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The Missa L'homme arme of Johannes Regis and Franco-Flemish Perceptions of St. Michael the Archangel

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THE *MISSA L'HOMME ARME* OF JOHANNES REGIS AND *FRANCO-FLEMISH*
PERCEPTIONS OF ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Music
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Kenneth Dale Lee Disney
May 2008

ABSTRACT

St. Michael the Archangel performed three key roles in medieval western Christendom, as outlined by religious historian Richard Johnson: guardian, warrior, and psychopomp.¹ The roles of intercessor and military leader derive from scriptural references to St. Michael, while the psychopomp role derives from the Jewish and Christian apocryphal tales that compose the Saint's *vita*. Beginning with Charlemagne, liturgies dedicated to Michael were nationally sanctioned in the Carolingian Empire. The Frankish region would remain devoted to the Archangel well into the fifteenth century. Mont-Saint-Michel in particular would develop its own foundation myth,² leading the surrounding area in angelic patronage during the late middle ages.

Michael's three key roles directly correlate with the rise and fall of the Cult's popularity, which notably coincides with the coming and going of wars. Fresh off the campaigns of the Hundred Years War, fifteenth-century Franco-Flemish countries produced music dedicated to St. Michael that predictably demonstrate a militaristic tone. Franco-Flemish composer Johannes Regis (c.1425-c.1496), in particular, represents this tradition in his *Missa L'homme armé*. The prominence of the Archangel in this work reflects the historically Michael-devoted environment in which Regis composed his mass.

¹ Richard F Johnson, *Saint Michael the Archangel in Medieval English Legend* (Woodbridge, U.K.: The Boydell Press, 2005), 30.

² *Ibid.*, 41.

Regis's *Missa L'homme armé* portrays St. Michael as protector and military leader through tropes focusing on the expulsion of the dragon from heaven and depictions of the apocalyptic trumpet. Musically, the piece relies not only on dramatic text but also the popular *L'homme armé* [Armed Man] *cantus firmus*, which carried its own military theme and history, including frequent use in fifteenth-century polyphonic works to symbolize warrior figures such as St. Michael. Searches for the tune's origins lead to Phillip the Good's Order of the Golden Fleece, as well as Louis XI's Order of St. Michael, organizations that significantly blended chivalric ideals, knightly practice, and votive devotions.

Missa L'homme armé reflects St. Michael's western military and devotional functions in Franco-Flemish society through its treatment of text, choice of *cantus firmus*, and compositional techniques. My study of this piece illuminates the musical expression of the Cult of St. Michael during one of its most popular periods in history.

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Chapter One: *Statement of Purpose, Methods, and Materials*

Fifteenth-century France supported a culture in which Michael the Archangel's name rang synonymously with war, intercession, and death. Late medieval Franco-Flemish society found itself rich in vivid devotional images of St. Michael crushing Satan beneath his feet, helping soldiers on the battlefield, and transporting the recently dead to heaven. Paintings, sculptures, coins, and liturgies enforced these concepts daily. Funeral services also reinforced Michael's powerful presence, with every Requiem mass reminding medieval Christians that the Archangel waited to carry each soul to his or her resting place upon death. Mont-Saint-Michel, the regional center of the Cult of St. Michael, widely transmitted these images to the laity through an elaborate literary tradition that cultivated tales of the Archangel.³ Music devoted to the heavenly warrior also powerfully reflected the hagiographical ideas of the reigning socio-political atmosphere.

Johannes Regis's *Missa L'homme armé* (c.1462) exemplifies Franco-Flemish musical interaction with the Michaeline Cult, exhibiting text, *cantus firmi*, and other musical devices that strongly demonstrate the surrounding culture's hagiographic imagery. Regis's mass details all three Michaeline roles, structuring each concept around the *L'homme armé* melody. The roles of warrior and psychopomp, ideas important to warfare, receive particular emphasis, revealing associations with knightly orders who, through their wartime activities and the actions of their noble leaders, participated actively in local devotional activities to the

³ Katherine Allen Smith, "Footprints in Stone: Saint Michael the Archangel as a Medieval Saint, 1000-1500" (PhD diss., New York University, 2004), 5.

Archangel. Through its incorporation of both a longstanding devotional history and its reflection of the current militant culture, Regis's *Missa L'homme* serves as a microcosm of the Cult of St. Michael. Specifically, it embodies how knightly orders viewed their heavenly chivalric standard, and reflects the rising trend toward militancy seen in the post-Hundred Years War Franco-Flemish region.

Terminology

As a historical sub-discipline concerned with the study of saints, hagiography embraces the study of study of saints' written lives (known as *vitas*), the dissemination of their relics, and the social factors surrounding their cults. Modern hagiographic scholarship began with Jean Bolland, founder of the Jesuit Bollandists. He began work on the first volumes of the *Acta Sanctorum*: a collection of saints' *vitae* arranged by calendar day.⁴ Despite being suppressed for various period of time, the work of the Bollandists continues today.

Saint Michael, his cult, and the associated music are each difficult to define within the parameters of traditional hagiography, a situation demonstrated by an overview of several basic characteristics of the discipline. Epoch (generally picked from a range within late antiquity and the Renaissance) serves as a point of division for hagiographers. Specificity also delineates the type of research performed; some scholars choose to study one specific personality, such as St. Michael or St. Catherine, while others draw conclusions regarding large communities of saints (e.g.,

⁴ David Knowles, *Great Historical Enterprises: Problems in Monastic History* (New York: Nelson, 1963), 6.

holy men and women of the early Christian period.) According to David Weinstein and Rudolph Bell, hagiographers seeking sociological generalizations from large collections of materials are known as Realists, while those seeking to verify the factual reliability of the legends of individual saints are Nominalists.⁵

Contemporary hagiographical scholarship tends to emphasize concepts, including piety and sanctity, which apply to many areas of medieval life, such as clerical practice and the ritual of the liturgy. Modern historians believe that understanding these concepts of holiness, as seen through the Cult of Saints, allows readers to understand the social values and concerns of the area or people being studied.⁶

The Michaeline Cult differs most starkly from a typical saintly cult in that Michael lacked a physical body. While other saints were venerated across Europe via the spread of bodily relics, such as a limb or a toenail, St. Michael never existed corporally. With no grave and no remains, Michael, almost uniquely (along with Gabriel and Raphael), could not easily generate a relic-based cult. Indeed, the fact that the Archangel had not lived a human life set him completely apart from humanity. While other saints had earned their sanctity through their sufferings and deaths, Michael's holiness was inherently part of his character. Michael's *vita* likewise departs from many archetypal characteristics of saints' *vitae*. Without a

⁵ Donald Weinstein and Rudolph M. Bell, *Saints and Society: The Two Worlds of Western Christendom, 1000-1700* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), 1.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.

customary life and death, the *vita* consists of “chapters” that originate from Michaeline legends found throughout Europe.

Katherine Smith explains that Michael’s Cult variously circumvented these obstacles, for example by worshipping the Archangel’s imprint on the physical world through the use of surrogate bodies.⁷ The saint, however, remained inherently separated from the other members of the holy “cloud of witnesses.”⁸ Further, the phantasmal figure of the Archangel blurs the line between the Nominal and Realist methods of hagiography.

Although I focus on the cult of a single saint, this study cannot be considered Nominal because I do not argue the veracity of events associated with St. Michael’s *vitae*. Indeed, it would be an impossible task to prove that the Archangel struck a monk blind at Mont-Saint-Michel or rained lightning upon the enemies of the Dukes of Lombard, regardless of the number of available eyewitness accounts. Rather, these legends serve as demonstration of St. Michael’s importance in the fifteenth-century mind and people’s beliefs on his efficacy.

Unlike the modern definition, which carries negative connotations of a small group of fanatics, the word “cult” here signifies a type of culturally accepted and clerically endorsed medieval phenomenon. In this context, “cult” represents the western phenomenon surrounding a group of people’s devotion to “the recognition of the excellence and superiority”⁹ of a particular saint or holy event. Such groups

⁷ Ibid., 157.

⁸ A common medieval term for the saints who existed in heaven, derived from Heb 12.1 (New International Version).

⁹ *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., s.v. “Cult.”

existed from the earliest periods of Christianity, when people devoted prayers to the martyrs of the Church who had died during the period of Roman persecution. As the Church became more unified and the number of saints grew, certain personalities were ascribed special feast days and festivals, eventually filling the entire calendar. Different regions came to exhibit a familiarity with certain saints, perhaps because the holy man or woman once inhabited the same area, or because an item under the saint's holy protection was of special importance to the people there. The "Cult of the Saints" refers to this fervid situation of saint-devotion throughout medieval western Christendom. The "Cult of Saint Michael" refers to a tradition active throughout the middle ages and fifteenth century, having originated contemporaneously with Paul's New Testament letters.¹⁰

Nonetheless, the phrase also refers to specific manifestations of the cult within the larger tradition, such as those enacted by the monks of Mont-Saint-Michel. The persistence of shrines like Mount Gargano depended on the patronage of the rulers who adopted St. Michael as the official image of their armed forces; an inquiry about the militant nature of this cult thus prompts an entrance into the realm of the socio-political.

In Regis's *Missa L'homme armé*, the concept of *cantus firmus* figures heavily. According to musicologist Jennifer Bloxam, *cantus firmus* refers to "a pre-existing

¹⁰ John Charles Arnold, "*Ego Sum Michael: The Origin and Diffusion of the Christian Cult of St. Michael the Archangel.*" (PhD diss., The University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, 1997), 127.

melody used as the basis of a new polyphonic composition.”¹¹ A piece’s *cantus* can come from several sources, such as plainchant, monophonic secular music, or a single voice part within a polyphonic work. A polyphonically set *cantus firmus*, which dictates tenor melody and rhythmic structure, ultimately determines the treatment of the text. Freely inventing a *cantus firmi* represents a comparably uncommon alternative.

For *Missa L’homme armé*, the underlying *cantus firmus* originates from secular song known as the *L’homme armé*, or “the Armed Man,” a prominent tune in Renaissance music. This particular *cantus* adds unique rhythmic, melodic, and symbolic characteristics to the mass. It also brings with it several extra-musical connotations that make the associated body of works important to musicological research.

Review of Literature

My argument draws on scholarly research regarding hagiography, knightly orders, fifteenth-century music, Regis, as well as several primary sources. These studies have aided my research process by facilitating my combined hagiographical-musicological stance, employing related interdisciplinary tools to analyze Regis’s mass with the Michaeline tradition in mind, and determine historical and social links between the piece and the post-war Franco-Flemish culture.

¹¹ M. Jennifer Bloxam, “Cantus Firmus,” in *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy (accessed 16 April, 2007), <http://www.grovemusic.com>.

I am particularly indebted to a small, yet important, group of hagiographers and historians who have focused on St. Michael. John Charles Arnold details St. Michael's position in the early Christian era and both Jewish and Christian apocryphal literature, particularly in his dissertation, which provides a detailed history of Constantine's infatuation with the heavenly being.¹² The primary historical study of Mount Gargano and Mont-Saint-Michel, presented by Katherine Allen Smith, reviews legends of the two shrines and posits the concept of a "genealogical relationship" between them.¹³ She likewise draws connections between each shrine and its respective geographical ruler.

The link between St. Michael and millennialism at the beginning of the high middle ages is reported by Daniel Callahan, who provides a useful outlook on Northern European adoptions of the Archangel's image for warfare.¹⁴ Dealing with English conceptions of St. Michael, Richard Johnson outlines the construct of Michael's essential three roles that this study utilizes.¹⁵ He also uncovers evidence that various apocryphal texts circulated throughout Europe. In her book *Myths and Symbols of Nation in Late-Medieval France*, Collete Beaune extrapolates St. Michael's role as a nationalistic symbol.¹⁶

¹² See Arnold, "Ego Sum Michael," 82-90.

¹³ Smith, "Footprints in Stone."

¹⁴ Daniel F. Callahan, "The Cult of St. Michael the Archangel and the Terrors of the Year 1000," in *The Apocalyptic Year 1000: Religious Expectation and Social Change, 950-1050*, ed. Richard Landes, Andrew Gow, and David Van Meter (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 181-204.

¹⁵ See Johnson, *Saint Michael the Archangel*.

¹⁶ Collete Beaune, *The Birth of an Ideology: Myths and Symbols of Nation in Late-Medieval France*, ed. Fredric L. Cheyette, trans. Susan Ross (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

Broader-based hagiographical works on medieval devotion have assisted me in approaching the topic from a larger sociological point of view. Thomas Heffernan gives an excellent overview of the practice of hagiography and, more importantly its conception in the middle ages in his monograph *Sacred Biography*.¹⁷ Here Heffernan challenges traditional positivist conceptions of biographical conceptions. Instead, he considers the texts with a view of reality, not based on anachronistic facts, but congruent with the groups who originally wrote them. Peter Brown covers the relationship between people and the sainted dead, focusing on the sacralization of burial sites and the struggle for control of such areas. The two-tiered hierarchy of saints and society, as suggested by Daniel Weinstein and Rudolph Bell, provides a framework within which medieval cultural interchanges took place.¹⁸

My analysis of the Michaeline literary tradition employs information from these secondary sources, as well as from primary documents as made accessible in several editions. The Bollandists compiled the *vita* for St. Michael in the *Acta Sanctorum*,¹⁹ which includes the foundation legends of Mont-Saint-Michel and Mount Gargano. A critical edition of the Mont-Saint-Michel legend collection, edited by P.L. Hull, has proven indispensable to this study.²⁰ Another version of these

¹⁷ Thomas Heffernan, *Sacred Biography: Saints and Their Biographers in the Middle Ages* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

¹⁸ Weinstein and Bell, *Saints and Society*.

¹⁹ Society of Bollandists, *Acta Sanctorum* (Brussels: Culture et Civilisation, 1965-1970).

²⁰ P.L. Hull, *The Cartulary of St. Michael's Mount* ([Essex]: Devon and Cornwall Record Society, 1962).

legend collections is available in a collected edition by Thomas Le Roy.²¹ My musical analysis has relied on Cornelis Lindenburg's complete edition of compositions by Regis (including *Missa L'homme armé*).²² Kevin Moll's audio recordings with *Schola Discantus*, offers a strict interpretation of Regis's surviving scores, and has aided my score interpretation.²³

Several musicologists have documented the *L'homme armé* musical tradition; their contributions have supplemented my argument. Lewis Lockwood, for instance, concluded that *L'homme armé* first appeared in both lay and clerical circles around the same time. He further addressed the melody's origin and posited that the tune's popularity may stem from its simultaneous circulation amidst lay and clerical social circles.²⁴ A. E. Plainchart draws the important connection between the tune and the Order of the Golden Fleece in his article "The Origins and Early History of *L'homme armé*."²⁵ Possible interpretations of the lyrics and the variety of personalities applied to them are discussed in Craig Wright's *The Maze and the Warrior*. These figures included Hercules, Christ, and St. Michael. He also details the image of St. Michael used in Regis *Missa L'homme armé*, referring to its uniqueness among other

²¹ Thomas Le Roy, *Les curieuses recherches du Mont-Saint-Michel*, ed. E. de Robillard de Beaurepaire (Caen: Le Gost-Clerisse, 1878).

²² Johannes Regis, *Opera omnia*, ed. Cornelis Lindenburg (Rome: American Institute of Musicology, 1965); Johannes Ockeghem, *Collected Works*, ed. Dragan Plamenac (New York: American Musicological Society, 1959-1966).

²³ Johannes Regis, *Missa Ecce Ancilla Domini / Missa Dum Sacrum Mysterium*, Schola Discantus, Kevin Moll, Lyrichord compact disc 8044.

²⁴ Lewis Lockwood, "Aspects of the *L'homme armé* Tradition," *Proceedings of the Royal Music Society* 100 (1973-74): 97-122, esp. 100.

²⁵ A. E. Plainchart, "The Origins and Early History of *L'homme armé*," *The Journal of Musicology* 20 (2003): 305-57.

L'homme armé mass settings.²⁶ I expand upon the cause of Regis's Michaeline devotion, providing theories that link the mass's composition to knightly orders and cultural preoccupations with warfare. This question has previously been left unexplored.

Information on Johannes Regis's biography comes mainly from the work of musicologists Sean Gallagher, Pamela Starr, and David Fallows. Gallagher's *Grove Online* article presents all of the general knowledge known about the composer, such as where he lived, approximate dates of his life, uncovered works, etc. Regis's fifteenth-century impact is explored by David Fallows, who uses contemporaneous motets and lists of famous composers as evidence that Regis was quite famous during his time.²⁷ Various "ghosts" exist with the same name as Regis, a situation that complicates our ability to establish the composer's whereabouts and activities. Luckily, Pamela Starr has addressed this issue and narrowed the composer studied here into a plausible identity.²⁸ She further suggests that his *Missa L'homme armé* was employed in the celebration of St. Michael's feast days.²⁹

Context & Scope

²⁶ Craig Wright, *The Maze and the Warrior: Symbols in Architecture, Theology, and Music* (New York: The Viking Press, 2001), esp. 160-170.

²⁷ David Fallows, "The Life of Johannes Regis, ca 1425-1496," *Revue Belge de Musicologie* 43 (1989): 143-172.

²⁸ Pamela Starr, "Southern Exposure: Roman Light on Johannes Regis," *Revue Belge de Musicologie* 49 (1995): 27-38.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 36.

The exploration of St. Michael as a social figure and an understanding of his three archetypal roles as presented in *Missa L'homme armé* require an in-depth exploration of his Cult from its inception through the Hundred Years War. The fifteenth-century Michaeline Cult relied heavily on earlier influences, drawing on a period spanning roughly from 300 to 1500: key facets of this earlier tradition includes Constantine and his Michaelion, the Dukes of Lombard and Mount Gargano, Charlemagne, the foundation of Mont-Saint-Michele, and its support from the Dukes of Normandy. By focusing on a small group of highly active and politically important shrines, I establish a network of relationships among historical practices of the Cult in the Low Countries and France's flagship shrine, Mont-Saint-Michel.

Shrines affiliated with Michael variously connected the Archangel to warfare, imperial expansion, or both over the course of the French and Burgundian middle ages. In addition, these shrines exhibited an implied genealogical relationship with one another, in which each built on the lore, relics, and practices of its predecessors.³⁰ Mont-Saint-Michel acted as the latest inheritor of this devotional legacy during the period of musical activity encompassed by this study.

Regis crafted his mass during a time of Michaeline prominence in the Franco-Flemish region that relates to the impact of the widespread warfare that had recently ended. The Hundred Years War led to the establishment of knightly orders, such as the Order of the Golden Fleece and the Order of St. Michael, setting the foundations for a revival of the Cult in France. Further, the war significantly invoked all three of St. Michael's roles as adopted by the Franco-Flemish: As a warrior he aided their

³⁰ Smith, "Footprints in Stone," 2.

efforts on the battlefield; as an intercessor, he intervened when the invading English caused suffering; and as a psychopomp, he carried off the souls of the war's casualties. The popular understanding of the Archangel in this context strongly influenced the emergence, structure, and subjects of Regis's mass.

