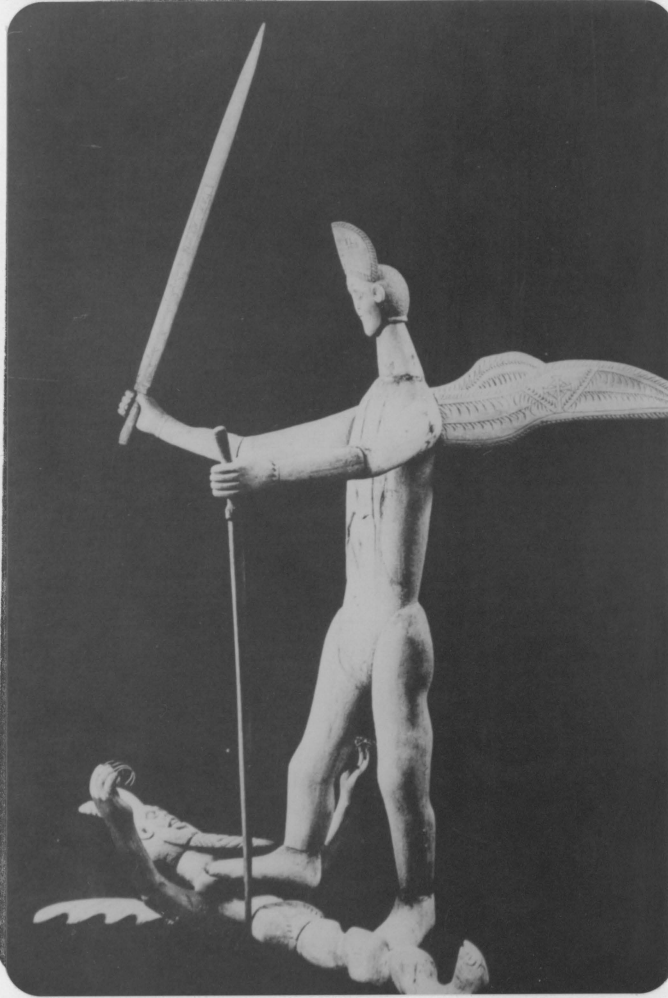


wigs, pieces of mica for eyes and teeth. To the local worshipers this statue was holy and was the recipient of daily prayers and offerings. The prayers were profuse and sincere; the offerings, usually modest and personal. Often beads and bits of food are found surrounding the saint. Candy is sometimes found stuck between his lips.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>As discussed in Brettenbach, Wilder, Santos (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1976), p. 45.

Figure 18



San Miguel by José Delores Lopez, Cordova, New Mexico, 1958.  
Height of San Miguel-44"  
Length of Devil-35".

Reproduced from Brettenbach, Wilder, Santos.

This status of St. Michael was carved from native cottonwood by folk artist José Lopez. A carpenter, Lopez was a member of the Penitentes, a religious group of men who practiced penance through self-inflicted flagellation. The statue, which was used in their services, was carried in processions and was often cut or burned as part of a holy act. This simple, crude rendition of the saint was the object of sincere worship.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>Brettenbach, Wilder, Santos, p. 56.

## H. CONTEMPORARY ART

Figure 19



Archangel Saint Michael  
Vanquishing the Devil, by  
Sir Jacob Epstein,  
Cathedral of St. Michael,  
Coventry, England.

Reproduced from Dmitri  
Kessel, Splendors of  
Christendom (Geneva:  
Edita, S. A. Lausanne,  
1964).

"St. Michael, rendered in a monumental bronze. . .spreads his wings over the demon at his feet. He looks toward the ruins of the old Coventry Cathedral which was destroyed by the demon in men" - World War II. <sup>41</sup> The statue of St. Michael, patron saint of the church, has a look of compassion rather than exultation or triumph. He conveys the basic purpose of the contemporary cathedral: that of being relevant

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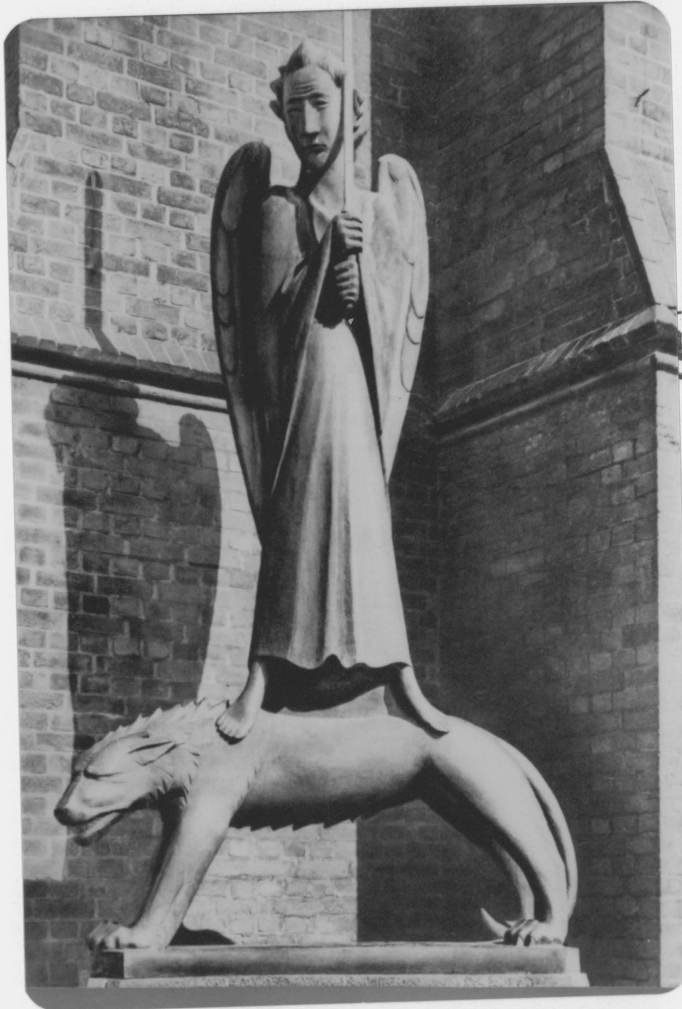
<sup>41</sup>Dmitri Kessel, Splendors of Christendom (Geneva: Edita, S. A. Lausanne, 1964), p. 247.

and meaningful to the people of Coventry--an aim never out of the mind of architect, Sir Basil Spence.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 248.