My argument demonstrates the ways in which Regis's *Missa L'homme armé* expresses literary traits and socio-political histories of the Cult of St. Michael. In part, I have chosen this composition because of its late fifteenth-century Franco-Flemish relevance. Moreover, the work reflects both the totality of Michael's role in medieval hagiographic tradition and the more specific socio-political and devotional perceptions that developed in Regis's milieu.

My study serves a twofold purpose: 1) to illustrate the musical manifestations of the Cult of St. Michael during one of its most active periods in history; and 2) to demonstrate how extra-Biblical Michaeline texts and events penetrated the official practices and music of the western Catholic church. The three roles that Regis presented for Michael are not products of scripture or exegesis alone. Rather, they reflect legends and apocryphal literature that feature the Archangel in contexts beyond purely canonical ones, and that show the Archangel's connections to both sacred and secular culture. This connection is achieved further through repeated themes of warfare, violence, and apocalyptic fear. These ideas appear in all manifestations of St. Michael's devotion. The Franco-Flemish region, with its frequent appearances of an Armed Man in various artistic mediums, reflects this tradition.

Methodology

This thesis thoroughly integrates musicology, hagiography, and aspects of literary analysis, intertwining these disciplines in order to better study votive music, in this case for St. Michael. This hybrid approach provides three-dimensional interpretations that incorporate musical analysis, historical exegesis of the piece, and composer biography. Any single method listed above cannot procure a full view of the Michaeline Cult's musical expression as represented in *Missa L'homme armé*. Combining musicological and music theoretical approaches with hagiography connects Regis's piece more completely to contemporaneous popular worldviews and constructed ideals of Michael based on the medieval concept of a community of saints.

Employing methodologies rooted in literary analysis and interpretation, I base my interpretations on foundation stories and legend collections from the shrines discussed above. Several other apocryphal texts inform fifteenth-century Michaeline receptions, such as the Gospel of Nicomedes, St. Paul's Apocalypse, and the Virgin's Assumption, are examined for the purpose of comparing Michael's role to that found in more specific shrine-based stories. Although written over a period of centuries, all of these texts circulated during the fifteenth century, and most could be found in the library of Mont-Saint-Michel.³¹

My methodology deliberately blends formal aspects of musical analysis with questions concerning music's social functions, an approach consistent with and well suited to demonstrating the second branch of my overall thesis. Beyond simply

³¹ P.L. Hull, *The Cartulary of St. Michael's Mount*, 15.

fulfilling the more traditional roles of music in a church service, Michaeline masses realized an important need in fifteenth-century communities. Such pieces provided saint-specific music required for feast days, but they also communicated devotional and political messages surrounding principal heavenly figures.

Several elements of my musicological approach draw on Rob Wegman's examination of Busnois's *Anthoni usque limina*, which utilizes methodologies similar to the hagiography-musicological hybrid described above. On the question of musical-textual analysis, Wegman embraces the medieval concept of "interpretive community" as the solution to the conflict between post-modernism's potentially endless list of relevant exegeses and the equally unavailing search for a single musical significance.³² The "interpretive community" consists of shared beliefs, values, interests, and paradigms held by a majority of people and are similar to the economic concept of "spontaneous order." Reaching beyond the musical score, Wegman calls for a widening of musical signifiers that includes the local community in order to reach a more authentic historical perspective. Similarly, my study draws upon the local "interpretive community" as it conceived St. Michael in order to create a perspective that, rather than depending wholly on musical analysis, creates in Wegman's words, "a fabric of signifiers" based on medieval perception "in which the musical work is fully interwoven."

By viewing medieval music in its social and religious context, we connect musical practice with larger devotional traditions. Wegman, for instance,

³² This paragraph relies on and cites from Rob C. Wegman, "For Whom the Bell Tolls: Reading and Hearing Busnoy's *Anthoni usque limina*" in *Hearing the Motet*, ed. Dolores Pesce (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 122-123.

accomplishes this task by exploring the relationship between Saint Anthony's Cult, Busnois's use of a bell, the shape of the musical manuscript, and the chosen text.³³ I find such frameworks compelling possibilities for future scholarship within the area of votive musicology, as seen in my application of such methodologies to Regis's *Missa L'homme armé*.

Local liturgical practices and their effects on *cantus firmi* choice can be explored with a "comparative musico-liturgical" methodology, as Jennifer Bloxam adopts in her study of masses for the Virgin Mary by Regis's contemporary Jacob Obrecht.³⁴ While Wegman focuses on popular beliefs, Bloxam examines prominent saintly liturgical traditions. Her study demonstrates the role played by local geographies in the selection of specific chants (or fragments of chants) for Obrecht's masses. The area shared a communal familiarity with music for the Virgin, and served as the composer's home during the time of the respective masses' composition. Attention is also given to the composer's geographic setting and organizational affiliations, as Obrecht's proximity to Marian cathedrals and confraternities no doubt played a role in his selection of Marian subjects for his masses.³⁵ Regis performed his musical duties close to several prominent Michaeline shrines, and notably found himself within traveling distance of Louis XI's court at Mont-Saint-Michele.

³³ Ibid., 125-128.

³⁴ M. Jennifer Bloxam, "Plainsong and Polyphony for the Blessed Virgin Mary: Notes on Two Masses by Jacob Obrecht," *The Journal of Musicology* 12, no. 1 (1994): 52.

³⁵ Ibid. 74-75.

Thesis Content and Organization

Following the multi-disciplinary nature of my research, my project discussion involves two types of approaches. First I address the hagiographical material appropriate to the history of St. Michael's Cult. Second, my musicological-music theoretical analysis focuses on *L'homme armé* melody, Johannes Regis, and the *L'homme armé* Mass he wrote based on Michaeline tropes. I feel it is essential to consider elements of the Cult's past and hagiographical traditions before the full context of the fifteenth-century music can be understood.

Chapter Two chronicles the history of the Cult of St. Michael in western Europe, centering on four major shrines and the imperial rulers that funded them. As political entities variously appropriated the Archangel, they transformed him into a national patron saint. While he officially carried the title of national or regional protector, in practice the Archangel became political patron of warfare and imperial aspirations for western Christendom at large. In these contexts, St. Michael also facilitated strong cultural interest in the battle portrayed in Revelation between the Archangel and the satanic dragon. Emperors who embraced Michael's patronage often described their enemies as serpents, as in the cases of Constantine and later the French. This overarching and consistent connection between Michael's cult and imperial aspiration reveals the extra-Biblical reinforcement of the Cult's general ideas about the Archangel.

Chapter Three describes the connections between the post-Hundred Years War Franco-Flemish political landscape and Regis's mass. The knightly orders, founded by noblemen, gained prominence during the war. One group, the Order of

the Golden Fleece, directly relates to the origin of the *L'homme armé* melody.³⁶ As a warrior class they devoted themselves generally to soldier-saints, among which the heavenly standard of knighthood became St. Michael. In this way, the *L'homme armé*, St. Michael, and Franco-Flemish nobility become connected, peaking in the example of Louis XI's Order of St. Michael, which noticeably patterns itself off of the same Michaeline tradition as Regis's mass. Finally, I discuss the motives behind Regis's devotion to St. Michael, suggesting that the composer could fit into the same category as composers like his peer, Dufay, who composed votive music for knights and noblemen on a regular basis. Regis lived close to several prominent Michaeline shrines, including Mont-Saint-Michel, leading an identification of the establishment of Regis as a peripatetic composer.

Johannes Regis's *Missa L'homme armé*, the topic of Chapter Four, is a musical embodiment of the medieval mind's perception of the Archangel and a representation of the militant fifteenth-century Franco-Flemish culture. My musical analysis of the mass focuses on the *cantus firmus*, the "*L'homme armé*" melody as a generating foundation with multivalent cultural associations. I argue that Regis employs an architectonic structure within which all three of Michael's roles appear. I further discuss the Michaeline tropes added to the Ordinary texts, and suggest that they reveal a focus on textual meaning that harkens back to the early middle ages. A study of the overall text setting follows, utilizing a system of chant analysis similar to

³⁶ A.E. Planchart, "The Origins and Early History of *L'homme armé*," *The Journal of Musicology* 20 (2003): 312, 355.

that presented by Jeremy Yudkin,³⁷ which contends that certain aspects of the text are musically emphasized by their placement within the phrase structure. Building on the legends outlined here, I discuss the apocryphal imagery of the sounding trumpet and the battle with Satan described in the text. Both images originate in the Book of Revelation, and the trumpet-like sounds employed connect the mass strikingly with the Anonymous Naples Masses.

Devotion to the Archangel Michael, a phenomenon developing alongside the imperial history of Western Christendom, found expression in the music of the Franco-Flemish region during the fifteenth century. The mass studied here reflects contemporaneous associations between Michael, knightly orders, rulers, and laymen, which in turn are built upon older and broader connections with warfare, imperialism, intercession, and care for the dead. As the capstone of a particularly turbulent period in Western Europe, both economically and politically, late fifteenth-century France and Burgundy aptly fostered the appearance of such a work.

Previous scholarship exploring the connection between Flemish composers and devotional confraternities has often adopted small starting points, such as a single composition, in an attempt to connect it to the larger cultural fabric. My study, however, employs a more contextual approach, more conducive to understanding the socio-political and religious meanings of Michaeline music. I thus begin with the “large” medieval perception of St. Michael as expressed through literary and

³⁷ Jeremy Yudkin, *Music in Medieval Europe* (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1989) 62-65.

hagiographic writings, and pinpoint its manifestation in the “small:” the mass that drew its influence from the cultural ramifications of the angelic cult.

In this way I demonstrate the impact of St. Michael’s place in fifteenth-century French and Burgundian society, and reveal the active dialogue across media regarding his importance. Simultaneously, I provide fresh analyses that allow modern scholars to view Regis as part of a broader musical framework, wherein composers manipulated the tools of their craft in order to interact with the Cult of Saints.

Chapter Two: *A History of the Cult of Saint Michael*

Over the course of the fifteenth century, the prominence of St. Michael's cult grew in popularity, not just in the Franco-Flemish regions, but in the Latin West as a whole. The history of the Cult reveals that several *topoi* present in Regis's mass, such as the St. Michael-Dragon dichotomy and the focus on battle, date from the Saint's first major Western shrine at Constantinople. The monks who kept the Cult alive during the fifteenth-century, particularly those situated at Mont-Saint-Michel, conducted themselves with a sense of tradition and reflected a basic knowledge of these tenets. They further showed a desire to connect their traditions and history with those of an older shrine in the West, Italy's Mount Gargano, which they perceived as a sort of genealogical "brother shrine."³⁸ However, while many traditions were fashioned from the practices of monasticism, the over-reaching and universal aspects of St. Michael were influenced, not by monks, but by the political changes that accompanied the spread of the Cult.

Throughout history, the Cult of the Archangel has been directly connected with imperial regimes. Kings and emperors felt drawn to St. Michael as an especially potent symbol of military power and dominance, perhaps based on his roles in scripture and hagiographical literature. In the Book of Revelation, he is leader of the heavenly army of angels, and likewise in the Book of Daniel the protector of God's people. Correspondingly, as Richard Johnson has posited, "each of the great regional

³⁸ For information regarding the genealogical relationship between Mont-Saint-Michel and Mount Gargano, as well as the Cornish St. Michael's Mount, see the introduction to Smith, "Footprints in Stone," 1-24.

powers [of the Western early middle ages], Constantine's empire, the Lombards, and the Carolingians, adapted and adopted St. Michael, leader of the Heavenly Host in battle, as the patron saint of its imperial ambition."³⁹ The devotional shrines associated with the rulers of the empires listed above show a connection between St. Michael and imperialism and, furthermore, form a discernable chain leading to Mont-Saint-Michel and the Frankish region in the fifteenth-century.

The spread of St. Michael's Cult related to the rise of powerful empires and kingdoms. These political entities adopted the Archangel as their patron saint during times of warfare, particularly when the goal was consolidated power achieved from the unifying of lands under a single banner. From the earliest recorded existence of a Michaeline Cult in the Near East, angelic devotion expanded westward. First Constantine would construct the Michaelion, using the Archangel as an imposing figure to help unify the Roman Empire. Later, the Lombard Dukes funded Mount Gargano, another shrine with political roots embedded in conflict with Eastern "pagans." Charlemagne helped make the Archangel a major part of continental devotion when his alacrity for St. Michael led to various official decrees that made the saint synonymous with the Carolingian empire. In this region Mont-Saint-Michel was founded in the eighth century, becoming the most prominent angelic shrine of the middle ages. The history of Mont-Saint-Michel depicts a view of St. Michael that reflects an overarching narrative of imperial rule during the time of the Hundred Years War and beyond, into the fifteenth century.

³⁹ Johnson, *Saint Michael the Archangel*, 32.

The Ancient Near East, Constantine, and the Michaelion

According to religious historians such as Richard Johnson and Katherine Smith, the first recorded instance of a cult devoted to angels comes from biblical times and is recorded in the Pauline letter to the Colossians. Paul writes expressly, “Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize,”⁴⁰ a verse that served as fuel for criticisms of angelic cults in many subsequent theological writings. While John Arnold uses alternative translations to argue against the verse as evidence of an early angelic cult,⁴¹ writings contemporary with the letter’s composition record the relevance of Paul’s claim. The Council of Laodicea (ca. 360) reiterated Paul’s admonition against angel worship,⁴² although Bishop Theodoret wrote around fifty years later that the practice “long remained in Phrygia and Pisidia,” and that “even to the present time oratories of the holy Michael may be seen among them and their neighbors.”⁴³

Further evidence speaking to the existence of an early medieval angelic Cult includes the existence of a Jewish tradition of angelic devotion. This takes the form of apocalyptic literature existing many years prior to the Christian era. Incidentally, the Christian Cult of St. Michael derives many of its principal *vitae* texts, including the Book of Enoch the Prophet, from this Jewish tradition. New Testament writings on the saint would also receive influence from this tradition, as seen in Jude, where

⁴⁰ Col. 2.18 (New International Version).

⁴¹ Arnold, “*Ego Sum Michael*,” 57.

⁴² Joseph Barber Lightfoot, *Saint Paul’s Epistle to the Colossians and to Philemon* (London, Macmillan and Co., 1913), 68.

⁴³ Cited in *ibid.*, 68.

the author refers to a Jewish apocryphal tradition during St. Michael's verbal conflict with Satan.

From well before the fourth century, at least, Christians devoted themselves to angels in a manner that troubled Church Fathers. In part, the angelic Cult presented an obvious challenge to the omnipotence of Christ as supreme intercessor. Further uneasiness perhaps developed because, as Arnold points out, angels did not originate in Christianity but rather derived from the paganisms of late antiquity. Angels, including St. Michael, served as a sort of ancient religious neutral zone, allowing people of different faiths to gather around a common shrine to ask a single celestial being for intercession.⁴⁴ As this tradition refused to die, theologians attempted to persuade people to turn away from perceived ties to "pagan" practices and magical rites throughout the early middle ages.⁴⁵

Constantine, however, soon rose to power, constructing shrines and later waging a military campaign to unite the Eastern and Western halves of the Roman Empire. His actions would entrench St. Michael and his cult into both the Latin and Byzantine Christian traditions. In so doing, Constantine effectively defied those who sought to blot out angelic cults with cries of idolatry.

While scholars continually debate Constantine's motives for conversion,⁴⁶ the recognized consensus states that he founded the first Christian dynasty as well as the

⁴⁴ Arnold, 16.

⁴⁵ Richard Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages* (New York: Canto, 1990), esp. Chapter 1.

⁴⁶ See A.H.M. Jones, *Constantine and the Conversion of Europe* (New York: Macmillan and Co, 1962) for a skeptical account of his conversion and T. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1981) for an interpretation siding with Constantine as a true believer.

first major Christian empire. His reign began in 307, and while the exact date of “acceptance” continues to elude scholars, the year 324 definitely marks the moment when the once-underground cult of Christianity won official sanction. Sometime after his personal conversion, Constantine oversaw the construction of the Michaelion at Chalcedon on the site of an earlier temple known as Sosthenion. Once a site of rich pagan mythos, the Sosthenion represented the many pre-Christian religions throughout the Roman Empire that had included angels in their belief systems.

Because of its background of angelic devotion, the future location of Constantine’s Michaelion came pre-equipped with Michaeline legends.⁴⁷ The Emperor interpreted foremost of these legends to declare that the Argonauts contacted the Archangel. While navigating the Black Sea in search of the Golden Fleece, the group endured the chieftain Amycus’s attacks at Sosthenion. They took refuge in a cave, and while recovering they received visions of a man with eagle-like wings. The winged man foretold of their imminent victory over the chieftain, after which the Argonauts built a temple and set up a statue of the winged man as a sign of appreciation.

According to tradition, the newly converted Constantine recognized the pagan statue as an angel wearing monk’s clothing. Later the angel would appear in the Emperor’s dreams and reveal himself as St. Michael. After this revelation, Constantine ordered the Michaelion built in honor of the Archangel, and the site,

⁴⁷ This paragraph relies on Johnson, *Saint Michael the Archangel*, 33-34.

already famous for healings and apparitions, renewed its reputation under a Christianized banner.⁴⁸

St. Michael's first major connections with imperial ambition and warfare arose out of tensions that mounted between Constantine and Licinius, ruler of the Eastern Empire, in the year 320. The war would ultimately unify the Roman Empire. Constantine began publicizing that St. Michael's visitation had been to declare a future victory over Licinius.⁴⁹ Four years later Constantine accused Licinius of persecuting Christians,⁵⁰ raised his army, and engaged in the final battle at Chrysopolis, near the Michaelion. Licinius was defeated and the Empire was unified. Constantine's biographer Eusebius described the situation as heaven on earth.

Constantine's subsequent promotion of these events raised the public's awareness of St. Michael and his military importance in a way that echoed for centuries. After his victory, Constantine commissioned a painting of himself and his sons standing atop a serpent that had been pierced by a spear. This painting was displayed publicly in front of the Emperor's palace. Clearly it portrays the battle from Revelation 12.7-9. According to Richard Johnson, however, Constantine here "associated himself with St. Michael, the commander of the celestial host, as he had previously associated himself with other supernatural beings, such as Sol Invictus and Apollo."⁵¹ In fact, Constantine began referring to his former rival Licinius as a

⁴⁸ Ibid., 34.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 34.

⁵⁰ Arnold, 85. Thus, by this date Christianity was publicly welcomed.

⁵¹ Johnson, *Saint Michael the Archangel*, 34.

dragon.⁵² Later, Constantine's identification with the Archangel became part of the foundation legend of the Michaelion, as seen in the fourteenth century *Ecclesiastica Historica* written by Nicephorus Callistus. Coins exhibiting the image of the pierced serpent would be distributed throughout the Empire beginning in 326, helping to ensure that the Archangel would replace the pagan Victory (also a winged figure) as an imperial symbol.⁵³ This also helped spread knowledge of the Archangel to outlying areas of the empire.

All subsequent Roman emperors, including the Holy Roman Emperor Charlemagne, supported the Cult of St. Michael, following Constantine's example. Against such sponsorship, opponent theologians, bishops, and councils alike were doomed to fail in their attempts to curb angelic devotion. From this point in history, the cult spread gradually westward, where St. Michael offering a strong alternative to older pagan deities among newly converted populations.⁵⁴ Eventually another popular shrine emerged in Apulia, Italy, this time supported by the Lombard Dukes and connected with their struggle with the Neapolitans. Many of the tactics that Constantine used would be revived as the Cult spread once more throughout Western Europe.

⁵² Arnold, *Ego Sum Michael*, 86.

⁵³ John Arnold, "Arcadia Becomes Jerusalem: Angelic Caverns and Shrine Conversion at Monte Gargano," *Speculum* 75, no. 3 (2000): 573; "Early Christian and Byzantine Art," *Grove Art Online*, Oxford University Press (Accessed 05 March 2008), <http://groveart.com>.

⁵⁴ Arnold, 146.

Mount Gargano and the Dukes of Lombard

Founded in Apulia during the late fifth century, Mount Gargano reflects many aspects of the Eastern cult of St. Michael, mirroring especially the shrine to the Archangel at Chonae in the Near East, with which it shared similar foundation myths.⁵⁵ Like the Michaelion, Gargano was probably a pagan shrine transformed in the wake of south Italy's Christianization. Although the Dukes of Lombard were not the founders of the Mount, they developed a special relationship with the shrine similar to that between Constantine and the Michaelion. In their battle with the Neapolitans, the Dukes adopted St. Michael as their patron, using him as did Constantine to emblemize powerful Christian forces that suppressed pagan enemies.

For the first few centuries of the shrine's existence, Mount Gargano was a simple community of monks; their central tradition revolved around the belief that the Archangel himself had carved the monastery from stone, as detailed in the popular hagiographic document *Apparitio in Monte Gargano*.⁵⁶ During this time the monks developed close ties with the local Dukes, who would come to rule the province of Apulia during the seventh through ninth centuries. When the Lombards converted from Arianism to orthodox Christianity, they immediately expressed a special devotion to St. Michael, giving extensive funds to Mount Gargano, thus allowing the shrine to flourish.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Smith, 31-32.

⁵⁶ See Arnold, "Arcadia Becomes Jerusalem," 568. Also known as *Liber de apparitione Sancti Michaelis in Monte Gargano*, the earliest examples of the text appear in two ninth-century manuscripts from St. Gall (MSS 558 and 550) and an Otto-beuren homily.

⁵⁷ Smith, 32.

The relation between St. Michael and militarism is seen again in coins minted under Lombard rule were given the image of St. Michael from the seventh through ninth centuries. Extant coins feature the “angel of destruction” armed with his shield and a cross-shaped spear.⁵⁸ As the shrine grew in power and influence, so did the Dukes. In particular, the shrine’s rise to regional prominence coincides with the story of the unification of Southern Italy under Lombard control.

In 663 the Lombard Dukes found themselves at war with the Byzantine Neapolitans. St. Michael again presented an appealing image to those in power, and the Lombards adopted him as a patron military saint, placing his image on their battle standards.⁵⁹ The story of the ensuing battle became so intertwined with the shrine at Mount Gargano as to find itself incorporated into the *Apparitio*, the foundation myth copied by monks for centuries, and disseminated throughout the European continent during the middle ages.⁶⁰ According to the *Apparitio*, Lombardy did not simply win the military campaign against their enemies through human means. Rather, they had benefited from a divine military intervention during which St. Michael rained down lighting bolts upon the Neapolitans.⁶¹

This story was used not only to bolster the faith of monastic practitioners and laymen, but also as a powerful political tool that enforced the correct and godly rule of the Lombard Dukes.⁶² The festival day for the foundation of Mount Gargano, 8

⁵⁸ G.F. Hull, “Apollo and St. Michael: Some Analogies,” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 36 (1916): 158-160.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 33.

⁶⁰ 150 copies of the story have been found in shrines all over Europe.

⁶¹ Johnson, *Saint Michael the Archangel*, 40.

⁶² Arnold, “Arcadia Becomes Jerusalem,” 587-588.

May, also became synonymous with the anniversary of Lombard victory over the Neapolitans. No longer bound to a legendary battle with Satan, as represented in Revelation, Saint Michael assumed much broader importance firmly rooted in the secular world.

The Archangel now transcended temporal boundaries, identified with ruling powers in both the past and present (Constantine and the Dukes, respectively). Further, Michael's efficacy was perceived as immediate; he was understood as a militant intercessor that physically interacted on the present-day battlefield. Mount Gargano and its monks transmitted this story and, as the Cult traveled northward, it disseminated the idea that political figures loyal to God could expect St. Michael, the protector of all Godly Christians, to watch over their kingdom.

A Frankish conquest of Italy occurred, c. 773-774, and the Lombard dukes were defeated. Although evidence exists of veneration of St. Michael in Gaul since the sixth century, it was the Frankish foray into the Apulian region that insured the Archangel was, as Johnson articulates, "destined to become part of Carolingian imperial mythology."⁶³ With the rise of Charlemagne at the end of the eighth and beginning of the ninth century, the next connection between the cult of St. Michael and imperial rule began. However, Mount Gargano's involvement persisted. Shrines built in the north, including Mont-Saint-Michel, continued to look to Mount Gargano as the standard of angelic devotion, despite the fact that it was a rival shrine. In their relationship with Mount Gargano, Mont-Saint-Michel monks sought out Gargano

⁶³ Johnson, *Saint Michael the Archangel*, 42.

relics, copied its *Apparitio* story, recited it as the previous “chapter” to their own foundation myth, and celebrated its feast day for St. Michael on 8 May.

Charlemagne and the Carolingian Empire

Charlemagne, who became king of the Franks in 768 and Holy Roman Emperor in 800, is well known for his efforts to unify and Romanize the liturgy of the Latin West. His attitude concerning worship and devotion to angels played an important role in many of his decisions. Under Charlemagne, the Carolingian Empire took on aspects of the Lombard Dukes, as well as Constantine, who had also adopted St. Michael as a patron saint in the past. A dedicated movement toward a government-supported Michaeline devotion can be traced through documented legislative decisions that affected that region’s social, cultural, and imperial characteristics.

Charlemagne’s actions to legitimize St. Michael occurred alongside equally important decisions to ostracize non-canonical angels. The first recorded instances of such legislation appear during Charlemagne’s rule (see below). A sense of unification combined with imperial ambition must be understood as a key part of Charlemagne’s goals, as he sought to bring a vast expanse of land under a single standard of worship.

Issued in 789, Charlemagne’s *Admonitio Generalis* was the future Holy Emperor’s first outline for a unified, Romanized liturgy, and a universally well-

educated clergy.⁶⁴ His plans for the clergy stipulated that only three angels should ever be recognized: Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael.⁶⁵ This decree echoed a Council of Rome edict of 745, which concluded that other angels were at best apocryphal and most likely demons.⁶⁶ After becoming Holy Roman Emperor in 800, Charlemagne furthered Michael's recognition during the Council of Mainz in 813 and legislated an official feast of St. Michael (29 September).⁶⁷ In supporting the church's condemnation of unknown angels, and enforcing universal acceptance of St. Michael's feast day, Charlemagne effectively placed the Archangel above all other angels, even though they had scriptural legitimacy. Gabriel and Raphael were given no feast days but were instead relegated behind Michael in "All Angels Day."

Along with his official legislative actions, Charlemagne proved his devotion to St. Michael through his written words, musical preferences, and aesthetic choices. In the preface for the 16 October section of the *Hadrianum* (the document serving as model for Gregorian liturgical practices), he wrote, "It is proper...that on this day we proclaim the merits of St. Michael the Archangel. For however much we are to venerate all the angels who stand before the presence of your Majesty, it is proper that in the celestial order the Warrior deserves the first rank."⁶⁸ The recognition of the day is itself important, for 16 October was the feast day for the celebration of Mont-Saint-Michel, which would later become a shrine of eminent importance. Twice in

⁶⁴ James Grier, "Adémar de Chabannes, Carolingian Musical Practices, and *Nota Romana*," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 56, no. 1 (2003): 18, 22.

⁶⁵ Smith, "Footprints in Stone," 28.

⁶⁶ Jeffrey B. Russell, "Saint Boniface and the Eccentrics," *Church History* 33, no. 3 (1964): 237.

⁶⁷ Smith, "Footprints in Stone," 29.

⁶⁸ Cited in Johnson, *Saint Michael the Archangel*, 43.

his life, once in 774 during a visit to Pope Hadrian, and again during his coronation as Holy Emperor in 800, Charlemagne specifically requested the hymn *Laudes Regiae* be sung, whose text, like the Emperor's words above, confirmed Michael's place above all other angels.⁶⁹ Like the Lombard Dukes and Constantine, Charlemagne adopted images of Michael for battle standards and coins, with the inscription "Patron and Prince of the Empire of the Gauls."⁷⁰ All of these decisions helped make St. Michael synonymous with the Carolingian Empire.

As St. Michael became assimilated into Franco-Flemish culture, various shrines were constructed throughout the region. Construction on the most prominent of all these began in Normandy during the ninth century. It became known throughout Europe as Mont-Saint-Michel, the fortress abbey. The history of Mont-Saint-Michel, including its imperial connections and usefulness in times of war, will be explored in the following chapter. I focus especially on the abbey's fame during the Hundred Years War, and how it inspired knightly orders to adopt St. Michael as the heavenly standard of chivalry.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

Chapter Three: *L'homme armé and Wartime Interpretations of the Archangel*

The prolonged Hundred Years War between France and England ended in 1453; yet papal pressure mounted almost immediately, impelling Christians to join in far-off military campaigns against the Turkish people. Knightly orders, led by nobles, fought on behalf of the European people at home and abroad. The romantic ideology of chivalry spurred them forward and provided hope that one day their names would join the annals of legendary heroes.

The cultural figure of “the Armed Man” gained prominence during this period, a fact that symbolizes Christianity’s increasing connection with both warfare and newly empowered, imperial nobility. Disregarding the power barons and lesser nobles once wielded over them, this new breed of kings and lords sought absolute sovereignty over a suddenly centralized government.⁷¹ Musically, the Armed Man manifested in the *L'homme armé* tune, which became culturally ubiquitous in the region as composer after composer adapted it for polyphonic masses. In calling attention to the armed man, who should be feared, *L'homme armé* popularized militant images and praised historic and mythical warrior figures. Various personalities that became associated with the Armed Man include Christ, Hercules, and Charlemagne.

⁷¹ D’Arcy Jonathan Dacre Boulton, *The Knights of the Crown: The Monarchical Orders of Knighthood in Later Medieval Europe, 1325-1520* (Dover: The Boydell Press, 1987), 1-5. As the later middle ages progressed, barons found themselves transformed more and more into servants dependent upon the highest-ranking nobility of the region. This created a bureaucratic system of loyalty, which led to many barons pledging one or more knightly orders.

Among the fifteenth-century *L'homme armé* masses stands Johannes Regis's *Missa L'homme armé*, which distinctively combines Michaeline tropes with a *L'homme armé cantus firmus* to create a striking portrayal of Michael's final battle with the dragon as found in the book of Revelation. Regis's *Missa L'homme armé* responds to both the militant culture of the fifteenth century and the traditions of the Cult of Saint Michael, musically portraying Michael in his roles of intercessor and warrior. This effect is achieved through several layers of interconnected symbols that begin with the mass's text: the Dragon, for example, serves as a dual metaphor for Satan and the English; Michael serves as the protector of souls, understood as both the unspecified people who witness the end of time and the French fighting the Hundred Years War.

I demonstrate this argument first by thoroughly exploring relationships between the image of Michael and culturally significant knightly orders, figures of nobility, and political events. Next, I connect Regis's *Missa L'homme armé* to this cultural circle through my examination of historical context, geographical considerations, and common musical practices found among contemporaneous Franco-Flemish composers. Finally, my analysis reveals that Regis emphasized regionally important aspects of St. Michael's character, namely his potency as a military saint and his ability to protect God's chosen people from their enemies.

The Resurgence of Michael

In the history of western Christendom, Michael the Archangel and his Cult regularly gained popularity during times of great conflict.⁷² As Chapter Two demonstrated, this relationship reached back to Constantine's military campaign, which unified the eastern and western halves of the Roman Empire. An endeavor that inspired the construction of the Michaelion, this conflict also represented the first imperial association between enemies of the state and Michael's perpetual nemesis, the satanic dragon. Indeed, the major Michaeline shrines of continental Europe likewise correlated with battle: Mount Gargano's feast day detailed the story of Michael raining lightning down upon Greek pagans, while Mont-Saint-Michel's history detailed the Dukes of Lombardy's struggle for survival against Viking raids.⁷³

Michael's influence extended beyond specific locations and shrines. The Archangel increasingly appealed to the broader population of western Crusaders during the eleventh century. Like the imperial armies of Constantine and Charlemagne before them, traveling "pilgrims" like the German imperial forces often adopted Michaeline images for their standards and shields.⁷⁴ To historian Daniel Callahan, this represents a "development of sacred militancy," which, throughout the middle ages, remained "unquestionably one of the principal reasons for the popularity

⁷² This phenomenon starkly contrasts with the situation in the Eastern Empire, where Michael's image remained that of a healer, as seen in his major shrines such as those at Colossae. While some Celtic Michaeline sites continued to perceive the Archangel as a primarily medicinal saint, this cannot be considered the norm, as evidenced by Michael's various associations with warfare. See Johnson, *Saint Michael the Archangel*, passim.

⁷³ See Chapter Two.

⁷⁴ Carl Erdmann, *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade*, trans. M. Baldwin and W. Goffart (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 20-21.

of the saint,” and resulted in the Archangel’s emergence as a symbol of the masculine in the early middle ages.⁷⁵ Callahan’s interpretation agrees with models of the Archangel as militant, and establishes his transcontinental importance by the turn of the eleventh century. As the Archangel reemerged in popular consciousness at the time of the Crusades, so too did he permeate the wartime culture of the fifteenth-century.

Mont-Saint-Michel provided a principal rallying point through which the French reclaimed the province of Normandy in 1440. Many scholars view this battle as the war’s primary turning point, after which the French army gained the momentum necessary to finally expel the British.⁷⁶ These combats at the Abbey also prompted the first battlefield sightings of the Archangel in many years. According to witnesses, Michael consistently fought against the English and protected his beloved shrine from harm. The last few decades of the war resulted in several other spectacular victories on part of the French. Operating under the influence of St. Michael in 1429, Joan of Arc famously commanded the French at one of these battles, the siege of Orléans. According to testimony obtained at her fourth public examination, the Archangel, surrounded by the other angels of heaven, was the first of several heavenly messengers from whom Joan “received comfort.”⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Daniel F. Callahan, “The Cult of St. Michael the Archangel and the Terrors of the Year 1000,” in *The Apocalyptic Year 1000: Religious Expectation and Social Change 950-1050*, ed. Richard Allen Landes, Andrew Colin Gow, and David C. Van Meter (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 181-182.

⁷⁶ “Hundred Years War,” *A Dictionary of World History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), *Oxford Reference Online*.

⁷⁷ Virginia Frohlick, *St. Joan of Arc Center*, <http://www.stjoan-center.com/>. Accessed 16 April 2008.

Conflicts such as these occurred approximately 10-15 years before Regis's mass appeared in Cambrian record books.⁷⁸ In the decades preceding these victories, the region had endured long periods of English occupation and rule. Significantly, St. Michael's principal shrine in the region, Mont-Saint-Michel, had never suffered defeat, despite multiple long sieges.⁷⁹ During the course of the war, it had ceased to function merely as a chapel in the eyes of the people; after various alterations and fortifications, the abbey had transformed into a fortress.

The war and especially the victorious defenses of Mont-Saint Michel reestablished long-standing regional connections with the Archangel as a new wave of devotion identified Michael as the best hope against invading English forces. Knightly orders and kings alike began to proclaim the Archangel as patron of individuals, groups, and Flemish kingdoms.

Late-fifteenth-century culture deemed Michael as protector, not just of God's people, but also quite specifically of the Franco-Flemish people. In fact, as the century continued, St. Michael's image on the continent became imbued with increasingly French characteristics, transforming him into what historian Colette Beaune calls "the Anti-English Saint."⁸⁰ During the Hundred Years War, St. Michael's association with the French region became cemented through contrasts with the English's respective principal military patron, St. George. St. George's red

⁷⁸ David Fallows, "The Life of Johannes Regis, ca. 1425-1496," *Revue Belge de Musicologie* 43 (1989): 146-147.

⁷⁹ Raymond Reagan Butler, *Is Paris Lost?: The English Occupation, 1422-1436* (Staplehurst, U.K.: Spellmount Ltd, 2003), 4.

⁸⁰ The remainder of this section relies on Collette Beaune, *The Birth of an Ideology* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: The University of California Press, 1991), 164-165.

colors, in particular, came to represent “the enemy” on Franco-Flemish soil. The color implied a connection to fire, which the French used to connect the English to dragons. Tradition thus caused the French to associate their enemies with the enemies of St. Michael, and the English became synonymous with the satanic dragon from Revelation. Further, Franco-Flemish culture linked dragons with the sea. When the great English ships (with their red crosses) attacked from the water, this once more brought them close to the idea of the apocalyptic dragon; the French thus called upon St. Michael to lend his assistance.

As the symbols of the English army and its association with evil became ingrained in the mental psyche of Frenchmen, St. Michael took on attributes comparable to St. George and eventually replaced his Cult in the Franco-Flemish region. The color white assumed a new nationalistic meaning for the Archangel’s symbology. During the fifteenth century the popularity of St. George also declined in the Franco-Flemish region. While no pre-existing sites or orders were destroyed, not a single new dedication to George occurred in during the fifteenth century.

L’homme armé

From the time of its appearance to the end of the fifteenth century, an impressive twenty-two masses would be composed with the *L’homme armé* melody as a *cantus firmus*.⁸¹ The sheer number of masses based on a single tune, most from

⁸¹ Ibid.

Burgundian or French court composers,⁸² shows the *cantus*'s importance in the Franco-Flemish lands. As a musical phenomenon, *L'homme armé* masses represent the combination of religion and warfare that occurred in fifteenth-century Burgundian and French courts, a striking phenomenon when considered in light of evidence connecting the tune's origin with knightly orders, the Hundred Years War, and the Papacy's desire to crusade against the Turks. The context of the song's lyrics reflects this environment of warfare, and therefore relates directly to areas understood as under St. Michael's jurisdiction.