Figure 20



Warrior of the Spirit  
by Ernst Barlach, 1928.  
Bronze 15', University  
Church of Kiel.

Reproduced from Carl  
Carls, Ernst Barlach  
(New York: Frederick  
Praeger, 1969).

St. Michael is the inspiration for contemporary art works.

Warrior of the Spirit, a bronze group created in 1928, shows the angel with sword in severe dress, wings folded, his feet planted on a demon in animal shape. It is highly effective with its clean strong lines and disregard for naturalistic detail. Heinz Beckman, author of a monograph on Barlach, comments, "If the Church had the vision it once had, if it still encompassed life and brought it into the churches. . . Barlock's work belongs in a church."<sup>43</sup> In defense of modern sculpture:

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<sup>43</sup>Cited in Carl Carls, Ernst Barlach. (New York: Frederick Praeger, 1969), p. 370.

"Art has its seasons--but in this century people have refused to accept the fruit of the season--they still prefer to believe the fruit of the past season is ripe. Let's see what our own creators can do."<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Raymond Regamey, Religious Art in the 20th Century (New York: Herder and Herder, 1963), Chapter 1, "Problem of Christian Art," p. 19.

### CHAPTER III

#### ST. MICHAEL IN MUSICAL LITERATURE

A search for musical literature dealing with St. Michael revealed only sacred music, compositions written for use in a religious setting. Although secular music was sought, none was located.<sup>45</sup> For purposes of analysis and illustration, I have chosen several forms to examine in this chapter: a cantata, an organ solo, a vocal trio, a children's song, some hymnody, and a portion of a liturgical service. Each of these compositions speaks directly of St. Michael by name and deed. A rough translation is provided, when needed, to show the romantic style of the lyrics which should be meaningful because of the background given in Chapter I.

<sup>45</sup>Worthy of mention are two works that are out-of-print: "Michael's Day Carol from the Hebrides," Colombo 821, and "Sequence of St. Michael" by Herbert Howells.



Cantata XIX

Johann Sebastian Bach wrote Cantata XIX, Es Erhub sich ein Streit (There arose a fight) for a celebration of the Feast of St. Michael in 1726. The libretto was written in 1724-25 by Christian Henrice (Picander) who is best known for his secular, satirical verse. Picander wrote a paraphrase of Revelation 12:7-9 (quoted in Chapter I, page 4). To meet the requirements of such a grandiose description of this scriptural passage, Bach used a musical complement of fairly large forces: two choirs, two violins, two violas, bassoon, four trumpets, timpani, double bass and organ.<sup>46</sup> The cantata is in C major, 6/8 rhythm. Four voices begin the work, entering in canon form, accompanied by continuo as shown in Example 1:

The image shows a musical score for the beginning of Cantata XIX. It features five staves: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass, and Continuo. The music is in C major and 6/8 time. The four voices enter in canon form, with the Soprano starting first, followed by the Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The lyrics 'Es erhub sich ein Streit' are written under the vocal lines. The Continuo part provides a rhythmic and harmonic foundation for the voices.

Example 1. Cantata XIX, measures 1-6<sup>47</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Cited by Phillip Spitta, Johann Sebastian Bach (New York: Dover Publications, 1951), Vol. II, p. 344.

<sup>47</sup> Accompanying score to the recording Das Kantatenwerk - J. S. Bach, Volume V, No. 002194. Germany, Heussweg 25, Hamburg 19.

In the seventeenth measure, timpani enter in a dull, low cadence, and a trumpet sounds a distant battle call that is answered by a second, then a third and a fourth trumpet. The two choirs attack each other like hostile armies and the whole body of instruments join the fray.<sup>48</sup>

Musical sounds may be interpreted any way the listener desires, but Albert Schweitzer thought that "The devil appealed to the musician in Bach." Schweitzer likened the sounds specifically to the writhing of the serpent as the musical line flings upward again and again into a wild agitated mass at the climax of the battle.

"After the words 'Aber Michael bezwingst' (but Michael conquers, and the cruel host of Satan encircling him is cast down), the beginning motive is inverted to represent the sinking and falling of the defeated angels."<sup>49</sup> The inversion occurs during the ending "Sturtz des Satan's grausamkeit" (overthrow the cruelty of Satan). See Example 2.




Example 2. Cantata XIX, measures 75-9.

Unfortunately for the development of the text, the dal segno takes the listener back to the A of the ABA and once again "and there arose a fight" is heard.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Spitta, Bach, Vol. 1, p. 44-45.

<sup>49</sup> Albert Schweitzer, J. S. Bach (New York: Dover Publications, (1966), Vol. II, p. 194.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., Schweitzer mentions this as an error of Bach's on page 195.

The opening chorus is followed by a bass recitative "Gottlob, der Drache leigt!" (God be praised! The dragon has fallen) written in the key of a minor. It is accompanied by a sustained bass continuo. Next is a soprano aria, "Gott schickt uns Mahanaim zu" (God sends Mahanaim to us), written in the key of G major and accompanied by two oboes and continuo. A tenor recitative, "Was ist der schönste Mensch das Erdenkind?" (What is base man, The child of earth?), is in the key of a minor. Here the soloist is accompanied by two violins, a viola, and continuo. Following this is an aria again by the tenor "Bleibt, ihr Engel, bleibt bei mir" (Stay, you angels, stay with me) in a minor and written in Bach's "angel rhythm" .<sup>51</sup> Next is "Lasst uns das Angesicht der frommen Engel lieben" (let us love the faces of the pious angels), a soprano recitative accompanied by continuo.