According to modern scholars, *L'homme armé* first appears around the year 1450,⁸³ although the concept of the Armed Man goes back further, into the final and most brutal phases of the Hundred Years War; Paula Higgins details streets, taverns, shops, and games with a similar or identical name existing in 1431 or before.⁸⁴ In 1925 Dragan Plamenac discovered the only existing copy of the full melody and lyrics. The manuscript, found in Naples, contains six anonymous polyphonic masses compiled as a gift for Beatrice of Aragon, and originally written, apparently, for Charles the Bold of the court of Burgundy.⁸⁵ Uniquely, each mass in this series is based upon a fragment of the *L'homme armé* tune, with the sixth mass alone stating the entire melody. Other masses in the *L'homme armé* polyphonic tradition would

⁸² Lewis Lockwood, "Aspects of the '*L'homme armé*' Tradition," *Proceedings of the Royal Music Association* 100 (1973-1974): 103.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 105.

⁸⁴ As cited in Plainchart, "*L'homme armé*," 310.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 306-307. The manuscript is stored at the Naples Biblioteca Nazionale. The *L'homme armé* appears on MS VI E 40, fol. 62v. The epigraph declares that Charles (of Burgundy) "used to enjoy them" (the masses).

continue this tradition of fragmentation, focusing on one or two phrases of the *cantus firmus* for the majority of the Mass.

The task of dating most of the Franco-Flemish *L'homme armé* masses remains one of educated guessing. Lewis Lockwood, after analyzing the structural aspects of several of these works, proposed a system of “dual-layer” continuity, wherein composers who utilized similar compositional techniques are grouped together in one of two waves of the *L'homme armé* tradition. The first group consists of Dufay and Ockeghem, whose masses appear to have been completed before 1460. The second group includes Caron, Regis, Faugues, and possibly Busnois.⁸⁶ The assignment of Busnois to this second category clashes with the findings of other scholars, such as Richard Taruskin, who considers Busnois's *L'homme armé* among the very first masses in the tradition.⁸⁷

Regardless of the details of chronology, several stylistic discrepancies exist among the different *L'homme armé* masses. While the tune itself remains true enough to its source to remain recognizable, composers apparently felt a certain amount of freedom in setting it as a *cantus firmus*. For example, some settings, such as that of Busnois, follow the rules of isorhythm very closely, while most Franco-Flemish settings ignore isorhythm altogether. Also, the earliest settings for the

⁸⁶ Lockwood, “Aspects of the ‘*L'homme armé* Tradition,” 108.

⁸⁷ Richard Taruskin, “Antoine Busnoys and the ‘*L'homme armé* Tradition,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 39, no. 2 (1986): 255-293.

melody used modes ending on G, but Regis and others freely changed the mode to a D final.⁸⁸

Another way in which composers differentiated their *L'homme armé* settings involved their style in employing melodic fragmentation. The melody is long, with 31 notes, and revolves around an ABA' structure. Many mass settings base themselves on fragments of the song; in fact, rarely is the full song heard in a liturgical setting. The particular fragment chosen serves as a compositional fulcrum;⁸⁹ in the case of the Anonymous Naples Masses, for example, the fragment of the tune employed determines the words of the mass, the principal intervals heard, and the liturgical lesson invoked.⁹⁰ Focusing on different points of the text or melody allows for different aspects of the Armed Man to receive emphasis as well: at times the fear associated with the Armed Man is the focus, other times it is his breastplate, etc.

The variable application of this *cantus firmus* relates to the large number of characters, sacred and secular, that became associated with it. In particular, the Armed Man was adapted to different musical roles as he came to represent Christ, Hercules, St. Michael, or others. The first two of these personalities descended into Hades, and are subjects of *L'homme armé* masses that apply retrograde treatments that signify this journey into and out of hell. Michael on the other hand did not

⁸⁸ Fallows, "*L'homme armé*." This question of why this is so will be analyzed in the following chapter.

⁸⁹ Paul Walker, "Soggetto," *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy (Accessed 08 March 2008), <http://www.grovemusic.com>.

⁹⁰ Judith Cohen, ed., *Six anonymous L'homme armé Masses in Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, MS VI E 40* (Neuhausen-Stuttgart: American Institute of Musicology, 1981), ix.

(canonically) complete such a journey and thus does not have retrograde applied to his character in Regis's mass. Rather, Regis's *Missa L'homme armé* has historically received attention based on its unique tropes to St. Michael.⁹¹

The functional origin of the *L'homme armé* melody proves a divisive topic among scholars. Historically, a breach exists between those who consider the tune a stand-alone melody that developed as a "folksong" and those who believe that it originated as a polyphonic tenor. The folksong theory has been challenged based on the melody's length. As recorded in the Naples manuscript, the piece runs a total of thirty-one notes, an unusual number when compared to other fifteenth-century melodies (and indeed western melodies as a whole).⁹² This number likely coincides with the number of members in the Order of the Golden Fleece, a theory that will be explored as I detail the tune's connections to knights below. Renaissance composers' understanding of the *L'homme armé* was such that they treated it as a traditional tenor. Anytime that the tune appears in a polyphonic setting, it consistently occupies a lower voice; in no extant polyphonic example is the *L'homme armé* used as an upper melody.⁹³

The *L'homme armé* does exhibit some qualities akin to folk song, a fact that proves problematic to the opposing *cantus firmus* origin theory. Its melody and text prompted Howard Mayer Brown to designate it as a *chanson rustique*, referring to a

⁹¹ Sean Gallagher, "Regis, Johannes [Leroy, Jehan], *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy (Accessed 09 September 2007), <http://www.grovemusic.com>.

⁹² Planchart, "The Origins and Early History," 311.

⁹³ Lockwood, "Aspects of the '*L'homme armé* Tradition,'" 103.

branch of monophonic popular music whose texts reflect everyday life.⁹⁴ The words of the song resonate with daily life of the average wartime citizen and especially the knights, with whom the melody's origin remains connected. Plainly stated, *L'homme armé* appears too pre-planned to fit with folksong; yet too melodious to mesh with what Reinhard Strohm considers "work of art" tenors.⁹⁵ The tune's origin remains a conundrum in light of these two theories.

Lewis Lockwood attempted to split the Gordian knot when he declared that both traditions, a polyphonic *L'homme armé cantus firmus* and a monophonic *L'homme armé* song, could have existed simultaneously without contradicting one another.⁹⁶ Lockwood's theory involves one tradition influencing the creation of the other shortly after an initial inception. Both performance practices importantly employed different performance forces and settings, and therefore did not compromise one another's originality or legitimacy.

Given militancy's popularity in Franco-Flemish culture, this idea proves quite attractive. The Armed Man could exist in the pub as easily as a church. He was an ever-present reality reflecting the threat of warfare. The existence of two performance outlets for this over-reaching figure should seem as normal, representing two manifestations of a single cultural paradigm.⁹⁷ Craig Wright, perhaps realizing

⁹⁴ Howard Mayer Brown, *Music in the French Secular Theater, 1400-1550* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963), 105-13.

⁹⁵ Reinhard Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 130.

⁹⁶ Lockwood, "Aspects of the '*L'homme armé* Tradition,'" 100.

⁹⁷ For more, see explanations of "meme," Chapter Four.

the concept's cultural ubiquity, comments: "not only was the Armed Man melody widely popular, it was equally at home in profane and sacred musical contexts."⁹⁸

As it appears in the Anonymous Naples MS (figure 3-1, table 3-1), the melody and text represent a militant call to arms proclaiming that the Armed Man should be feared. All who hear the call ought to arm themselves with iron breastplates. For some, the hero of text remains ambiguous: Does the Armed man represent an enemy to arm oneself against, or a friend to stand with on the field of battle? The answer lies in an examination of the tune's uses and contemporaneous interpretations. In Regis's environment, the Armed Man representing knightly figures who inspire laymen to arm themselves against the English, and later, the Turks.

⁹⁸ Wright, *The Maze and the Warrior*, 166.

Ex.1

L'hom-me, l'hom-me, l'homme ar - mé, l'homme ar - mé, L'homme ar -
-mé doit on doub - ter, doit on doub - ter. On a fait pat -
- tout cri - et, Que chas - cun se viegne ar - mer, d'un hau - ble -
- gon de fer. L'hom - me l'hom - me l'homme ar -
- mé l'homme ar - mé, l'homme ar - mé doit on doub - ter.

Figure 3-1. The L'homme armé melody⁹⁹

Table 3.1. The L'homme armé text.¹⁰⁰

The armed man, the armed man, should be feared. Everywhere the cry has gone out, Everyone should arm himself With a breastplate of iron. The armed man, the armed man, should be feared.
--

⁹⁹ Fallows, "L'homme armé."

¹⁰⁰ Wright, *The Maze and the Warrior*, 165.

Fifteenth-century military culture was not limited to the existence of knightly orders and *L'homme armé* masses. Charles VII enacted far-reaching military reforms throughout the course of the Hundred Years War, which resulted in a massive centralization of government. Beginning in the 1440s royal decrees instituted a nationalized draft that placed the levying of troops under complete control of the crown; formerly, local lords had held the responsibility of gathering troops.¹⁰¹ In 1445, *companies d'ordonnances* were formed and assigned as garrisons to the cities of France, with the citizens forced to house soldiers. Finally, in each town a government-regulated militia was formed, offering tax relief and other benefits to men who enlisted. Significantly, military historian Charles Oman describes how each member of such a militia would have had to provide his own iron breastplate, exactly like the one mentioned in *L'homme armé*.¹⁰²

Who is the Armed Man? Several scholars have weighed in on the issue, but Craig Wright offers a useful beginning point when he concludes that the Armed Man represents more than one warrior.¹⁰³ These example characters, regardless of origin, symbolize Christian victory over evil. Beyond this central fact, the identity seemed open for the composer's interpretation.

Who is the enemy against whom the Armed Man fights? The issue again depends on context, but in Franco-Flemish culture it appears that a few culturally significant villains stood out, either explicitly or implicitly. As detailed above, St.

¹⁰¹ Lockwood, "Aspects," 105. Information in the remainder of this paragraph comes from this citation.

¹⁰² Charles Oman, *A History of the Art of War in the Middle Ages*, vol. 2 (New York: B. Franklin, 1959), 125.

¹⁰³ Wright, *The Maze and the Warrior*, 168.

Michael's dragon symbolized the English. Therefore, reference to the satanic dragon in Regis's *Missa L'homme armé* represented battles from the Hundred Years War. Some *L'homme armé* pieces also directly allude to Crusades against "the Turk," such as *Il sera par vous – L'homme armé* (probably written by Dufay during his time at the Burgundian court).¹⁰⁴

As mentioned above, the *L'homme armé* is thought to have a Burgundian origin. Evidence toward this theory comes from an epigraph on the anonymous Naples manuscript, which says that the six masses "used to be enjoyed by Charles [the Bold]." This epigraph coincides with an order that commissioned six masses from Dufay for daily polyphonic rituals, which makes it seem that the Naples masses came from the pen of one of the most well-known Franco-Flemish composers.

Knights Orders and Confraternities

Knights orders and their closely related confraternities developed around ideas of religious militancy that began with the Crusades. Like St. Michael's Cult, these groups saw a renewed importance in the fifteenth century. Indeed, this simultaneity was no coincidence. These groups commonly enjoyed noble patronage, and more prominent orders such as the Order of the Golden Fleece and the Order of Our Lady employed year-round musicians, such as the Order of the Golden Fleece and the Order of Our Lady.¹⁰⁵ Through these societies arose opportunities for the

¹⁰⁴ Planchart, "The Origins and Early History," 318.

¹⁰⁵ Barbara Haggh, "Singers and Scribes in the Secular Churches of Brussels," In *Music and Musicians in Renaissance Cities and Towns*, ed. Fiona Kisby (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 152.

creation of votive compositions that enhanced the celebration of masses, office hours, and personalized requiems. Chivalric ideals dating back to the twelfth century provided models for both the orders' systems of centralized rule and their keenness for music. Further, these organizations set precedents important to understanding the context of medieval attitudes toward religious militancy.

The Cult of St. Michael and chivalry converged in northern France during the later middle ages, sharing origins that arose from a combination of history and legend. In twelfth-century northern France, the nobility's interests in courtly romance breathed life into the concepts of chivalry advocated by literature.¹⁰⁶ Imaginative romances became the basis for real chivalric codes, which aimed to create knights who embodied the virtues common to heroes in the stories. These stories featured mythic figures, including Charlemagne, who served as models for knightly behavior. In considering the popularity of these stories, Boulton proclaims, "it is almost impossible to overestimate the influence of these works on the chivalrous culture of the later medieval court," and that the cultural omnipresence "is not at all surprising."¹⁰⁷

A strong connection between knights and religious concerns developed during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in response to prominent religious thinkers' demands that knights add Godly service to their duties. This trend perhaps began with Bernard of Clairvaux (d. 1153), who around the time of the Third Crusade became concerned about horrific stories regarding knights. Arguing that knights

¹⁰⁶ Boulton, *The Knights of the Crown*, 5.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 6.

ought to enact the Crusade through moral and less destructive means, he motivated the establishment of the Crusading Order of the Templars.¹⁰⁸ Descended from a knight, Bernard possessed a background sympathetic to the knightly style of life.¹⁰⁹

Bernard's writings described heavenly chivalry in a way that justified knights in performing wartime duties without fear of judgment from God. *In Praise of the New Knighthood*, a treatise written during the early twelfth century, describes many of the abbot's tenets for knights, ranging from garb to living quarters.¹¹⁰ He most seriously considers, however, the question of how a knight may kill an enemy without dooming the enemy and simultaneously committing the sin of murder. Calling upon writers from both the Old and New Testaments, Bernard concludes that the knights fight not against the human, but against sin:

Knights may fight the battle of their lord, fearing neither sin if they smite the enemy, nor danger at their own death; since to inflict death or to die for Christ is no sin, but rather, an abundant claim to glory. In the first case one gains for Christ, and in the second one gains Christ himself. The Lord freely accepts the death of the foe who has offended him, and yet more freely gives himself to the consolation of his fallen knight.

By the late middle ages, those who fought against fellow Christians, such as the French against the English, would not see themselves as man killers, but as killers of evil.

John of Salisbury concurred, with Bernard's writings, and in 1150 wrote a full manifesto for the Christ-knight. On top of the normal chivalric ideals of courage,

¹⁰⁸ Constance Brittain Bouchard, *Strong of Body, Brave and Noble: Chivalry and Society in Medieval France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press), 84.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 170.

¹¹⁰ This paragraph draws on Bernard Clairvaux, *In Praise of the New Knighthood*, trans Conrad Greenia, in *Bernard of Clairvaux: Treatises III* (Kalamazoo, Mich: Cistercian Publications, 1977), 127-145.

military prowess, and mannerly behavior, the knight's new central tenets included defending the church, assailing infidelity, venerating the priesthood, protecting the poor, and exhibiting willingness to sacrifice his life for another. Although knights remained strictly subject to the secular nobility, the theoretical aspects of these religious-chivalric codes became inseparable from the knightly ideal by 1250, creating a new ideology regarded as "monastic chivalry."¹¹¹

As the nature of northern French romance stories continued to change over the middle ages; so too did monastic chivalry, assuming a novel social dimension. Serving in military campaigns and providing protection to a lord were the first, most basic, and indeed most important knightly oaths to appear within the orders. Courtliness, frankness, and willingness to serve a lady now stood among the noblest acts portrayed in the romances.¹¹² In turn, refined manners could now demonstrate a knight's honor as easily as his battle prowess. Several popular Michaeline stories collected during this time reflect a similar trend. This is only fitting, since Michael continued to embody courtly values while maintaining his divinity: His ability to save a pregnant woman from rising tides and a lighting storm rests alongside tales of fire and lightning raining down on sinners.

The infusion of militancy with religious symbolism that occurred here gave rise to the organization of knightly orders and confraternities in fifteenth-century Franco-Flemish culture. The growing concern among knights for spiritual wellbeing in particular led to the addition of several types of auxiliary staff. These new

¹¹¹ Boulton, *The Knights of the Crown*, 8.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 6.

positions addressed not military campaigns, but the afterlife destination of both the living and departed. Such participants included chaplains, hospital staff, as well as other “hirelings” who did not join the ranks of the order but served at their behest.¹¹³ With this system of religious support came the need for the standard music that accompanied the rituals.

The practice of dedicating orders to specific saints speaks to the development of monastic concerns within the chivalric system described above. Notions of votive piety had long been present in the medieval community. The onset of the fifteenth century brought with it the concept of a military order operating under the patronage of a specific holy figure; while not new, the idea certainly enjoyed a newfound popularity in the Franco-Flemish lands. Continuing traditions of the militant, from the recently ended Hundred Years War back to the Crusades, virtually every Franco-Flemish order based their ceremonies on the legends of its respective saint.

Modern scholars have noticed a pattern regulating the types of saints that knights chose as objects of devotion. The orders tended to select people of a military calling, such as St. George of Lydda (at this time primarily in England), St. Maurice of the Theban Legion, and St. Michael, general of the heavenly armies and the prototype for earthly chivalry. Boulton refers to this phenomenon as the “cult of heroism,” describing it as a subculture of saints and heroes whose candidates exhibited certain parameters worthy of the devotion of soldiers.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ Ibid., 18.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 12.

Like these military saints, the Armed Man represented for the Franco-Flemish an assault against God's enemies. Thus, the *L'homme armé* melody and the cult of heroism intertwined in an environment that created a context leaning toward such a union. Two knightly orders, the Order of the Golden Fleece and the Order of Saint Michael, particularly provided several opportunities for performances of masses based on the *L'homme armé*, a correspondence stemming from their attention to the cult of heroism and their devotion to votive musical ritual.

The Order of the Golden Fleece

During the latter period of the Hundred Years War, the Dukes of Valois (mentioned earlier) presided over what would become the most prominent group of knights in western Europe, the Order of the Golden Fleece. Founded in 1430 by Duke Phillip the Good, the order's central purpose was to address the perceived need for a neo-Arthurian force among the nobility. Phillip answered the call by creating what would become one of the most highly regulated groups of its kind. Each member carried around a hard copy of the group's statutes, reminding himself of his vow to remain true to his chivalric virtue.¹¹⁵ The knights answered directly to the headmaster, Phillip the Good, then later his successors. In theory these men served at behest of the King of France, but in reality Duke Phillip maintained a good amount of independence from the French monarchy. As he consolidated his powers, he amassed enough wealth and authority to earn the nickname "The Grand Duke of the West."¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 357-358.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 360.

The Order of the Golden Fleece formally dedicated itself to St. Andrew the Apostle. Despite this dedication, the group still held clear connections with the *L'homme armé* tune and the Cult of St. Michael, which I, in turn, use to suggest an association between the Order and Regis's *Missa L'homme armé*. Further, the obvious parallels among this order, *L'homme armé*, and St. Michael, allow for new theories about the musical practices of the Order.

The first and most well known connection between the Order of the Golden Fleece group and the *L'homme armé* melody has been postulated in the work of musicologist Alejandro Planchart. At the center of his argument lies the correlation between the number of notes in the melody and the number of members in the order. While the order originally contained twenty-five members, after the birth of Charles the Bold, the number of Golden Fleece knights suddenly increased to thirty-one. This decision primarily aimed to include the newborn Charles among the ranks, and to accommodate five other influential noblemen. Agreement between the number thirty-one and the number of notes in the *L'homme armé* melody gives the tune a newfound significance, as its length remains an oddity among other *cantus firmi* or folk songs. Planchart concludes, "It should not be surprising that the symbolism of the number 31 would be far more prevalent in the works written for the order under Charles the Bold."¹¹⁷

Additional evidence further supports the links between Charles and *L'homme armé*: The earliest recorded instances of the song, including the mass by Busnois,

¹¹⁷ A. E. Planchart, "The Origins and Early History," 313.

were produced under Charles the Bold.¹¹⁸ The anonymous Naples masses, of course, bear witness to the noble's penchant for the tune. As detailed above, the manuscript's inscription names Charles as its primary beneficiary.

The Order would have been interested in a work specifically dedicated to St. Michael for at least two reasons. First, the Archangel's unique position among saints made him a viable candidate for the cult of heroism. Stories, liturgy, and scripture portrayed him as the supreme chivalric standard. Furthermore, Michael's feast days were universally observed in western Europe during the fifteenth century, making it likely that a group sensitive to liturgical events would prepare a feast ceremony for the Archangel. When taking into account the special attention knights owed toward these feasts of heavenly victories, such as Mount Gargano (8 May), and the angelic general himself (29 September), the Order's devotion to Michael seems additionally assured.

Scholarship shows that the Golden Fleece employed special music on votive and devotional occasions, such as St. Andrew's day and the Mass for the Holy Ghost. Here the Order's own records describe the use of "discant" for "solemn events."¹¹⁹ An entire office dedicated to Mary also survives from the Order's archives, further witnessing the group's dedication to several orthodox religious figures besides their patron saint.¹²⁰ *Missa L'homme armé* would easily fill the musical needs for one of Michael's feast days. In addition, however, it utilized a *cantus firmus* that the Order possibly helped to form and popularize with its expansion to thirty-one members.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Haggh, "The Archives of the Golden Fleece and Music," 6.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 17.

Second, the Order's headmaster, Phillip the Good, adopted Charlemagne, one of the historical figureheads in the Michaeline Cult, as a role model. His decision to form a band of knights drew in part on the legends of Charlemagne,¹²¹ in which many chivalric romances found inspiration. The legendary king, as Chapter Two details, had helped establish the Archangel's place as one of only a few orthodox angels, and brandished his image as an imperial Frankish symbol. Like Charlemagne, Phillip the Good's actions reflected themes of warfare and imperialism; the Order of the Golden Fleece would later become involved in the Hundred Years War and a newly proposed Crusade against the Turkish people. Although on a decidedly smaller scale than Charlemagne, Phillip also showed leanings toward centralized government; barons and noblemen pledged loyalty to him through the statutes of knighthood.

The Order of St. Michael

In 1469 France's Louis XI, a self-proclaimed recipient of at least three miracles attributable to the Archangel,¹²² formed the Order of St. Michael. The order was obviously formed with Duke Phillip's rival Golden Fleece in mind; the statutes of the two are virtually identical and differ only on matters of iconography, color choice, and saint selection.¹²³ As the two groups followed virtually the same guidelines of worship, the Order of St. Michael possessed the same musical needs as its Burgundian counterpart. St. Michael's Order variously interacted with and supported

¹²¹ Boulton, *The Knights of the Crown*, 12.

¹²² Beaune, *The Birth of an Ideology*, ??.

¹²³ Haggh, "The Archives of the Order of the Golden Fleece and Music," 37.

the regional Cult of St. Michael. Regis's composition *Missa L'homme armé* (1462) would have clearly fulfilled the Order's musical needs.

The Order of St. Michael based all of its customs on Michaeline tradition, beginning with its annual meeting date. According to its statutes, every year on 29 September the knights gathered to hold an official chapter meeting at the Archangel's principal regional shrine, Mont-Saint-Michel.¹²⁴ The choice of this date proves especially important because it reveals an obvious connection between the knights and Michaeline symbology, and further provides insight into possible intersections between the Order's liturgy and the Regis mass.

The Michaeline chants utilized in Regis's *Missa L'homme armé* all derive from chants used for St. Michael's feast and the feast of Mount Gargano.¹²⁵ While one cannot definitely conclude from this evidence that the mass exists due to the commission of the Order of St. Michael, the work perfectly fills the group's musical requirements for its annual Michaeline festivals. Pamela Starr agreed, and considered the work easily appropriate for an order dedicated to the Archangel.¹²⁶

A survey of votive music employed for the patron saints of other orders strengthens the connection between Regis's *L'homme armé* Mass and the Order of Saint Michael. The Guild of Our Lady at Bergen of Zoom instituted a daily polyphonic service for Mary in the fifteenth century.¹²⁷ A similar Marian guild at 's-

¹²⁴ Boulton, *The Knights of the Crown*, 432.

¹²⁵ *Antiphonale Monasticum* (Paris: Desclée, 1934), 1055-1064.

¹²⁶ Pamela Starr, "Southern Exposure: Roman Light on Johannes Regis," *Revue Belge de Musicologie* 49 (1995): 36

¹²⁷ Rob C. Wegman, "Music and Musicians at the Guild of Our Lady in Bergen op Zoom, c. 1470-1510," *Early Music History* 9 (1990): 11-12.

Hertogenbosch performed sixty-nine polyphonic masses for the Virgin Mary annually.¹²⁸ Further, prominent composers such as Dufay, Busnois, and Ockeghem were frequently commissioned to provide such music. Importantly, the repeating occurrence of polyphony for special occasions, and the penchant for groups to employ Franco-Flemish musicians to compose it are striking phenomena. As a cohort of Dufay, and one recognized by Tinctoris as “one of the finest composers,” Regis must have served as composer for such commissions.

Mont-Saint-Michel as a place of legend also lends credence to the *mythos* surrounding the Order of St. Michael, *Missa L’homme armé*, and their interrelationship. As described above, Mont-Saint-Michel became known as the fortress-abbey during the Hundred Years War, having remained unconquered despite multiple English sieges. Its fortitude encouraged a prevailing belief that only a fortress could properly house the saint who helped to defeat God’s enemies throughout history. Louis XI clearly had idea image in mind when he chose to gather his order at Mont-Saint-Michel for its annual meeting (see below).

Would the music of Regis’s mass support the themes of militancy inherent in this fortress-abbey setting and the Michaeline Cult? The answer is an overwhelming yes. Voices depicting the Archangel’s defeat of the Dragon would echo off the monastery walls as knights stood beneath Michaeline relics, such as Aubert’s forcefully indented skull, magical swords, and flame-seared shields; such objects attested to St. Michael’s power in the physical world. Community memory of the English’s recent expulsion would have remained strong at this time, and surely

¹²⁸ Ibid., 18.

thought of the English “Dragons” would form concretely in French minds when looking across the water that recently delivered waves of British attack.

The central ceremony of this order is built around the “Michael vs. Dragon” scenario as occurs in *Missa L’homme armé*, making it an appropriate choice befitting the Order’s specific symbology. The induction ceremony specifically demonstrates both the newfound fifteenth-century perception of Mont-Saint-Michel as an impenetrable fortress and the older images of St. Michael as the premier knight. When sworn into the order, the new member, repeating after the sovereign, would say:

...and to the honor and reverence of Saint Michael the first knight, who in God’s quarrel battled against the ancient Enemy of the human race, and cast him out of heaven, and who has always guarded his place, and preserved and defended his oratory, called Mont-Saint-Michel, without ever suffering it to be taken, subjected, or placed in the hands of the ancient enemies of our realm...¹²⁹

The shared mythos between the mass, feast days, Mont-Saint-Michel, and this initiation ceremony worked together to create a homogenous environment exuding a coherent and consistent Michaeline image. This general perception of the Archangel as a knightly defender of Christianity coincides with contemporaneous French culture and the militant atmosphere inherent in the post-Hundred Years War environment. Further, the intersection between Michael and his expressions—musical, military, and liturgical—reflects the saint’s own traditional roles reborn into the fifteenth-century Franco-Flemish culture.

¹²⁹ Boulton, *The Knights of the Crown*, 440.

The Sword Ceremony

A popular fifteenth-century liturgy serves as a thread uniting the Order of the Golden Fleece, the Order of St. Michael, their polyphonic traditions, the *L'homme armé* melody, and the Michaeline Cult. Known as the “sword ceremony,” this term refers to both masses and office hours that occurred in conjunction with the brandishing of swords. Often additional military items would be included, such as armor (breastplates), maces, or gauntlets placed in ritualistic patterns. Humanist author Giovanni Rucellai vividly recounted the ceremony in his writing *Zibaldone quaresimale* (1457), where he describes the sword-holder “with the bared sword in hand” as if defending “the Christian faith against whoever would contradict it.”¹³⁰ This description echoes the idea of the Armed Man.

Because of the sword’s usage in this setting, scholars such as Flynn Warmington and Barbara Haggh concluded that sword ceremonies provided one of the most likely contexts in which *L'homme armé* masses might be performed.¹³¹ The imagery involved closely parallels the message of the *L'homme armé* text; both broadcast a defender of Christianity arming himself in order to intimidate heretics. Both the ceremony and Regis’s mass echo the chivalric goals of the knightly orders, which, as explained above, had focused in the fifteenth century on military defense of the Church. In fact, after it gained imperial significance via association with the Holy

¹³⁰ Alessandro Perosa, ed., *Giovanni Rucellai ed il suo Zibaldone*, vol. 2, *A Florentine Patrician and His Palace: Studies by Alessandro Perosa, Brenda Preyer, Piero Sanpaolesi, and Roberto Salvani* (London: The Warburg Institute, 1960-81), 103-104.

¹³¹ See Haggh, “The Archives of the Golden Fleece and Music,”; Flynn Warmington, “The Ceremony of the Armed Man: The Sword, the Altar, and the *L'homme armé* Mass,” in *Antoine Busnoys: Method, Meaning, and Context in Late Medieval Music*, ed. Paula Higgins, 89-130 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

Emperor and popes, the sword ceremony became ingrained in the lives of the leadership of the two orders discussed here. The sword ceremony was employed widely in settings of sacred or secular powers from a small local order to universal ruler.

The medieval imagination, Warmington explains, traced the origins of the earliest sword ceremonies to Charlemagne, who supposedly passed the rite down to the abbeys he founded.¹³² All of Western Europe, not just the Franco-Flemish region, derived principles of leadership from the idea of Charlemagne and the romances detailing his exploits. Charlemagne provided a model for noble leadership in the fifteenth century, just as St. Michael provided a model for sacred chivalry. The sword ceremony likewise connected to contemporaneous Holy Roman Emperors, mostly through these legends of Charlemagne passing on the rite. Belief in the ceremony's Carolingian origin continued throughout late medieval and Renaissance western Christendom, with abbeys and confraternities petitioning monarchs and sovereigns for permission to perform sword ceremonies.

The Holy Roman Emperor's role during Regis's time included service as a soldier-deacon in the most prestigious sword ceremony of all, which occurred annually at the Christmas Papal Mass. The Emperor simply held the sword and read the gospel. However, since the only permissible occasion for non-clergy to read scripture involved the Holy Roman Emperor at this ceremony, the event was

¹³² Warmington, "The Ceremony of the Armed Man," 95. Although this origin story is important in revealing the cult of imperialism of the period, it cannot be regarded as fact. Institutions such as this often claimed to have Charlemagne as their founder, and at any rate, the actual founding of the abbey was within one month of the ruler's death.

particularly significant for a layman, even the Emperor.¹³³ This Christmas ceremony exuded an air of militancy, as described in encyclopaedist Moroni's eyewitness account of the event from 1488. According to Moroni, the deacon closed the ceremony with three vertical strokes to the ground, after which he drew the blade across his left sleeve to symbolize the wiping off of blood.¹³⁴

A series of fifteenth-century popes, beginning with Martin V (papacy 1417-31), used the sword ceremony to compel the participation of lower-level nobles in their wartime policies. Special swords and caps for use in the sword ceremony were annually "awarded" to select nobles. In turn the nobles volunteered, at least in spirit, to assist with the Pope's military agendas. The swords were silver, with velvet sheaths, while the caps were imbued with a Holy Spirit dove meant to protect the wearer and help him use his sword correctly.¹³⁵ Several of these gifts were given to gather support for a new Crusade against the Turks, which the Papacy began planning after the 1453 Fall of Constantinople.

Two noblemen intimately connected with Michaeline Orders received swords in ceremonies such as these. Philip the Good received the sword in a sword ritual during 1460 or 1461 specifically for his willingness to launch a crusade. Likewise, Louis XI, founder of the Order of St. Michael, obtained a papal sword in 1462.¹³⁶ These connections advance my argument in several respects. As has been shown, the Franco-Flemish nobility utilized music for important occasions and often employed

¹³³ Ibid., 97.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 100.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 109.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 111. Indeed, Philip, and presumably the Order of the Fleece, was the only dedicated support Pius II received on crusade.

trained composers to produce polyphony for “solemn” ceremonies. Also, as knightly commanders Louis and Phillip interacted with the “cult of heroism.”¹³⁷ These ideas are reinforced by the participation of these nobles in the Papal sword ceremony. Since the ceremony by definition played upon images of the Armed Man, it would have served as a perfect and specific occasion to sing a mass incorporating both the *L’homme armé* melody and St. Michael.

Notably, Regis’s *Missa L’homme armé* coincides with the time period in which Phillip the Good and Louis IX received their papal gifts. The Mass first appears in the Cambrai record books in 1462,¹³⁸ while the two noblemen received the swords in 1461 and 1462, respectively. Thus, chronological, geographic, and theme, the pieces all compellingly point to one of these ceremonies.

My research further confirms that the sword ceremony included events beyond the scope of Papal Christmas masses and ceremonies for the nobility. While these occasions presented the most visible and obvious reasons for requesting the *L’homme armé* mass, the ceremony could also be enacted throughout the year once the pope or Emperor had granted his permission for its performance. The only requirement was that the chapter sovereign or head abbot felt the need to increase the *gravitas* on a particular day.

Therefore, we should expect the use of Regis’s *Missa L’homme armé* to surpass merely a few dates in the liturgical calendar, let alone a single ceremony in history. Rather, for many nobles the piece and the ceremony must have served on

¹³⁷ Boulton, *The Knights of the Crown*,

¹³⁸ Fallows, “The Life of Johannes Regis, ca 1425-1496,” 146.

multiple occasions, particularly for Louis XI, who celebrated the Archangel's feast days yearly, in addition to participating in the sword ceremony. Thus, when Louis founded the Order of St. Michael in 1469, he very possibly pre-equipped the Order with the appropriate pre-existing music of Regis.

Composers and Votive Orders: Writ Large

Although hard evidence concerning Johannes Regis's biography does not connect him to any knightly order or confraternity, I believe such an association must have existed. In part, his culturally conscious, Michaeline-devoted *Missa L'homme armé* points to such an affiliation. First, as established above, the interlocking militant themes of St. Michael that run throughout the piece resonate with the symbology of surrounding knightly orders. Further, the experiential and compositional involvement of his near contemporaries with orders suggests that Regis interacted with orders as well. Below are several examples of pieces written specifically for the purpose of votive devotion by Franco-Flemish musicians.

For example, Anthony Busnois's *Anthoni usque limini*, according to Rob Wegman, likely served as a devotional piece for the Order of Saint-Antoine-en-Barbefosse.¹³⁹ Just as Regis incorporated Michaeline imagery and music, Busnois reflected St. Anthony's character in his textual focus on healing and purgatory, and the musical inclusion of "St. Anthony's bell." The work possibly served as more than a commission for the troubled Busnois. Wegman describes how the Christian's formation of a personal bond with a saintly figure served as an important component

¹³⁹ This paragraph relies on Rob Wegman, "For Whom the Bell Tolls," 135.

in penance. As one who committed acts of sin in his youth (e.g. attacking a priest), Busnois's devotion to St. Anthony, patron of penitence and indulgences, makes sense in this light. Indeed, the composer demonstrated his commitment to visit Anthonine shrines over four hundred kilometers away.¹⁴⁰

The Marian confraternity at Bergen op Zoom employed Obrecht three different times, once as choirmaster (1480-4), and twice as a singer (1488, 1497-8).¹⁴¹ Wegman shows that the area, although small, was enriched via the influx of merchants from all over the Low Countries. This allowed the nobility to seek more qualified musicians, coinciding with the periods of Obrecht's employment. Obrecht is also believed to have written a mass for this confraternity, specifically *Sicut spina rosam*.¹⁴²

Finally, Dufay wrote his Requiem and an Office of the Dead for the Order of the Golden Fleece, both of which were used at least after 1501.¹⁴³

The Devotion of Johannes Regis

The question of whether or not Johannes Regis experienced a personal devotion to Michael the Archangel, although unanswerable without further evidence, remains an essential one. My conclusions draw on the centrality of geographic identity in Regis's milieu. In particular, Regis's relationship to St. Michael would have been shaped by the following factors: the saint in question was a national saint;

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 134.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., "Music and Musicians," 198.

¹⁴² Jennifer Bloxam, "Plainsong and Polyphony for the Blessed Virgin: Notes on Two Masses by Jacob Obrecht," *The Journal of Musicology* 12, no.1 (1994): 62.

¹⁴³ Barbara Haggh, "The Archives of the Order of the Golden Fleece," 2.

Regis found himself close to at least two prominent Michaeline shrines; travel opportunities were readily available to the composer; the writings of Tinctoris reveal Regis's reputation in the Franco-Flemish region. I conclude that Regis equated Michael with his Armed Man, an identification in keeping with regional awareness of current events and the local establishment of the Michaeline Cult.

Given that the Hundred Years War between France and England had only ended in 1453,¹⁴⁴ Regis composed his *Missa L'homme armé* no more than nine years after the conflict subsided. After examining the Archangel's past connection with similar situations we can easily imagine Regis, who grew up during the Hundred Years War, taking interest in prayers to the historically protective St. Michael. Assuming a birth date around 1438, Regis would have been a child near the end of the conflict, a period when France recovered from terrible losses and preparing to permanently expel the British. Normandy was recovered not long before the war's end in 1440. Possibly, Regis's affinity with St. Michael was fueled by France's recent combative victories, which gave the composer good reason to consider the Archangel as an acting protector and warrior on his side.

Regis's home base of Soignies was near Ghent. Here a singer named Regis appears in archival records as occasionally employed at St. Michael's cathedral.¹⁴⁵ Because the composer Regis seems to never abandon his post at Soignies, Fallows doubts that the singer could be the same person and considers him one more "ghost"

¹⁴⁴ "Hundred Years War," *A Dictionary of World History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), *Oxford Reference Online*.