The cantata ends with a homophonic choral in C major accompanied by an obligato choir of trumpets, strings, and continuo. (See Example 3.) A translation of the libretto of this choral reads:

Let your angels travel with me  
 On Elijah's red chariot  
 And keep my soul safe  
 Like Lazarus after his death.  
 Let it rest on your bosom  
 Fill it with joy and comfort  
 Till the body arises from the earth  
 And is reunited with it.<sup>52</sup>

Earlier Andreas Hammerschmidt (1611-1675) set Rev. 12:7-9 as text to his cantata in six parts as part of Musicalische Andachten

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>52</sup>As translated by Albert Durr on the cover of the recording.

CHORAL.

Lass dein Eu gel Seg le Und mein Seg le  
 auf E li an Wa gen  
 ren, wie Lar rum nach errent  
 fah wahl he mit mir  
 Lass die ruh in dei . um Schone, er . full' sie mit Freud und Trust, bis der Lieb kommt aus der Er'  
 und mit ihr ver ei nigl wer  
 und mit ihr ver ei nigl wer  
 und mit ihr ver ei nigl wer  
 und mit ihr ver ei nigl wer

Example 3. Cantata XIX, "Choral"

Gesprache über die Evangelia. Phillip Spitta writes "It is likely Bach used this as inspiration for Cantata XIX. Hammerschmidt's cantata had the battle rage around a long common chord of C. The genius Bach brought to the idea far transcended Hammerschmidt's."

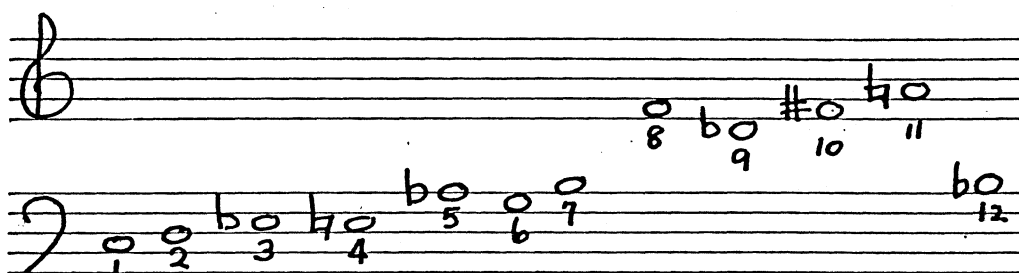
Georg Philipp Telemann attempted a similar composition for St. Michael's Feast when he was Kapellmeister at Eisenach from 1708 until 1711. His work was part of an "untitled cycle of cantatas for the church year - Advent to 27th Sunday after Trinity."<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Spitta, Bach, p. 50.

"Vision von St. Michael und dem Draghen"

Joseph Ahrens<sup>54</sup> wrote an organ composition, "Vision von St. Michael und dem Draghen" (Vision of St. Michael and the Dragon)<sup>55</sup>, describing in sound the titanic struggle between these two foes. The entire composition is built upon the following twelve tone row:



Example 4. Twelve tone row used in "Vision."

The composition begins with a statement of the row in octaves on the manuals, followed by the statement in the pedals, against the strident chord patterns and sharp rhythms of the manual. Next, the row appears in chord clusters, then it is inverted and later divided between manual and pedal. (See Example 5.)

There are three basic sections of sound:

Section I - Strident, battle-like;

Section II - Ethereal and mysterious with interjections of

Section I;

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<sup>54</sup>Joseph Ahrens, b. 1904, a German organist and composer, is Professor of Church Music at the Musik Hochschule, Berlin. He has written a large number of organ works, motets, solo cantatas, and masses.

<sup>55</sup>From Trilogia Sacre, Sieben Visionen nach der Apokalypse (Heidelberg: Willy Muller, Sueddeutscher Musikverlag, 1965).

# Vision von St. Michael und dem Drachen

<b>I. Manual:</b>		<b>II. Manual:</b>		<b>III. Manual:</b>		<b>Pedal:</b>	
Principal	8'	Holzgedackt	8'	Gedackt	8'	Principal	16'
Oktave	4'	Terzian	2fach	Salicional	4'	Oktave	8'
Nassat	2 1/2'	Trem.		Sesquialtera	2fach	Choralbaß	4'
Oktave	2'			Sifflöte	1 1/2'	Weitprincipal	2'
Mixtur	4-6fach			Oberton	2fach	Baßliquote	3fach
Trompete	8'						

$\text{♩} = 58$

I Tutti+ GK. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

1 2 3 4 5 6

I

- Tutti 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 9 10 11 12

The first system of the musical score consists of two staves. The upper staff is a piano staff with a treble clef, and the lower staff is a bass staff with a bass clef. The tempo marking "Tutti" is written above the piano staff. The piano staff contains a series of notes with accents, and a handwritten number "9" is placed above the final note. The bass staff contains a series of notes with accents, and a handwritten number "8" is placed above the final note. A handwritten "GK" is written above the first few notes of the bass staff. At the bottom of the system, the numbers "4 5 6" and "10 11 12" are written, corresponding to the numbered tone row. The system concludes with a double bar line and the instruction "- Tutti".

The second system of the musical score consists of two staves. The upper staff is a piano staff with a treble clef, and the lower staff is a bass staff with a bass clef. The tempo marking "Hymnisch breit" is written above the piano staff. The piano staff contains a series of notes with accents, and a handwritten number "3" is placed above the first note. The bass staff contains a series of notes with accents, and a handwritten number "3" is placed above the first note. The tempo marking "Tutti (ohne 16')" is written below the piano staff. At the bottom of the system, the numbers "1 2 3 4 5 6 7 9 11 12" and "1 2 3 4 5 6 8 10" are written, corresponding to the numbered tone row. The system concludes with a double bar line.