¹⁴⁵ Fallows, "Life of Johannes Regis," 164. The alternate name "Jehan Le Roy" appears in the records described here.

in a long line of people falsely associated with the composer.¹⁴⁶ However, Fallows does not consider the proximity of Ghent and Soignies, which are a mere sixty miles away from each other.

Further, the fifteenth century saw the rise of the peripatetic composer. Compared to the journeys that Busnois made for devotional purposes, Regis's trip to Ghent would present only a very minor challenge. Indeed, we know that musicians achieved much longer trips, as witnessed by the singer Wegman studied, who requested a three-month travel pass to journey to a Viennese shrine.¹⁴⁷ Thus, it is completely possible that Regis visited Ghent and returned home within the span of two or three weeks, an absence that would not have resulted in significant disruptions of his work at home.

Several cultural factors coalesced in the fifteenth century that made the Franco-Flemish region uniquely militant; the Armed Man serves as a representative concept of these times. He made himself known everywhere: pubs, churches, poems, paintings, and in music that fit all of these occasions. Several cultural manifestations of the Armed Man exhibit a Michaeline theme, especially those related to fifteenth and early-sixteenth-century religious visual art.

The consistent themes in these depictions mirror those described above in the imperial coins: clothing St. Michael in armor, granting him weaponry, and setting him against a draconic opponent.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Wegman, "For Whom the Bell Tolls," 134.

¹⁴⁸ Several examples of this artistic trend are located in the appendix.

In all cases, the Armed Man reflected the social realities of the Hundred Years War, wherein lines between soldier and citizen blurred and every able man owed allegiance to the local militia. Even after the war with England ended, French eyes turned toward conflict in the Middle East, and (again) *L'homme armé* pieces appear, now describing western Christendom's inevitable triumph over the Turks.

Regis's *Missa L'homme armé* utilizes Michaeline themes in a manner that precisely reflects this culture, and further suggests plausible theories relating to its origins. While other scenarios are possible, Louis XI's personal devotion to the Archangel, his formation of the Order of St. Michael, and his participation in a special Papal sword ceremony all point to the king as the likely commissioner of Regis's piece. The sheer and undeniable similarities between *Missa L'homme armé's* text and the Order of St. Michael's initiation rite strongly imply a connection between Regis and Louis XI. Among known Renaissance pieces, Regis's mass would have uniquely satisfied the polyphonic requirements for the Order's annual ceremonies.

Chapter Four: *Missae L'homme armé - A Microcosm of Michaeline Tradition*

Among similar Armed Man masses from the same period, Johannes Regis's *Missae L'homme armé/Dum sacrum mysterium* (henceforth, *Missae L'homme armé*) uniquely and creatively appropriates tropes that praise the Archangel Michael. The previous chapters have shown that St. Michael and *L'homme armé* grew to prominence in a post-war Frankish environment, both among nobles, who openly proclaimed devotion to the saint, and knightly orders, fresh from duty in the Hundred Years War. I have also demonstrated that such orders actively employed the composers of many *L'homme armé* mass settings and votive music.

This chapter implements an in-depth analysis of Regis's *Missae L'homme armé*, focusing on the symbolic interpretations of *L'homme armé* and Michaeline themes as decidedly militant phenomena in the post-Hundred-Years-War cultures of France and Burgundy. In unraveling the richness of the various meanings and references within the mass and its contexts, I argue that Regis's setting of *Missae L'homme armé* reflects Michaeline ideas that ring in unison with contemporaneous Franco-Flemish culture.

Interpretive Paradigms

Scholars have interpreted medieval and early Renaissance music variously since the 1950s. At first, research regarded pre-modern music in a strictly positivistic manner, focusing on archival work or mathematical constructs while ignoring

interpretive or expressive possibilities.¹⁴⁹ Although music of the pre-modern era was once regarded as simplistic, cold, mathematical, or simply monotonous sounding, repertoires of various pre-modern genres contain characteristics that betray the expressive intentions of their composers. In this regard medieval music relates to musicological understandings of later western art music, although current scholarship often disagrees on how exactly to qualify this connection.

Some scholars, turning away from a positivistic view of the medieval period, began to assert a text-based symbolic interpretation for the repertoires that had once represented little more than logic problems. Scholars such as Craig Wright, for instance, view medieval music as comprising series of interlocking musical and textual narratives.¹⁵⁰ Literary theory plays a major role in this concept, as interpretations almost always emanate from the text, in conjunction with its setting, and not from the music alone.¹⁵¹ Art theory plays a role too, as the creation of symbolism intrinsically draws upon the listener's faculty for imagining appropriate scenes and people from the aural and textual clues. In exploring sacred drama, for example, Edmund Bowles notes the importance of the listener's ability to see past "each concrete object or event," where "a hidden meaning related to the Scriptures"

¹⁴⁹ Joseph Kerman, *Contemplating Music* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1985), 126.

¹⁵⁰ Wright, *The Maze and the Warrior*, 160-161.

¹⁵¹ E.g., E.J. Harrison and F.L. Dobson, *Medieval English Songs* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 188-93, which describes several interpretations of song text and how it affects the listener's understanding of the music, as opposed to vice versa. See also D.W. Robertson, *A Preface to Chaucer: Studies in Medieval Perspectives* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), which claims that the only orthodox interpretation of a text in the medieval period was an allegorical one.

can be found.¹⁵² Medieval audiences, I argue, considered text and music as working together to create allegories in a manner similar to Biblical exegetes and Old Testament interpretations.

Strictly allegorical approaches often yield useful results when applied to a specific medieval work, but the concept is not tenable for entire repertoires. While a focus on verbally expressive qualities of medieval music makes the period more accessible to modern inquirers, structured and mathematical aspects of medieval repertoires cannot be denied. We also cannot assume that medieval thinkers, relying heavily on Aristotle, ignored the physical world altogether, even if they did possess a deep sense of allegory.¹⁵³

Scholars espousing theories grounded in allegorical exegesis contend that the true expression of medieval composers lies in the construction of a “sophisticated contextualization” that shows the “intricate relationship between music, literature, and society,” as Judith Peraino explains.¹⁵⁴ Operating through a set of layers that communicates meaning when structurally sound, the music thus joins an architectonic cultural impetus with an expression of cultural context to the audience.

Polyphony and cathedrals, in particular, have provided interpretive models for medieval music and its aesthetics. Cathedrals often serve as an ideogram for medieval culture, and exude meanings that resonate with the architectonic system,

¹⁵² Edmund Bowles, “The Role of Musical Instruments in Medieval Sacred Drama,” *The Musical Quarterly* 45 (1967): 67.

¹⁵³ Christopher Page, *Discarding Images: Reflections on Music and Culture in Medieval France* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993),

¹⁵⁴ Judith Peraino, “Re-placing Medieval Music,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 54, no. 2 (2001): 213.

such as rationality and piety.¹⁵⁵ Besides the late medieval tendency to build music around a base (i.e. the tenor, a *cantus firmus*, etc.), the cathedral relates to music because of the sheer importance of the building to medieval music. Several composers in the late medieval and early Renaissance eras, such as Machaut, Dufay, and Regis, found their voices ringing off the walls of such houses of God.¹⁵⁶ The connection seems to ingrain itself in sacred polyphony, beginning with the surviving Notre Dame repertoires, for which convincing connections have been demonstrated between the building's construction and patterns in Leoninus and Petroninus's repertoire.¹⁵⁷

As allegorical theories rely on literature, architectonic theories obviously draw from architecture, and thus tend to downplay interpretations of the text in favor of mathematical or contextual revelations. Allegorical theories based on architecture have revealed the logical mindsets that medieval composers adopted without returning to positivism's focus on fact archiving. Even mathematical structures can be seen as having a liturgical meaning, as Craig Wright argues of Dufay's *Nuper rosarum flores*, whose structural ratios might represent the Temple of Solomon.¹⁵⁸

Architectonic views on music, like allegorical ones, tend to work well for certain pieces but not as a broad generalization. Even in the polyphonic motet repertoire where the cathedral-music comparison occurs most often, many examples

¹⁵⁵ Page, *Discarding Images*, 1.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁵⁷ Nino Pirrotta, "Dante *Musicus*: Gothicism, Scholasticism, and Music," *Speculum* 43 (1968): 528.

¹⁵⁸ Craig Wright, "Dufay at Cambrai: Discoveries and Revisions," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 28 (1975): 220.

exist that simply do not fit this mold. Often, medieval repertoires are protean; some examples represent meticulous examples of mathematical perfection, others appear melodically driven or just chaotic.¹⁵⁹

Understanding a medieval work and knowing how to interpret it thus requires some familiarity with the historical or religious elements associated with it, as well as its compositional status. My analysis of Regis's piece, a *cantus firmus* mass relying on the *L'homme armé* melody for its structure, depends on an adopted architectonic type of analysis. By this, I mean that the meanings and symbols found within the mass represent a harmonious order and, importantly, the tenor voice serves as a structural point around which other expressions emanate. Christopher Page's idea of viewing the tenor voice not as the hierarchical king, but as the structural base, figures prominently in my analysis.¹⁶⁰

The idea of allegory finds a place here as well, but only when the cultural or musical evidence indicates it heavily. Scholars must exert caution, as allegorical interpretation requires a combination of fact and imagination that delves into the expressive consciousness of the medieval mind,¹⁶¹ a fact that makes this method worthy of caution. If positivism represented one extreme, medieval musicologists certainly do not want to slip into a habit of extreme relativism.

¹⁵⁹ Page, *Discarding Images*, 38-39.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 24.

¹⁶¹ Reinhard Strohm, "How to Make Medieval Music Our Own: A Response to Christopher Page and Margaret Bent," *Early Music* 22, no. 4 (1994): 715-716.

Monophony and Grammatical Structure

An understanding of monophonic lines as a tool for conveying word meaning illuminates Regis's mass. Gregorian chant has been the main focus of scholarship dealing with text/music relationships. Secular music also exhibits expressive qualities, as musicological scholarship has shown in genres such as Troubadour song, chansons, *forme fixes*, and the *L'homme armé* melody. Although *Missa L'homme armé*, a polyphonic mass, does not strictly adhere to monophonic conventions, it retains some monophonic "habits" within its musical fabric, which aids in the communication of textual and extra-musical ideas.

Monophonic chant developed a style of expression during the early middle ages that relied on a unique relationship between text and music. Music was fitted to pre-existing text that followed a coherent syntactical flow.¹⁶² Further, as Leo Trietler has argued, chant melodies derived from recitational speech likely stemming from epic poetry traditions. Operating on a system of melodic "formula," the musician would improvise within a framework of acceptable "strategies" for melodies of a certain type.¹⁶³ Under this theory, plainchant melodies that survived represent the most commonly adopted versions of an infinitely variable, yet thematically stable, repertoire. This process parallels how epic poems changed slightly in detail while essentially maintaining the same story.

Some methods of reflecting monophonic musical-text relationship revolve around tonal eccentricities that highlight the structure, as seen in Aquitanian *versus*.

¹⁶² Yudkin, *Music in Medieval Europe*, 43.

¹⁶³ Leo Trietler, "Homer and Gregory: The Transmission of Epic Poetry and Plainchant," *The Musical Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (1974): 351-353.

Another tendency involved the correlation of important words with the highest or lowest notes in the piece. In the Marian *versus In vellus rore*, for example, the declaration “O wondrous birth” coincides with the lowest note of the melody’s range.¹⁶⁴ This pairing of the piece’s low point with the theological concept of the Virgin birth rhetorically highlights Mary’s importance within the *versus* repertoire and the surrounding culture. Structural points within the mode were also employed to convey grammatical units. Commas and other incomplete thoughts fell on unresolved notes that led to the final, while the final might remain unused until the thought concluded. This technique can also correspond with poetic ideas, with unresolved phrases ending on words dealing with earthly matters, and the final providing resolution with texts proclaiming the promise of heaven.

Monophonic repertoires sometimes also relate to architectonic concepts present in the surrounding culture or the liturgy. Most structured modal points connect with more than one idea over the course of a piece. Thus, particular modal pitches associated with a particular feeling and idea, such as different words, people, or places, fall on the note in question throughout the piece. In the Crusade song *Pax in nomine domine* by the troubadour Marcabru, the idea of indulgence is clearly meant to come about at the same time as the note *c*. The word *pax* (peace) falls in the first verse, and in every following verse the word for “washing place,” (i.e. area to earn a plenary indulgence) likewise falls on *c*. A unified theme thus emerges through

¹⁶⁴ Rachel Golden Carlson, “Striking Ornaments: Complexities of Sense and Song in Aquitanian *Versus*,” *Music and Letters* 84, no. 4 (2003): 548.

the tonal structure of the piece, which, like the grammatical structure, ties the music to an intended message.

Polyphonic music in the fifteenth century remained connected to monophonic repertoires, using techniques similar to those outlined above, but applied to multiple voices. Polyphony drew on monophony in ways that had conveyed meaning in the past, but augmented these expressions through layers. The text now related not just to its own melodic line, but also to melodic lining of the other voices. In a monophonic chant, St. Michael might appear at the pitch climax of the chant, such as in original version of *Dum sacrum mysterium*. In Regis's *Missa L'homme armé*, Michael and Satan simultaneously appear in different voices, competing against one another as in the Book of Revelation and occupying high/low notes, etc.

Polyphonic layering combined with mathematical structures to create meaning. Obrecht's *Missa sub tuum presidium*, for example, contains 888 measures to symbolize the Lord's number. Dufay's *Nuper rosarum flores* uses a mensural proportion of 6:4:2:3, as already mentioned, to represent Solomon's Temple. Extra-musical meaning exists in these and similar examples, both isolated and within a musical fabric consisting of logical and harmonious interrelations.

The fifteenth century also witnessed the continued development of tonal contextualization. As composers interacted with the surrounding culture, ideas became ingrained in the Franco-Flemish repertoire, creating recurring concepts, which I suggest acted in turn as the period's musical "meme." Meme, a scientific term introduced in Charles Dawkins's *The Selfish Gene* (1976), seeks to quantify cultural ideas, which pass among many minds just as a physical genetic trait pass

among bodies. Similar to genes, cultural values on a broader level, such as “tunes, ideas, catch-phrases” appear in many places, albeit with variations, through a process of imitation and appropriation.¹⁶⁵ Over a period of time, this phenomenon allowed many ideas, melodies, and tonal fragments, to become associated, or contextualized through repeated performances.

Medieval Franco-Flemish people inferred meaning from certain famous melodies or familiar signifiers without a need for words, as suggested by memetic theory and explored in recent musicological research. Aural representations of a ringing bell, for example, signaled to fifteenth-century audiences the themes of St. Anthony and his associations with relief from temptation and purgatory.¹⁶⁶

The *L'homme armé* tune, which received treatment as a *cantus firmus* more than any other melody in history, as well as appearing in motets and chansons, certainly served as an example of musical meme. For the knights, soldiers, and citizens subject to France's recent military reforms, the melody would have recalled powerful images of the recently ended Hundred Years War, Christian victory, and militant themes associated with its text. Within fifteenth-century polyphony and the cultural application of memetic principles, the Armed Man appeared in many of the region's artistic media, always exhibiting enough traits to be identified as part of the meme.

Countless literary, religious, and historical characters became associated with the role of the Armed Man through *L'homme armé* masses in the fifteenth century.

¹⁶⁵ Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 192.

¹⁶⁶ Wegman, “For Whom the Bell Tolls,” 125-126.

Yet, despite this wide range of application, extant Renaissance sources of the sixteenth century reveal only two formally recognized purposes for *L'homme armé* masses. One document places the Mass on the Feast of St. Michael (29 September);¹⁶⁷ the other names it as acceptable for a Mass for the Lord, meaning a Sunday mass or another Christ-oriented ceremony. These specifications are broad enough to include the sword ceremony mentioned in Chapter Three, which received its name based not on the time of performance but on the presence of armor and sword.¹⁶⁸ In short, a sword ceremony could occur for either of the two mass ceremonies detailed above.

Regis's *Missa L'homme armé* suggests usages similar to those specified by sixteenth-century sources. The chants it incorporated obviously align the piece with Michaeline tradition. At this time, symbolic expressions within the mass make Christological meanings clear as well. Such correlations are achieved not only through use of the Ordinary mass texts, which obviously feature Christ, but also through associations between music and text that explore connections between the Son of God and the Archangel. Christian tradition viewed both figures as conquerors of Satan, so Regis's similar musical handling of Christ and Michael proves appropriate here. In his emphasis on these two devotional figures in his *Missa*, Regis appears to anticipate the sixteenth-century liturgical designations guidelines and their

¹⁶⁷ Kathryn Pohlmann Duffy, "The Jena Choirbooks: Music and Liturgy at the Castle Church of Wittenberg under Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1995), 255 and 266. Josquin's *L'homme armé* mass, specifically, was deemed useful for St. Michael's feast beginning in 1543. This appears to continue the traditional association between the Archangel and melody present in Burgundy since the mid-fifteenth century.

¹⁶⁸ See Chapter Three.

conflation, suggesting earlier manifestations of the sixteenth-century associations and traditions.

Missa L'homme armé alludes to Michaeline and Christological functions by employing chants and articulating a devotional emphasis appropriate to the Feast of St. Michael and Sunday mass worship. Noting that these particular liturgical associations with *L'homme armé* are not made explicit until the sixteenth-century documents cited above, the question of why Regis appears to pre-date musical fashion deserves a final clarification.

As described in Chapter Three, several fifteenth-century composers were linked to the knightly orders existing immediately following the Hundred Years War. The knights generally considered St. Michael as the heavenly standard for chivalry, and the war bolstered the popularity of his cult. The feast of St. Michael and its chants would thus have been well known among the musicians connected to such groups and their leaders. My theory that Regis composed *Missa L'homme armé* for use at Louis XI's sword ceremony, Louis's yearly Michaeline celebrations, or both, complies with this evidence. Dufay, composer, priest, and advocate of Regis's music, worked for the Order of the Golden Fleece at one time. Through this connection, Regis must have known about the major cultural aspects of the Burgundian court, even if he did not receive a commission before the mass's appearance in 1462.

Regis drew musical inspiration from the militant traditions of the Michaeline Cult. *Missa L'homme armé's* subject reflects not an anomaly but an already continuing tradition that pre-dates the extant record's association in the sixteenth century. It must be remembered that the written record here reflects only surviving

and discovered documents. Indeed, the parallels between St. Michael and Armed Man were reflected in paintings and stories about the saint from well before Regis's time.

The Mode

Scholars have developed a sophisticated, if approximate, timeline of fifteenth-century *L'homme armé* masses; consensus chronologically divides *L'homme armé* composers into two groups, although the specific placement therein differs from scholar to scholar. Since many earlier *L'homme armé* settings currently have an ambiguous date of origin, this division lumps many pieces into the category of those written before the year 1460. *L'homme armé* masses written after 1460, with closer approximations for their composition date, comprise the second group. Various modal characteristics associate with the chronological placements of such *L'homme armé* masses.