The third system of the musical score consists of two staves. The upper staff is a piano staff with a treble clef, and the lower staff is a bass staff with a bass clef. The tempo marking "+ 16'" is written above the piano staff. The piano staff contains a series of notes with accents, and a handwritten number "11" is placed above the final note. The bass staff contains a series of notes with accents, and a handwritten number "12" is placed above the final note. The system concludes with a double bar line.

Example 5. "Vision von St. Michael und dem Draghen"  
 Numbered tone row as it appears in various forms  
 throughout composition. Lines 1, 2, 3, 12, 14.  
 pp. 29-33.



Section III - Bright, tutti with the tone row done freely  
in canon.

"Vision of St. Michael and the Dragon" would be a suitable selection  
for a prelude, setting the mood for an opening hymn of triumph.

"Sankt Michael am Meer"

Armin Knab<sup>56</sup> wrote "Sankt Michael am Meer" (St. Michael of the Sea), a three-voice choral tribute to the Archangel. It is adaptable for either male or female voices. The composition is in closed binary form and contains shifting meters, maintaining a primarily homophonic texture. (See Example 6.) The libretto is of particular interest. Loosely translated it reads:

St. Michael, you strong hero  
 In Mercy listen to us  
 High climbs and storms the Sea  
 And the Dragon of Hell attacks us  
 Come to our side in the wild fight  
 Protect us with sword and shield.

Lucifer you threw down  
 And took away his possessions  
 Thus subdue the waves of fury  
 Come to our rescue in this hour  
 Out of the storms night, guide us to a secure port.

In bare shirt, with bare feet  
 In severe winter cold  
 When ice covers the field  
 These pious sailors go on a pilgrimage  
 And gifts to thank out of shining silver  
 A little ship to your honor.

We sing loud your praise and glory  
 You high warrior!  
 God, you are very great on land and sea  
 Pull us out of hell.  
 With sword and shield in the wild storm  
 Be our merciful protector.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Armin Knab (1881-1951) was a German composer who taught at the Musik Hochschule in Berlin. He wrote sacred cantatas, musical fairy tales, folksong cantatas, and is particularly esteemed as a composer of lieder.

<sup>57</sup> Translation provided by Mrs. Dorothee Kim.

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## Sankt Michael am Meer

Christoph Beck

Armin Knab

Lebhaft

I

1. *f* Sankt Mi - cha - el, du star - ker Held, \_\_\_\_\_ in  
 2. *f* Den Lu - zi - fer du warfst zum Grund \_\_\_\_\_ und  
 3. *p* Im blo - ßen Hemd, mit Fü - ßen bar, \_\_\_\_\_ in  
 4. *ff* Wir sin - gen laut dein Lob und Preis, \_\_\_\_\_ du

II

1. *f* Sankt Mi - cha - el, du star - ker Held, \_\_\_\_\_ in  
 2. *f* Den Lu - zi - fer du warfst zum Grund \_\_\_\_\_ und  
 3. *p* Im blo - ßen Hemd, mit Fü - ßen bar, \_\_\_\_\_ in  
 4. *ff* Wir sin - gen laut dein Lob und Preis, \_\_\_\_\_ du

III

1. *f* Sankt Mi - cha - el, du star - ker Held, \_\_\_\_\_ in  
 2. *f* Den Lu - zi - fer du warfst zum Grund \_\_\_\_\_ und  
 3. *p* Im blo - ßen Hemd, mit Fü - ßen bar, \_\_\_\_\_ in  
 4. *ff* Wir sin - gen laut dein Lob und Preis, \_\_\_\_\_ du

5

1. Gna - den uns er - hör! \_\_\_\_\_ Hoch steigt und stürmt das  
 2. nahmst ihm Gut und Blut. \_\_\_\_\_ So dämpf der Wo - gen  
 3. stren - ger Win - ter - kält; \_\_\_\_\_ wenn Eis be - deckt das  
 4. ho - her Krieses - herr. \_\_\_\_\_ Gar groß zu Land und

1. Gna - den uns er - hör! \_\_\_\_\_ Hoch steigt und stürmt das  
 2. nahmst ihm Gut und Blut. \_\_\_\_\_ So dämpf der Wo - gen  
 3. stren - ger Win - ter - kält; \_\_\_\_\_ wenn Eis be - deckt das  
 4. ho - her Krieses - herr. \_\_\_\_\_ Gar groß zu Land und

1. Gna - den uns er - hör! \_\_\_\_\_ Hoch steigt und stürmt das  
 2. nahmst ihm Gut und Blut. \_\_\_\_\_ So dämpf der Wo - gen  
 3. stren - ger Win - ter - kält; \_\_\_\_\_ wenn Eis be - deckt das  
 4. ho - her Krieses - herr. \_\_\_\_\_ Gar groß zu Land und

Example 6. "Sankt Michael am Meer"  
 m. 1-6. (Mainz: B. Schott's Sohns,  
 1933).

"With Flame of Might"

"With Flame of Might" is a carol for children written by Carl Schalk and Henry Letterman.<sup>58</sup> The emphasis of the composition is on Michael, the special champion who leads the saints of the Church in their battle against Satan. In the accompanying directives, the children are asked to capture the confident spirit of the text with appropriate volume and expressiveness.

The composition is written in the key of d minor and maintains a brisk, march-like rhythm throughout. Piano accompaniment enhances the militant flair by introducing and closing the song with fanfares, and uses an open fifth chordal structure to maintain the martial mood. Syncopation in the twelfth and fifteenth measures add to the vitality of this saint's day carol. (See Example 7.)

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<sup>58</sup> Carl Schalk, a professor of music at Concordia College, River Forest, Illinois, has written many sacred choral and organ works, and is editor of Church Music, a journal from Concordia Publishing House. Henry Letterman is a writer of many sacred and secular texts in the Concordia Music Education Series.