Regis resides in the second group based on *Missa L'homme armé's* appearance in 1462. Examining Regis's association with Dufay, sometimes seen as a teacher-pupil relationship, Lockwood further concludes that Regis, who took inspiration from it, knew Dufay's *L'homme armé* setting.¹⁶⁹

Although useful in maintaining a sense of chronology, this division of *L'homme armé* composers also suggests a qualitative "second tier" of *L'homme armé* masses, defined by a pre-1460 school that set the standard for derivative composers

¹⁶⁹ Lockwood, "Aspects of the *L'homme armé Tradition*," 108; for Dufay's mass, see Alejandro Planchart, "Guillaume Dufay's Masses: Notes and Revisions," *Musical Quarterly* 58 (1972): 1-23.

who followed. Further, it falsely implies that *L'homme armé* endured a recognized period of compositional lacuna before the second group of composers decided to continue the tradition. As I have shown, however, Franco-Flemish culture produced images of the Armed Man in many milieus, sacred and secular; the idea of a silent period in the middle of the tradition's development does not hold, and derives only from a lack of information about earlier composer's activities. Although we should disregard tendencies to rank a composer's innovation based on this chronological listing, the scholarship remains helpful in assessing Regis's unique place within Franco-Flemish compositional practices

One trait that does divide *L'homme armé* masses is the choice of mode, which tends to follow one of two trends. The post-1460 compositional group includes Regis, whose mass appears in Cambrian record books in or around 1462. The pre-1460 group of composers, including Dufay and perhaps Busnois, tended to set the melody in a mode centering on G.¹⁷⁰ Composers writing in the 1460s and later alternatively gravitated toward other modes, especially D. Regis, whose mass appeared around 1462, and Faugues are both examples of this new trend toward the D-mode.¹⁷¹ Further investigation reveals that these two modes, D and G, had a historical significance for the Cult of St. Michael in the Franco-Flemish region by the time that Regis composed. In fact, looking at the French manuscripts that include

¹⁷⁰ Fallows, "*L'homme armé*."

¹⁷¹ Ibid. Later, Pipelare and Palestrina would also set four-part *L'homme armé* masses in D.

chants utilized in Regis's *L'homme armé*, only a select few examples fall outside of this general rule.¹⁷²

Perusing contemporaneous Michaeline chants confirms that certain modes had become associated with St. Michael by the fifteenth century. Nonetheless, the question of why earlier *L'homme armé* masses mention the Archangel only vaguely, if at all, remains unsettled. The problem here involves interactions between secular history and worship practices. As the Armed Man and his militancy became more prominent in culture, the looming presence of *L'homme armé* promoted greater association in sacred music between the tune and its most relevant liturgical subject. Indeed, the surviving examples of the melody alone are always based on G.¹⁷³ The idea of modes as the conveyors of mood goes back to Plato; here we have an example, albeit more complex, of two modes conveying the overall idea of Christian victory. Victory in war can become embodied in a nameless *L'homme armé*, St. Michael, or both simultaneously.

Regis set his *L'homme armé* mass in D, but the reason for this choice cannot be explained simply as the "next step" in *L'homme armé* tradition as Fallows has argued. Looking at Regis's mass from a Michaeline perspective gives a new insight into the composer's connection with the Archangel's Cult, one that suggests Regis maintained the integrity of the original chants from which he drew (Table 4-1). The most commonly used chant in the mass is *Dum sacrum mysterium*, set in G in

¹⁷² Debra Lacoste, ed., *CANTUS: A Database for Latin Ecclesiastical Chant* (Accessed Jan 29, 2007), <http://publish.uwo.ca/~cantus/>.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

virtually all French manuscripts and, judging by the number of extant copies, a universally known chant.¹⁷⁴

Table 4-1: Michaeline Chants employed in *Missa L’homme armé*.

Latin	English
<i>Dum sacrum mysterium cerneret Johannes, Michael Archangelus tuba cecinit: dignus es Domine Deus meus accipere librum.</i>	While John was discerning the sacred mysteries, Michael the Archangel sounded his trumpet: You are worthy, Lord my God, to receive the book.
<i>Michael Archangelus, milia milium ministrabant ei.</i>	Michael the archangel, thousands upon thousands were attending to him.
<i>Michaeli, quem honorificant cives angelorum.</i>	Michael, whom the legions of angels honor.
<i>Michael praepositus paradisi quem honorant eius archangelorum.</i>	Michael, the overseer of Paradise, whom the crowd of archangels honor.
<i>Dum cerneret belli dracho cum Michael Archangelo.</i>	While the dragon of war contends with Michael the Archangel.
<i>Laudes Dominum, quem laudant angeli, cherubim et seraphim. Laudamus Christum quem laudant.</i>	Praise the Lord, whom the angels praise, the cherubim and seraphim. We praise Christ, whom they also praise.
<i>Audita est vox milia milium dicentium salus Deo nostro. Dum committeret belli.</i>	The voice of thousands upon thousands is heard saying, “Praise to our God.” While he was engaging in battle.

Regis’s mass does not break away from previous tradition so much as it reflects the common setting of the majority of its original chants. Only one found within the mass is transposed from its traditional key. This chant, *Dum sacrum mysterium*, receives the most frequent comment from modern scholarship; however, Regis employs several other votive chants not often discussed by contemporary scholars. Yet, taken collectively these chants equal *Dum sacrum mysterium* in terms of structural importance within the mass. Unlike the former, *Milia milium*

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

ministrabant ei, *Praepositus paradisi*, and *Dum committeret bellum draco* all represent traditionally D-mode Michaeline chants.

Regis confirms the connection between St Michael and *L'homme armé*, unambiguously juxtaposing them in a mode that fits within standard Michaeline tradition. We should recall that many Franco-Flemish composers were also clergymen, including Regis and Dufay. A basic knowledge of local Church tradition was a requirement of their clerical and musical training, as both types of training intertwined in the daily office hours and mass performances. As Barbara Haggh concludes, a thorough familiarity with the local musical repertoire became a universal requirement imposed on fifteenth-century sacred musicians.¹⁷⁵ Other composers enacted this hypothesis when they constructed masses around themes of war coinciding with the modes on G and D.

The Three Michaeline Roles in Missa L'homme armé

As outlined above, western medieval Christendom viewed St. Michael as performing three roles: warrior, protector, and psychopomp. We should expect Regis's *Missa L'homme armé*, a votive mass for St. Michael, to reflect these perceptions of the Archangel's Cult, especially considering the Franco-Flemish preoccupation with militancy during the time of its composition. Indeed, these motifs appear in the mass in several different ways, from the blatantly obvious naming of St. Michael as the Armed Man, an acknowledgement of his warrior characteristics, to the

¹⁷⁵ Haggh, "Singers and Scribes," 146.

more subtle pairing of the Archangel with Mary, an allusion to his role as psychopomp.

Further, Regis's musical choices present an understanding of a broader Michaeline tradition, which he unfolded through a system of contextualization that medieval listeners, and especially members of knightly orders, would have understood. At the center of the piece lies the *L'homme armé* melody, the foundational basis around which other ideas of the Archangel receive extrapolation. Within this structure, *Missa L'homme armé* reflects common interpretations of the Archangel and serves as a compact musical record of the fifteenth-century Michaeline cult as the Franco Flemish practiced it.

That Regis proclaimed St. Michael a warrior may seem an apodictic observation at this point. However, Regis's portrayal of the warrior-angel, especially as juxtaposed with the *L'homme armé* melody, reveals several idiosyncrasies that require additional analysis in order to understand fully the many subtleties inherent in the composer's expression. Through the use of repeated motives and pre-existing chants, Regis paints St. Michael as a Christian warrior extolling the monastic-chivalric virtues important among fifteenth-century knights.

Musically, the concepts found within Regis's *L'homme armé* exists in harmony with the idea of "warrior hood," just as knights who focused on matters or piety did so service to the greater knightly ideals. The choice of the *L'homme armé* melody as the work's principal *cantus firmus* thus establishes St. Michael's warrior nature and reaffirms it throughout the work. Sometimes the tune appears augmented, sometimes diminished, and often melodically altered. In a variety of forms, the

omnipresent iteration of the *L'homme armé* melody serves to draw listeners back to its principal Michaeline message. While other Michaeline roles, psychopomp and guardian, appear in the piece, we must remember that these concepts were interrelated in chivalric values and contemporaneous beliefs. The roles of psychopomp and guardian exist alongside the title of warrior, not in opposition to it..

The *cantus firmus* runs throughout the entire piece, appearing in many different forms. Besides its constant presence, the *L'homme armé* moves beyond the boundaries of the tenor voice's sphere. In all movements the tune is written in the *discantus*. It appears too in the *bassus* during the Sanctus and Agnus Dei. In part the inclusion of the *cantus firmus* in so many voices reflects the difficulty of basing a lengthy work on an unchanging thirty-one-note melody. Without some sort of creativity, or at least practicality, the tenor would lead the composer to inevitable repetition. Regis's spontaneity was not boundless, however. Despite operating in a fabric with a fluid *cantus firmus*, voiced in up to three voices simultaneously, several motifs emerge from the musical fabric, granting *L'homme armé* a certain degree of logical predictability.

One important recurring motif involves an augmented fragment of the *L'homme armé*'s opening notes. Several half notes set this motif (hereafter motif A) apart from the faster notes found around it. Its first appearance, in the altus voice, resides in measure 25 of the Kyrie (Figure 4-1), closely followed by the same motif in the tenor. Motif A returns in the Credo at measure 78, again in the altus and bassus voices at measure 61 of the Sanctus (albeit in a slightly



Figure 4-1: *L'homme armé* Motif A¹⁷⁶

different form), and finally in the altus and tenor of the *Agnus Dei*, measure 41. In the first two appearances this motif accompanies a chant describing “thousands upon thousands” alongside the Archangel [figure 4-1]. This description pertains to the psychopomp role, as the “thousands” include the resurrected dead (a reference to Daniel) who pray for the Archangel’s favor. The latter two appearances of the motif, however, coincide with the *Dum sacrum mysterium* chant, which describes St. Michael as “blowing the trumpet.” To Regis’s medieval audience this text probably recalled images of the beginning of apocalypse, leading to the inevitable confrontation between St. Michael and Satan. Over the course of the mass, then, the treatment of motif A, in conjunction with the Michaeline chants, signifies the upcoming battle with the satanic dragon.

Another motif, designated motif B, begins as an almost note-for-note recalling of the *L'homme armé* tune’s first phrase [figure 3.1]. Suddenly, however, it is cut short, slightly displaced rhythmically, and finished with an extended motif A (Figure

¹⁷⁶ All musical examples are taken from Johannes Regis, *Missa L'homme armé/Dum Sacrum Mysterium*, in Regis, *Opera Omnia*, ed. Cornelis Lindenburg (Rome: American Institute of Musicology, 1956).

4-2). This ubiquitous motif begins to appear in the altus and tenor voices at the 51st measure of the Kyrie, returning at measure 102 as part of a cadential flourish to the movement's end. It reappears in the Credo, measure 17, and a slightly extended version at measure 115, again as part of a final cadential flourish. Measure 44 of the Agnus Dei signals its last appearance, ending the movement and the piece.



Figure 4-2: *L'homme armé* Motif B

Regis shows his familiarity with the warrior image of St. Michael through motives that relate not only to the *cantus firmus* but also to another militant *L'homme armé* Mass. The intervallic fourth plays a large melodic role in Regis's mass (Figure 4-3). Notably, this choice finds precedence in the fourth Anonymous Naples *L'homme armé* Mass, which likewise places the fourth in a prominent position.¹⁷⁷

The intervallic similarity between these two pieces directly relates to the shared subject of judgment, signaled with melodic fourths (the “trumpet”) in both masses. In Regis's mass, the trumpet appears in the text of *Dum sacrum mysterium*, wherein St. Michael sounds the instrument at the start of the apocalypse. We find the

¹⁷⁷ Cohen, *Six Anonymous L'homme armé Masses*, xiv.

trumpet mentioned several times, in conjunction with fourths, in the Anonymous Naples Mass IV. Herein, the instrument refers unquestionably to the upcoming apocalypse, signaling the event's inception, awakening the dead, and announcing the end of time.

The image shows a musical score for three voices (Soprano, Alto, and Tenor) in 3/8 time. The score is divided into three systems, each with a treble clef for the upper voice and a bass clef for the lower voice. The lyrics are Latin and describe the Nativity scene. The first system (measures 1-4) shows a descending 4th interval in the upper voices and a fourth interval in the lower voices. The second system (measures 5-8) continues the melody. The third system (measures 9-12) shows a similar intervallic structure. The lyrics are: 'Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis. Laudamus te. Benedicimus te. Adoramus te. Glorificamus te. Gratias agimus tibi. Dum sacrum mysterium cerneret Johannes...'.

Figure 4-3: Descending 4ths in the upper voices and fourths from original *L'homme armé* melody.

Further, a canon found at the beginning of Anonymous Naples Mass IV includes an interesting rubric that links the trumpet to the prominent use of fourths. The anonymous composer writes: “The trumpet reflects the sound, turning around the pitches, and echoes again, crying out a fourth below.”¹⁷⁸ Fourth in the piece thus

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

enact an actual trumpet call, in direct reflection of the subject of the text. *L'homme armé*'s original melody also contains many fourths that come throughout the piece, further reinforcing the fourth's significance by embedding it within the structural tenor.

Could Regis have invoked this same signifier in his mass? As part of a cycle written for Charles the Bold, the anonymous mass was penned under Franco-Flemish eyes.¹⁷⁹ In all probability Regis's mentor, Dufay, composed it.¹⁸⁰ Both pieces share similar subjects, raising the possibility that Regis turned to pre-existing inspiration when he adopted an apocalyptic theme. The fourth anonymous mass, originating from the Flemish courts and probably written by Dufay, would have garnered Regis's notice. As a mass sharing the same *cantus firmus* and a similar subject, written by a contemporary (possibly a very close one), and utilized in a prominent noble court, there seems little doubt that the anonymous Naples mass would have passed across Regis's stylistic radar. *Missa L'homme armé* refers back to the Naples mass, using the fourth to recall the apocalyptic trumpet.

The association between the trumpet and St. Michael dates back to millennial fears that western Europeans endured in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. Mont-Saint-Michel, the regional focus of the saint's cult, produced many stories that alluded to the upcoming events, expected interchangeably in the year 1000 or 1033. Chronicler Rudolf Glaber declared in 992 that a comet presaged the burning of the mount; Bishop Norgod of Avranches in 1007 envisioned the mount consumed in

¹⁷⁹ Chapter Three

¹⁸⁰ Chapter Three.

fire.¹⁸¹ The letters of Fulbert of Chartres predicted a rain of blood, mixed with fire, in western Aquitaine.¹⁸² The fire and blood overtaking France (and especially St. Michael's mount) in these visions parallel those in Revelation, as the first signs of doomsday after the angelic sounding of the trumpet.

Millennialism produced a Franco-Flemish image of St. Michael sounding the trumpet, which served as a preliminary warning for his battle with Satan. We see this scripturally, of course, but also in the millennial visionary accounts: Glaber's prediction of fire precedes his account of a great dragon traveling through the skies. Regis's use of the fourth, and the anonymous Naples mass composer before him, called on the image of the trumpet not as a musical nicety but as a militant call to arms befitting the *L'homme armé cantus firmus*. The trumpet serves as an apocalyptic symbol of a coming battle, and like the words of the *L'homme armé* melody, warned the medieval listener to prepare for an imminent battle.

Other obvious references to battle exist in the chants utilized in the piece. *Dum cerneret belli* describes the conflict between the satanic dragon and St. Michael in Revelation, while *Audita est vox* describes the voices of thousands praising God during the course of the event. These chants are juxtaposed in the tenor of the Sanctus, setting up a movement where the three characteristic notes of the *L'homme armé* melody leap by descending fifth on the word "Osanna" (Figure 4-4). Throughout the mass, *Dum sacrum mysterium* and the ever-present fourths have

¹⁸¹ Cited in Callahan, "The Apocalyptic Year 1000," 188.

¹⁸² Ibid.

served as the “trumpet” foretelling the meeting of the angelic and satanic combatants. As the two finally meet in the Sanctus,



Figure 4-4: Hosanna and the *L'homme armé* original tune.

cries of “Hosanna” cut through the music, expressing joy at the Christian victory the warrior Michael will soon have.

St. Michael’s role as guardian manifests in the chants Regis employed and the associations he creates among sympathetic belief in a “protector,” ideas present in the text, and musical fabric. While the ideas of protector and warrior have similarities, medieval audiences maintained a theological basis to separate these two roles. Protector here closely relates to guardian or intercessor, acting not as a physical combatant against enemies but as a spiritual guardian against evil. The chant *Audita est vox*, which describes “thousands upon thousands,” saying “Praise to our God,” offers a striking example of the Archangel’s intercession. As detailed above, within Regis’s mass this chant describes the battle with Satan. The thousands praying to God represent the prayers of people that St. Michael hears, as they call upon him to intercede.

The exact meaning of the thousands “attending to St. Michael” remains unclear, but one possibility is that the chant means to name thousands of people praying to the Archangel. This would synchronize with *Audita est vox* in an almost synoptic manner. *Milia milium ministrabant* ranks with *Dum sacrum mysterium* as one of the most used chants in the piece. Almost always, it appears with motif A described above. More interesting is the canon effect that almost always accompanies the use of this chant. The altus and tenor imitate each other exactly, one beat apart, every time the motif begins. With imagination, one can hear this as the many voices praying, closely together but not exactly in unison, asking for St. Michael to intercede for them as the horrors of Revelation unfold before them.

As a chief intercessor in Catholic tradition, St. Michael filled the important role of distributing mercy to those who asked for forgiveness. Regis communicated this relationship by pairing the concept in a way that resonates musically with the idea of the Archangel. Both times the word for mercy, “*miserere*,” appears in the Ordinary text it coincides with the prominent onset of Michaeline tropes in other voices. At measure 68 in the Gloria (Figure 4-5), *milia milium ministrabant*’s half-motif A dominates the inner voices, with *miserere* occupying the outer voices in decidedly faster notes.

Another striking juxtaposition occurs when the “thousands upon thousands” asking for intercession become directly linked with mercy. In the Agnus Dei, *miserere* begins in measure 7 and canonically floats in and out of all four voices along with *Dum sacrum mysterium* (Figure 4-6). The Michaeline tropes remain absent in the final movement’s introduction until *miserere* appears. Waiting until the

appearance of mercy to bring in allusions to St. Michael highlights the saint's attributes.