A Carol for Saint Michael and All Angels  
September 29

With Flame of Might

Words by HENRY L. LETTERMANN

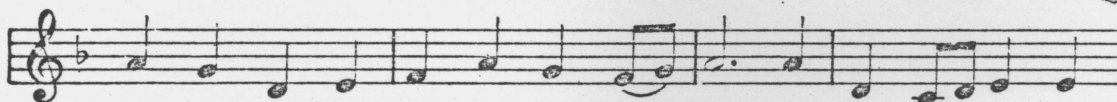
Music by CARL SCHALK

*In march-like manner*

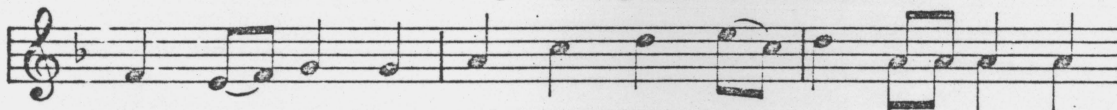


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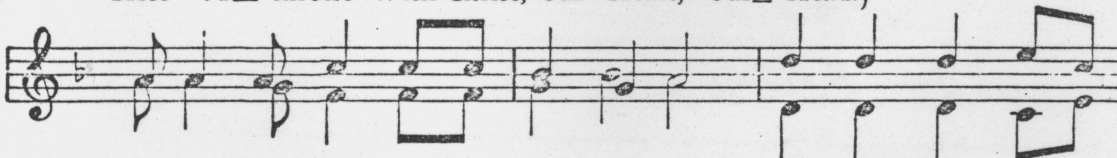
1 With flame of — might Saint  
2 bat - tle - ground ter -  
3 round Thy — throne ce -



Mich - ael goes God's ho - ly war to — wage, And we who fol - low  
res - tri - al we march with spir - its — light, Sur - round - ed — by a  
les - ti - al The liv - ing, dy - ing, — dead Are gath - ered - in the



seize the — sword With mar - tyr, saint, and — sage!  
guard - ian — host, Ar - rayed in heav'n - ly — white! } Al - le - lu - ia!  
bless - ed — throne With Christ, our Heart, our — Head!



An - gels and men and the ris - en saints. Praise Thy glo - rious



name, Al - le - lu - ia! }  
2 On name, Al - le - lu - ia! —  
3 A -

Example 7. "With Flame of Might"

(St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House,  
1968)

Hymnody

For Christians, the battle figure of St. Michael symbolizes the great conflict between good and evil. The Church, being in the midst, is called the Church Militant and arms itself spiritually with song and prayer. Hymnody for St. Michael's Day has played an important part in providing this inspiration. Many hymns call the faithful to battle in this fashion:

Rise! To arms! With prayer employ you  
 O Christians lest the foe destroy you.  
 For Satan has designed your fall.  
 Wield God's word, a weapon glorious!  
 Against each foe you'll be victorious;<sup>59</sup>

Hymns of the militant nature are numerous and are present in most denominational hymnals. For the purpose of this thesis, only hymns that specifically mention St. Michael were sought. One example was chosen, which has three settings.

"Christe, Sanctorum decus angelorum" (Christ the fair Glory of the Holy Angels) is a hymn ascribed to St. Rabanus Maurus (776-856). The original text appears in plainsong style in mode I. (See Example 8.)

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<sup>59</sup>The Lutheran Hymnal (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1941) # 444.

## ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

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Mode I.

arr. J. H. A.

• In some texts the B is flattened.

OFFICE HYMN. M.

Ascr. to Archbishop Rabanus Maurus, 9th cent.

Christe, sanctorum decus Angelorum. Tr. A. R.

**C**HRI<sup>S</sup>T, the fair glory of the holy Angels,  
 Thou who hast made us, thou who o'er us rulest,  
 Grant of thy mercy unto us thy servants  
 Steps up to heaven.

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Example 8. "Christ, the Fair Glory"  
 English Hymnal #242  
 (London: Oxford Press, 1933).

The same hymn is also set to plainsong in Mode VIII as in Example 9.

## ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

HYMN 564

FIRST TUNE

Christe, sanctorum decus angelorum — II II II 5

Mode viii

Christe, sanctorum decus angelorum

1 Christ, the fair glo-ry of the ho-ly an-gels, Ru-ler of  
 2 Send thine arch-an-gel Mi-chael from thy pre-sence: Peace-mak-er  
 3 Send thine arch-an-gel, Ga-bri-el the migh-ty: On strong wings  
 4 Send thine arch-an-gel, Ra-pha-el the hea-ler: Through him with  
 5 Fa-ther al-migh-ty, Son, and Ho-ly Spi-rit, God-head e-

1 all men, au-ther of cre-a-tion, Grant us in mer-  
 2 bless-ed, may he ho-ver o'er us, Hal-low our dwell-  
 3 fly-ing, may he come from hea-ven, Drive from thy tem-  
 4 whole-some medi-cines of sal-va-tion Heal our back-slid-  
 5 ter-nal, grant us our pe-ti-tion; Thine be the glo-

1 cy grace to win by pa-tience Joys ev-er-last-ing.  
 2 ings. that for us thy chil-dren All things may pros-per.  
 3 ple Sa-tan the old foe-man. Suc-cour our weak-ness.  
 4 ing, and in paths of good-ness Guide our steps dai-ly.  
 5 ry through the whole cre-a-tion Now and for ev-er.

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Example 9. "Christ, the Fair Glory"  
 Hymns Ancient and Modern, #564  
 (London: Wm. Clowes & Sons, 1950).



Still another setting of the hymn is a French church melody,  
 "Coelitis Plaudant" from The Rouen Antiphoner of 1728.

*St. Michael and All Angels*

HYMN 564

SECOND TUNE

Rouen — II ♩ II 5

French Melody

*May be sung in Unison*

Christe, sanctorum decus angelorum

Christ, the fair glory of the holy angels,  
 Ruler of all men, author of creation,  
 Grant us in mercy grace to win by patience  
 Joys everlasting.

2

Send thine archangel Michael from thy presence:  
 Peacemaker blessèd, may he hover o'er us,  
 Hallow our dwellings, that for us thy children  
 All things may prosper.

3

Send thine archangel, Gabriel the mighty:  
 On strong wings flying, may he come from heaven.  
 Drive from thy temple Satan the old foeman.  
 Succour our weakness

4

Send thine archangel, Raphael the healer:  
 Through him with wholesome medicines of salvation  
 Heal our backsliding, and in paths of goodness  
 Guide our steps daily.

5

Father almighty, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
 Godhead eternal, grant us our petition;  
 Thine be the glory through the whole creation  
 Now and for ever.

Ascribed to ARCHBISHOP RABANUS MAURUS  
 Tr. Compilers

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Example 10. "Christ the Fair Glory"  
 Ibid., #564.

The poetry of St. Michael verses in many hymns contains descriptive lines such as the following:

"Who like the Lord?" thunders  
Michael, the chief;<sup>60</sup>

Thus we praise with veneration  
All the armies of the sky;  
Chiefly him, the warrior primate  
of celestial chivalry.  
Michael, who in princely virtue  
Cast Abaddon from on high.<sup>61</sup>

Michael, Prince of all the angels  
While your legions fill the sky  
All victorious over Satan  
Lift your flaming sword on high.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup>The English Hymnal, #245, v. 4 (London: Oxford Press, 1933).

<sup>61</sup>St. Dunstable, #245, v. 3 (New York: H. W. Gray Co., 1966).

<sup>62</sup>New Basil Hymnal, #186, v. 1 (New York: H. W. Gray Co., 1966).

Liturgy

Special liturgies have been composed for St. Michael's Day.  
The following examples are taken from the Liber Usualis:

3. Ant.  
8. G

**A** Rchänge-le Mícha-el, \* constí-tu-i te princípem  
super ómnes ánimas susci-pi-éncias. P. T. Alle-lú-ia.

Example 11. Antiphon 3 from First Vespers  
Liber Usualis, p. 1653.

Translation: O Archangel Michael, I have made thee a prince  
that thou mayest receive the souls of all.<sup>63</sup>

At Magn.  
Ant. 1. D<sup>2</sup>

**P** Rinceps glo-ri-o-síssime, \* Mícha-el Archán-  
ge-le, ésto mémor nóstri : hic et u-bíque semper  
precá-re pro nó-bis Fí-li-um Dé-i, alle-lú-ia,  
alle-lú-ia. E u o u a e.

Exemplé 12. Antiphon at The Magnificat  
Liber Usualis, p. 1662.

Translation: Most glorious prince, Michael, the archangel,  
be mindful of us, and here and everywhere always entreat the Son of  
God for us. Alleluia!<sup>64</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Translation from The Missal, p. 1471.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 1477.

Psalm 148 is part of a special liturgy for St. Michael's Day:

AT MASS.

Intr.  
3.

**B**

Benedí-ci-te Dóminum \* ómnes Ange- li é-jus :

pot-éntes virtú-te, qui fá- ci-tis vérbum é-jus, ad au-

di-éndam vó-cem sermó- num é- jus. *P. T.* Alle-

lú- ia, alle- lú- ia. *Ps.* Benedic ánima mé-a Dómi-

no : \* et ómni-a quae intra me sunt, nómi-ni sáncto

Example 13. Psalm 148, Liber Usualis, p. 1652.

Psalm 148 is put in a 20th-century setting. Paul Bunjes<sup>65</sup> wanted to "create a new melody designed to carry the English text as perfectly as possible in its rhythm and inflection."<sup>66</sup>

## Saint Michael's and All Angels' Day

*The Introit*

*Formulary Tone 1*

A. Bless the Lord, ye His angels, that excel in strength, that do His commands, hearkening unto the voice of His Word. Bless ye the Lord, all ye His hosts, ye ministers of His that do His pleasure. Ps. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, / bless His holy name.

Example 14. Psalmody, The Service Propers Noted, p. 253.

<sup>65</sup> Professor Paul Bunjes, a member of the Music Department at Concordia College, River Forest, Illinois, is best known for organ and instrumental settings of Lutheran hymns.

<sup>66</sup> The Service Propers Noted, prepared by Paul Bunjes (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1960), p. 3.

Richard Hillert<sup>67</sup> has composed a plainsong setting for Psalm 148. The form of the melody appropriately resembles "Christe, Sanctorum." (See Example 15)

*J = ca. 72*

Al - le - lu - ia, — al - le - lu - ia.

lu - ia. Bless the Lord, O you his an - gels —

you might - y ones who do his word. Al - le - lu - ia, —

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Example 15. "Verse" from Verses and Offertories for St. Michael's Day (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing Co., 1980) p. 25.

<sup>67</sup> Professor Richard Hillert, who teaches in the Music Department of Concordia College, River Forest, Illinois, is a prolific composer and arranger of church organ and choral music.

## CHAPTER IV

### ST. MICHAEL IN LITERATURE

As stated in the introductory comments of Chapter I, a worthy question regarding St. Michael centers on the sources of information for the many promulgations of the Michael legend or theme. Earlier chapters of this paper have concentrated on the visual manifestations and the musical tributes to Michael. In this chapter an attempt is made to explore what has been written about the origin and development of the Michael phenomenon. Works have been selected as examples of different styles of treatment.

#### Biblical and Apocryphal Reference to St. Michael

But the prince of the Kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days; but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the Kings of Persia.<sup>68</sup>

Daniel, a biblical seer, writes here of his vision of an angelic visitor who is to predict future happenings for the Jewish race. This angel explains that for twenty-one days he had been hindered from appearing by the opposition of the angel patron of Persia; he had finally been able to get away only because Michael, patron angel of the Jews, had come to his assistance. This is the first biblical reference to Michael by name who is here called one of the chief

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<sup>68</sup>Daniel 10:13.

princes. A cross reference is made to the Apocrypha, Enoch 9:1, 71:9, 9:20, where Michael is designated to be set over "the best part of mankind and over chaos."<sup>69</sup>

But I will show thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with <sup>70</sup>me in these things, but Michael your prince.

The angel in Daniel's vision promises to remain long enough to reveal to the seer the matters that have been settled in the book of decrees, the scripture of truth, in which have been set down all events yet to occur. Michael is mentioned again as the patron angel of the Jewish nation.<sup>71</sup>

Yet Michael, the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him <sup>72</sup>a railing accusation, but said, the Lord rebuke thee.

In an explanation of this verse, Albert Barnett notes that

The devil sought to keep Michael from burying Moses on a two-fold charge: (a) that Moses' body belonged to him as lord of the material order, and (b) that Moses had committed the murder of an Egyptian...Michael successfully counters the Devil's opposition, buries Moses' body <sup>73</sup>in the mountains, and carries his spirit to heaven.

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<sup>69</sup>The Interpreter's Bible, exegesis by Arthur Jeffrey (New York: Abingdon Press, 1957), Vol. 6, p. 507.

<sup>70</sup>Daniel 10:21.

<sup>71</sup>The Interpreter's Bible, exegesis by Jeffrey, Vol. 6, p. 507.

<sup>72</sup>Jude 9.

<sup>73</sup>The Assumption of Moses, pp. 105-10, quoted by Albert Barnett in the exegesis of The Interpreter's Bible, Vol. 12, p. 330.



And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels.

And prevailed not; neither was their place found anymore in heaven.

And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into<sup>74</sup> the earth and his angels were cast out with him.

Here is the great struggle that takes place between Michael and his angels and the Devil and his angels. Right triumphs over wrong; good over evil, and the Devil and his angels are defeated. The result is by no means final; it is merely a prelude to the final cosmic battle at the end of the world - the apocalypse. Here a cross-reference is made to I Enoch 54:6: "He will cast the angels into the fiery furnace."<sup>75</sup>

The Greeks were accustomed to tales of cosmic battles, as those between Cronus and Uranus, Jupiter and Cronus, and Jupiter and the giants. The task of the early Christian leaders was to make Christian the minds of the Greeks and Romans who accepted the new religion. Their own mythology was filled with a moral and spiritual meaning quite new to their world. . . with a sudden turn the myth becomes Christian theology.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup>Revelation 12:7-9.

<sup>75</sup>The Interpreter's Bible, exegesis by Martin Rist, Vol. 12, p. 456.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., pp. 456-7.

Michael and the War in Heaven as Subjects  
for Literary Treatment

The War in Heaven (Rev. 12:7-9) is a significant subject for literature as evidenced by the vast number of writings produced on the topic. Since the biblical account of the mighty conflict is powerful but matter-of-fact and unsentimentalized, most writers had to rely on other sources for the details of the war. From the Bible and early mythology the names of the combatants and the outcome of the battle were inherited. Beyond this point there was little information. For possible strategies, many authors turned to poetry and to epic literature. According to Stella Revard, "narrated wars had become almost pro forma in epic since Demodocus had told of the Trojan horse in Odyssey 8 or Aeneas of the sack of Troy in Aeneid 2." Revard also observes that the subject allowed writers to "excel in imagination and variety of invention."<sup>77</sup>

Authors who made use of the Michael/Lucifer theme included Valmorona in The Battle of the Angels over the Incarnation of Christ, Acevedo in Creation, Taubman in The War of the Angels, and Vondel in Lucifer. Many failed to agree on the time, the place, and the immediate cause; nevertheless they held, almost universally, that there had been a battle.

The story or play often included dialogues between Michael and his angels before engaging in battle with Lucifer. In Vondel's

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<sup>77</sup>Stella Revard, The War in Heaven (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980) pp. 15, 18.

Lucifer, Michael, as he is girding for battle, speaks:

Swift Uriel, my squire, fetch my  
 Lightning harness and shield and helmet,  
 and God's banner!  
 Now let the trump be blown!  
 To Arms! To Arms!  
 Come, all ye thrones and powers that are true.<sup>78</sup>

In Valmorona's, The Battle of the Angels, Michael, encouraging his allies, says:

Now is the time, now is the pitch of action,  
 Now is the limit of his age run,  
 Whatever the ages portend. . .  
 Therefore, come and let us avenge our  
 loving master with dedication.<sup>79</sup>

Great imagination was shown by writers in their descriptions. Weapons included thunderbolts, mountain boulders, huge trees, whole islands, cannons and gunpowder. Battle scenes described the sea surging and moaning, mountains toppling, skies ablaze with flames, and the axis of heaven shaken.

John Milton wrote one of the best-known accounts of the Michael/Lucifer battle as part of Paradise Lost. He drew upon the biblical theme and the literary contributions of numerous writers, adding invention of his own. In Paradise Lost, the War in Heaven lasted for three days but failed to achieve a victory for Michael and his angels. According to Stella Revard:

"He [Michael] is not the conventional battle victor. Clearly, in characterizing the War in Heaven as a stalemate rather than a clear-cut victory, Milton has changed our apprehension of Michael's part in

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<sup>78</sup> Cited in Revard, The War, p. 238.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., pp. 241-2.

the war. Splendid warrior though he is, all his resource in arms wins him no more than a temporary repulse of Satan. Yet we should recognize that, if not in arms, in<sup>80</sup> the wielding of the word Michael is triumphant.

Michael is assigned the role of prophet, and is sent to earth to reveal to Adam the consequence of sin, and to dispossess Adam and Eve of the Garden of Eden. His approach is described:

. . .and th' Arch-Angel soon drew nigh,  
 Not in his shape Celestial, but as Man  
 Clad to meet Man; over his lucid Arms  
 A military Vest of purple flow'd  
 Livelier than Meliboean, or the grain  
 Of Sarra, worn by Kings and Heroes old  
 In time of Truce; Iris had dipt the woof;  
 His starry Helm unbuckl'd show'd him prime  
 In Manhood where Youth ended; by his side  
 As in a glistering Zodiac hung the Sword,  
 Satan's dire dread, and in his hand the Spear. 81

Milton continues with "Adam bow'd low. . ." Most of us can well imagine the dread that he must have experienced. Michael speaks the message very clearly:

Adam, Heav'n's high behest no Preface needs:  
 Sufficient that thy prayers are heard, and Death,  
 Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,  
 Defeated of his seizure many days  
 Giv'n thee of Grace, wherein thou mayst repent,  
 And one bad act with many deeds well done  
 May'st cover: well may then thy Lord appeas'd  
 Redeem thee quite from Death's rapacious claim;  
 But longer in this Paradise to dwell  
 Permits not; to remove thee I am come  
 And send thee from the Garden forth to till 82  
 The ground whence thou wast tak'n, fitter Soil.

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., pp. 123-4.

<sup>81</sup> Paradise Lost, Book XI, lines 238-248. In Merritt Y. Hughes, ed., Complete Poems and Major Prose (New York: Odyssey Press, 1957).

<sup>82</sup> Book XI, lines 251-262.

Michael then proceeds to reveal in a vision to Adam the future consequences of sin. Each time the Archangel speaks, he is gentle but firm and very clear. After the Salvation is revealed, Michael declares:

This having learnt, thou has attain'd the sum  
Of wisdom;<sup>83</sup>

and he leads Adam and Eve out of Eden.

Writers, theologians, and politicians in many periods adapted the depiction of a heavenly conflict to fit their own purposes in discussing the struggle between good and evil. In the English seventeenth century political scene, Puritans called the King and the Royalists "The Beast and his party" and the "Angels of the dragon who were destroying the land," while they took to themselves the "names of Saints". . . "The angels of Michael."<sup>84</sup>

"English Protestants of the seventeenth century identified the dragon of Revelation with the Roman Church and saw themselves as angels of Michael resisting its forces."<sup>85</sup> The Catholics of the counter-Reformation reversed the roles.

In another view, Emmanuel Swedenborg, a Swedish mystic-theologian, wrote:

Revelation 12 signifies the falses [sic] of a former church fighting against the truths of a new church. Those who believe in justification by faith alone are

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<sup>83</sup> Book XII, lines 575-576.

<sup>84</sup> As described by Revard, The War, p. 113.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., p. 111.

the dragon. Michael is not meant any archangel. . .but followers who prove they do not separate charity from faith.<sup>86</sup>

The figure of the Archangel is not always shown in battle. Henry Adams discussed the "Chanson de Roland," an eleventh-century French epic, in Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres. This poem contains a description of the annual pilgrimage to the Mount, tells of knightly battles and of the death of Roland:

Folding his hands, he passed to his end  
 God sent to him his angel cherubim  
 And St. Michael of the Sea in Peril  
 Together with them came St. Gabriel  
 The soul of the Count they bear to paradise.<sup>87</sup>

"Probably there was never a day, certainly never a week, during several centuries when portions of the Chanson were not sung at the Mount. . ."<sup>88</sup>

In The Divine Comedy, Dante mentions Michael in "Paradise," Canto IV: 48, where Beatrice explains to him that certain provisions are made to accommodate human understanding:

And so does holy Church, in pictures lending  
 A human face to Michael, Gabriel,  
 And him by whom old Tobit found amending.<sup>89</sup>

Yeats in "The Rose of Peace," a love poem, suggests:

If Michael, leader of God's host  
 When Heaven and Hell are met,

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<sup>86</sup> Emmanuel Swedenborg, The Apocalypse Revealed (New York: American Swedenborg Printing & Publishing, 1908), p. 548.

<sup>87</sup> Henry Adams, Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres, p. 27.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>89</sup> Dante, The Divine Comedy, translation by Dorothy Sayers and Barbara Reynolds (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1962) p. 82.

Looked down upon you from Heaven's doorpost  
 He would his deeds forget.<sup>90</sup>

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, writes in The Golden Legend of Michael's protection against Lucifer's hosts. The evil hosts cry:

O we cannot!  
 The Archangel Michael  
 flames from every window  
 with the sword of fire that drove us  
 Headlong out of heaven aghast!<sup>91</sup>

Robert Nathan, an American novelist, wrote the Archangel Michael into his story, The Bishop's Wife. The bishop had prayed for an archdeacon to help with the affairs of the parish. Michael appears and assists - succeeding supernaturally because of his eons of experience and cosmic view. The story is a gentle satire on the worldliness of today's church. It is a clever story with touches of humor (Michael remembers hearing a fine organist at Weimar long ago), pathos (Michael and the bishop's wife fall in love), and the only possible ending (Michael disappears).<sup>92</sup>

"Sons of the Morning," a play written and produced by Terry Kroenung, as a creative project in related arts in the spring of 1981, dealt with St. Michael and Lucifer in battle games. The main theme of the play is a power struggle between the two angels.

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<sup>90</sup>The Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats (New York: Macmillan Co., 1933) p. 36.

<sup>91</sup>Longfellow, The Complete Poetical Works of Longfellow (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1866) p. 408.

<sup>92</sup>Robert Nathan, The Bishop's Wife (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1928). A movie, The Bishop's Wife, starring Loretta Young, Cary Grant, David Niven, and Monty Wooley, was based on this book.

Stating he wanted to humanize a mythic/fantasy situation, the author presents the roles of the two angels through poetic prose, exciting action, and social commentary. The character of Michael shows the awesome effect of too much authority. He is the center of the drama and wavers between the emotions of defiance and guilt. Lucifer, by contrast, is unencumbered with such emotions and is only interested in regaining his power.<sup>93</sup>

Such treatment questions the traditional image of St. Michael who is generally regarded as being without weakness. Kroenung's intent seems fulfilled when he says, "The challenge was to produce something fresh from a much belabored subject."

Writers such as these have used the Michael theme and their creative ability to magnify traditional sources to larger proportions. Literary allusions to Michael are plentiful, and one is impressed with the diversity of treatment and the great popularity and adaptability of the character of Michael.

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<sup>93</sup>Terry Kroenung, personal interview, May, 1981.



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