65

Pa - tris, mi - se - re -

tris. Mi - cha - el arch -

Mi - cha -

dex - te - ram Pa - tris, mi - se - re -

70

- re no - bis, quo - ni - am tu so - lus san -

an - ge - lus, mi - li - a mi - li - um mi - ni - stra -

el arch - an - ge - lus, mi - li - a mi - li - um

- re no - bis. Quo - ni - am tu so -

Detailed description: The image shows a musical score for two systems, measures 65-70. Each system consists of a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (bass clef). The lyrics are in Latin. Measure 65 starts with a sharp sign (#) in the key signature. The lyrics for measure 65 are: 'Pa - tris, mi - se - re -' (top line), 'tris. Mi - cha - el arch -' (middle line), 'Mi - cha -' (bottom line), and 'dex - te - ram Pa - tris, mi - se - re -' (bottom line). Measure 70 starts with the lyrics: '- re no - bis, quo - ni - am tu so - lus san -' (top line), 'an - ge - lus, mi - li - a mi - li - um mi - ni - stra -' (middle line), 'el arch - an - ge - lus, mi - li - a mi - li - um' (bottom line), and '- re no - bis. Quo - ni - am tu so -' (bottom line). There is a small '(b)' under the 'lus,' in the bottom line of measure 70.

Figure 4-5: *Miserere* and *L'homme armé* Motif A

mun di: mi se re -
 - di, (Dum sa - crum my -
 Dum
 ta mun - di,

8 (re no - bis, mi se re -)
 ste - rium cer - ne - ret Jo - han - nes.) Mi se re -
 com - mit - te - ret bel - li. A - gnus De - i.
 (Dum sa - crum my - ste - ri - um cer - ne - ret Jo - han - nes.) Mi - se -

11 re no - bis.
 - re no - bis.
 (mi se re - re) no - bis. tacet.
 re - re no - bis. tacet

Figure 4-6: *Miserere* and *Michael redux*, with *Dum sacrum mysterium*

The Michaeline Cult, utilizing both Scriptural and apocryphal sources, had long helped to enforce images of St. Michael as a guardian. In fact, this tradition draws from the older Jewish portrayal of the Archangel, which culminated in the Old Testament Book of Daniel.¹⁸³ Besides being the only book in the Hebrew Bible to mention the Archangel, it also serves as the sole canonic Hebrew example of apocalyptic literature.¹⁸⁴ Daniel and Revelation parallel each other in this way, but while the New Testament's Michael battles actively against the enemy, Daniel's vision entails a defender who protects a chosen people.

Two references in Daniel 10-12 depict St. Michael as a guardian of the Israelites. At times of need, he intervenes to protect his people. First, an angel appears to Daniel and describes heavenly battles with the prince of the Persian kingdom. Michael alone, he says, aids in the battle (10: 13-14, 21). At a future time of distress, the angel tells Daniel, St. Michael will protect the Israelites directly:

At that time, the great prince, Michael, who stands beside the sons of your people, will appear. It will be a time of trouble, the likes of which has never been since the nation came into being. At that time, your people will be rescued, all who are found inscribed in the book.¹⁸⁵

The author's language moves toward the idea of Michael as a guardian. Ideas like "standing beside" the youth, and "rescuing" the people of the nation invoke a sense of protection, where the Archangel seems ready to shield us from harm rather than

¹⁸³ *Encyclopedia Judaica*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Angels and Angelology." The belief in guardian angels first appeared in the Post-Exilic period (post-538 BCE), when acts of "divine commerce" with this world became assigned to supernatural agents acting on Yahweh's behalf. As different angels were given different assignments, some took on the protection of nations, and gradually individuals.

¹⁸⁴ John J. Collins, "The Jewish Apocalypse," *Semina* 14 (1979): 30-31.

¹⁸⁵ Dan. 12.1. (New International Version).

confront the enemy directly. Obviously, western Europe would later interpret this scripture as *writ* large, applying it to Christians rather than Jews.

New Testament scripture reflects later Jewish apocryphal literature, and the belief that guardian angels direct their attention to individuals in need. The Epistle of Jude shows Michael specifically protecting Moses and directly opposing Satan, representing a figure of the past with futuristic shades of foreshadowing. As Michael and Satan dispute, the former shows restraint, not attacking his opponent; he declares “The Lord rebuke you.”¹⁸⁶ Jude refers here not to a personal vision but a Jewish apocryphal tradition. Satan contends Moses does not deserve a proper burial because of his status as a murderer, bringing about the Archangel’s restrained response.¹⁸⁷

Further medieval examples from the New Testament apocrypha that developed in early medieval Europe depict St. Michael acting as an intercessor. Included among these are the Greek Apocalypse of Paul, the Gospel of Nicodemus, and the Apocalypse of the Holy Mother. While these tales contain many differences, they are similar in that they contain scenes of the Archangel interceding on behalf of sinners. A belief in the strong efficacy of St. Michael’s intercessory powers particularly shines through in the Apocalypse of the Holy Mother, where he acts on par with the highest heavenly beings by relieving the suffering of the damned. Mary comments on his power, designating him “the minister of the invisible Father” and “associate of my Son.”¹⁸⁸ The significance of these texts lies in their portrayal of the guardian Archangel as the protector of God’s people from harm, both before and after

¹⁸⁶ Jude 1.9 (New International Version).

¹⁸⁷ Johnson, *St. Michael the Archangel*, 22.

¹⁸⁸ Cited in *Ibid.*, 26.

death. In the wake of a major war, when knights had increased their dependence on Requiem masses,¹⁸⁹ the idea of intercession played an important auxiliary role in St. Michael's *L'homme armé* image.

Unlike the previous two traditional roles, that of "psychopomp" lacks any direct Scriptural reference, although, as explored below, apocryphal texts and church tradition had depicted St. Michael as Christianity's "standard bearer" of souls for centuries. Regis incorporates this understanding of Michael into his mass in a way similar to the other two roles, using chants and architectonic contextualization to weave the concept in and around the *L'homme armé*.

Church tradition and scriptural exegesis played into social perceptions of the psychopomp role. Scripturally St. Michael finds mention in Daniel, shortly before souls are transported back to earth. When the resurrection of the dead happens Michael stands up to protect the Israelites. Although not explicitly named as the carrier of souls, his proximity to the event possibly encouraged connections between the two. The Offertory text of the Requiem had referred to St. Michael as the "standard bearer of souls" since its standardization in the early medieval period. I see it as no coincidence that Ockeghem's contemporaneous *Requiem Mass*, the first known polyphonic setting of the genre, prominently exhibits, and is well known for, its near-fugal treatment of the Offertory's Michaeline section.¹⁹⁰ The Church also supported the role in its adoption of doctrine relating to the Assumption of Mary, many tales of which included the Archangel in his most important psychopomp role.

¹⁸⁹ Cited in Hagg, "Archives."

¹⁹⁰ Basil Smallman, "Requiem Mass," *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy (Accessed 8 May, 2007), <http://www.grovemusic.com>.

A group of apocryphal texts detailing Mary's death and assumption into heaven began to circulate around the fourth century in several different languages, including Coptic, Greek, and Latin.¹⁹¹ In all of these legends, Christ entrusts Mary's soul to Michael after her death. When the disciples ask for her to return to life, it is the Archangel who returns her soul to her body and carrying them, reunited, into heaven.¹⁹² Various texts proscribe other souls to him, but the Assumption's status as widely accepted doctrine, and the sheer importance of Mary's cult in the middle ages, this role proved most important to St. Michael's continuing psychopomp reputation.

Missa L'homme armé refers to this strong Mary-Michael relationship when it juxtaposes Michaeline tropes and Ordinary texts that reference the Virgin. Found in the altus at Credo measures 37-42, text declaring Jesus as born from virgin flows directly into the opening *L'homme armé* melody in its original rhythm, set to the *Dum sacrum mysterium chant* (Figure 4-7). This pairing alludes to Michael, who serves as the pieces Armed Man, and serves to relate themes of soul transference to warrior *topoi*. At this point, too, a strong cadence occurs, aurally marking the text as significant. The altus here uses this Mary-Michael cadential point as a hinge point that helps build to the piece's final notes.

¹⁹¹ Mary Clayton, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Anglo-Saxon England* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 8-10.

¹⁹² Depending on the source text, either Gabriel (usually) or Michael rolls away the stone covering Mary's grave.

36 Spi-ri - tu San - cto ex Ma - ri - a
 de Spi - ri - tu San - cto ex Ma - ri - a Vir - gi - ne: et ho - mo fa - ctus est, Dum sa -
 ex Ma - ri - a Vir - gi - ne: et ho - mo fa - ctus est. (Cru - ci -

39 Vir - gi - ne: et ho - mo fa - ctus est. Cru - ci - fi - xus e - ti - am pro no - bis: sub Pon - ti - o Pi - la - to
 crum my - ste - ri - um cer - ne - ret Jo - han - nes, (Mi - cha - el) archan - ge - lus tu - ba
 Dum sa - crum my - ste - ri - um cer - ne - ret Jo - han - nes, Mi - cha - el arch - an - ge -
 fi - xus e - ti - am pro no - bis: sub Pon - ti - o Pi - la - to, pas - sus) et

42 pas - sus et se - pul - tus est.
 ce - ci - nit.
 lus tu - ba ce - ci - nit. tacet
 se - pul - tus est. tacet

Figure 4-7: *Dum sacrum mysterium* and the Virgin Mary

St. Michael and the dead also find themselves conveniently paired several times in the piece. As the Credo moves to describe Christ as judging the dead in measures 80-81, Regis ensures that Michael's name rings loudly in the strong half-note motif A, in two voices spaced a measure apart (Figure 4-8). The chant used

here, *Milia milium minisrabant*, describes again the thousands of people “attending” to St. Michael. Having learned that the dead traditionally relied on St. Michael to answer prayers as surely as the living, I conjecture that this chant symbolizes the prayers of the dead who will receive the resurrection, or freedom from purgatory, after the defeat of Satan.

In fact, the Credo text “I await the resurrection of the dead” signals the next juxtaposition of “the dead” and “Michael,” with the same motif ringing underneath a melismatic treatment of the word “*mortuorum*” (Figure 4-9, measure 115-117). *Michael praepositus paradisi*, another Michaeline trope Regis employs, describes St. Michael as “the overseer of Paradise, whom the crowd of archangels honor.” As the entity known to deliver souls to Paradise, including that of the Queen of Heaven, this title refers to Michael’s psychopomp role. The title made itself a reality in several lesser-known apocryphal works, as well. The Gospel of Nicodemus and the *Canticum de Creatione* describe St. Michael as appearing to spiritual travelers at the Gates of Paradise, not just as a greeter but also as a master, the entity charged with the wellbeing of the souls therein.¹⁹³

¹⁹³ Johnson, *Saint Michael the Archangel*, 84-85.

Figure 4-8 shows a musical score for the piece "St. Michael and the dead". The score is written for voice and piano. It consists of two systems of music. The first system starts at measure 78 and ends at measure 83. The lyrics are: "re vi - vos et mor - tu - os: cu - ius re - gni a Mi - cha - el arch - est cum glo - ri - a, iu - di -". The second system starts at measure 84 and ends at measure 89. The lyrics are: "non e - rit fi - nis. Et in Spi - ri - tum San - ctum, Do - mi - num, et vi - vi - fi - can - an - ge - lus, mi - li - a mi - li - um mi - ni - stra - bant e - el arch - an - ge - lus, mi - li - a mi - li - um ca - re."

Figure 4-8: St. Michael and the dead

Figure 4-9 shows a musical score for the piece "Thousands attending to the Prince of Paradise". The score is written for voice and piano. It consists of two systems of music. The first system starts at measure 115 and ends at measure 120. The lyrics are: "mor - tu - o - rum. Et vi - tam ven - tu -". The second system starts at measure 121 and ends at measure 126. The lyrics are: "Mi - cha - el arch - an - ge - lus, Mi - li - a mi - li - um mi - ni - Mi - cha - el arch - an - ge - lus, mi - li - a mi - li - um - rum. Et vi - tam ven - tu - ri sae -".

Figure 4-9: Thousands attending to the Prince of Paradise

Regis's *Missa L'homme armé* serves as a microcosm and an encomium that represents St. Michael's three traditional roles of warrior, guardian/intercessor, and

psychopomp. Architectural elements, using the *L'homme armé* melody as a *cantus firmus*, portray these facets of the Saint's personality, which in turn derive from the literature and traditions that formed the contemporaneous Michaeline Cult. The three concepts do not receive an equal treatment; the guardian role in particular lacks musical presence. This preference for Michael's warrior role likely reflects the cultural emphasis on battle and the afterlife that presented itself after the Hundred Years War; it also resonates with my theory that knights commissioned Regis's mass. *Missa L'homme armé* serves, then, not as a work meant to represent a perfect three-part presentation of St. Michael, but as a work representing post-war perceptions of the Archangel in the fifteenth-century Franco-Flemish region.

Chapter Five: Remembering Relics of War

The remarkable feature of the western European Michaeline Cult remained its tendency to represent warfare, imperial aspirations, and centralized government. In the fifteenth-century Franco-Flemish region, this tradition took its place alongside a rapidly expanding royal power, complete with a fearsome army. The end of the Hundred Years War in 1453 relaxed this atmosphere slightly, but the aftereffects of the final battles still affected the populace deeply. The appearance of Regis's *Missa L'homme armé* nine years later represented not an anomaly among musical works, but rather a natural extension of a social landscape steeped in the Michaeline Cult.

St. Michael lacked many features often necessary for a cult's success. Without a body, traditional *vita*, or actually having lived, the spread of Michael's Cult has generated many questions for scholarship. His cultural prominence thus further testifies to his fame and reception in France-Flemish regions, and substantiates his connections with warfare, specifically the Hundred Years War. Other angels, after all, did not obtain nearly the same level of followers, even though they held an equal or greater scriptural validity (e.g. Gabriel).

The most prominent shrines to the Archangel played a part in, suffered through or were constructed around times of conflict. Whether a listening audience heard tales of Mount Gargano's foundation story of St. Michael's raining of lightning down upon the enemy, or Mont-Saint-Michel's tales of the defense against the British, the central message remained essentially the same: St. Michael had

interacted with humans, and, as a result of the Archangel's anger, the powerful enemies of France suffered ruin.

The scars of battle ultimately served as St. Michael's relics. Even attempts at maintaining physical reminders of the Archangel's presence focused on this idea, with swords and shields serving as the main "body." The best example came from the skull of Aubert, founder of Mont-Saint-Michel, which transformed into a Michaeline relic and reminder of the Archangel's power; the Archangel had pierced Aubert's head when the bishop refused to listen. The results of such violence became enshrined as relics, as potent memorials to Michael's interaction with earthly humans.

Mount Gargano's foundation history perhaps seems tame by comparison., Indeed only solid walls of rock, not bone or flesh?, were torn asunder. However, when one considers the number of dead attributed to the Archangel's intervention from the time of Constantine to that of Regis, St. Michael's appeal to rulers at times of war remains vivid and meaningful, if not chilling.

Johannes Regis emphasized St. Michael's association with battle when he structured his *Missa L'homme armé* around the Armed Man *cantus firmus*. At any given moment of the piece, whether the text declares visions of a psychopomp or apocalyptic visions of satanic dragons, the *L'homme armé* tune bespeaks both of the secular nature of the piece and of Archangel's earthly activities.

Indeed, Michael did not exist merely in Scripture, waiting for an indeterminate date to battle with Satan. Rather, St. Michael, the patron Armed Man of the Franco-Flemish people, had helped to battle the English "dragon" at Mont-Saint-Michel. Likewise, knights, as Armed Men on earth, celebrated his

contemporary patronage with the respect due the highest-level heavenly figures. Confraternities and French kings took his name in battle and afterward, dedicating special ceremonies in his honor. More than just an extramundane mystery, the Archangel infiltrated the terrestrial world. War was the conduit between history and the future, heaven and land.

Even the psychopomp role, applicable to all points in history, achieved greater importance during times of war. Franco-Flemish knights, as discussed in Chapter Three, increased their dependence on *Requiem* masses throughout the fifteenth century, a time coinciding with the major English occupations of Normandy. With large amounts of troops falling in battle, perhaps daily, the reason behind this demand for *Requiem* masses becomes obvious. Regis's *Missa L'homme armé* structured his perceptions of St. Michael around the central concept of Armed Man. Likewise, the theological concept of psychopomp connected closely to the battlefield and the dead soldiers it held.

Further research on this topic should consider Ockeghem's *Requiem Mass*, which scholarship has identified as the first polyphonic setting of its genre. It features a separate canon-like section in the Offertory focusing strictly around the Michaeline text. In conjunction with research on knights' use of the *Requiem* in the fifteenth century, scholars could ascertain further conclusions about musical manifestations of Michaeline perceptions. Many other interpretive possibilities lie within the legend tales of Mont-Saint-Michel and the apocryphal texts that circulated throughout the middle ages. The surface has merely been scratched, and no doubt a

greater understanding of these sources would reveal a great deal about medieval comprehension of St. Michael and perhaps the *L'homme armé* tradition in general.

The Cult of St. Michael has observably escalated during times of strife. Further, warfare itself literally served as the catalyst in spreading the Cult's renown. The ideas surrounding St. Michael served as substitutes for a physical body or other tangible relics, and the related concepts of battle, victory, death, and empire easily attached themselves to the heavenly general.

Johannes Regis's *Missa L'homme armé* testifies to the popularity and circulation of such religious-cultural memes. In Regis's piece, contemporaneous and traditional Michaeline images combine with the Armed Man in a manner that repeatedly reinforces the Saint's central warrior aspect. Regis's *Missa L'homme armé* illuminates the post-war culture of the Franco-Flemish people, showing an attempt to bring St. Michael to earth through the personification of warfare. As the original song indicates, the Armed Man, Michael, should be feared. With the Archangel's aid, the Franco-Flemish had wreaked enormous destruction on God's enemies, with a force and effectiveness "the likes of which has never been."¹⁹⁴ *Missa L'homme armé* thus makes the impossible possible, creating a physical relic of St. Michael through the sacralization of war.

¹⁹⁴ Dan 10.12 (New International Version).

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Appendix



Plate 1: Detail from *The Virgin and The Dead Christ and The Ascension and Saints*. Bartolomeo Vivarini, 15th century.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁵ The Boston Museum of Art, *Collections* (Accessed 01 March 2008), <http://www.mfa.org/collections>



Plate 1: Detail from *The Virgin and The Dead Christ and The Ascension and Saints*. Bartolomeo Vivarini, 15th century.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁶ The Boston Museum of Art, *Collections* (Accessed 01 March 2008), <http://www.mfa.org/collections>



Plate 2: *St. Michael Weighs the Souls and Spears Satan*. Bartolomeo Vivarini, 15th century.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁷ *Short Lives of the Saints: St. Michael the Archangel* (Stanten Island: New York, 2005), 19.



Plate 3: *St. Catherine and St. Michael*. Josse Liefvixne, ca. 1503.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁸ California State University, *World Images* (Accessed 01 March 2008), <http://worldimages.sjsu.edu>.



Plate 4: *St. Michael and St. Francis*. Juan de Flandes, ca. 1508.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.



Plate 5: *St. Michael*. Anonymous, 14th century. St. Mark's Basilica.²⁰⁰

²⁰⁰ *Short Lives of the Saints*, 13.

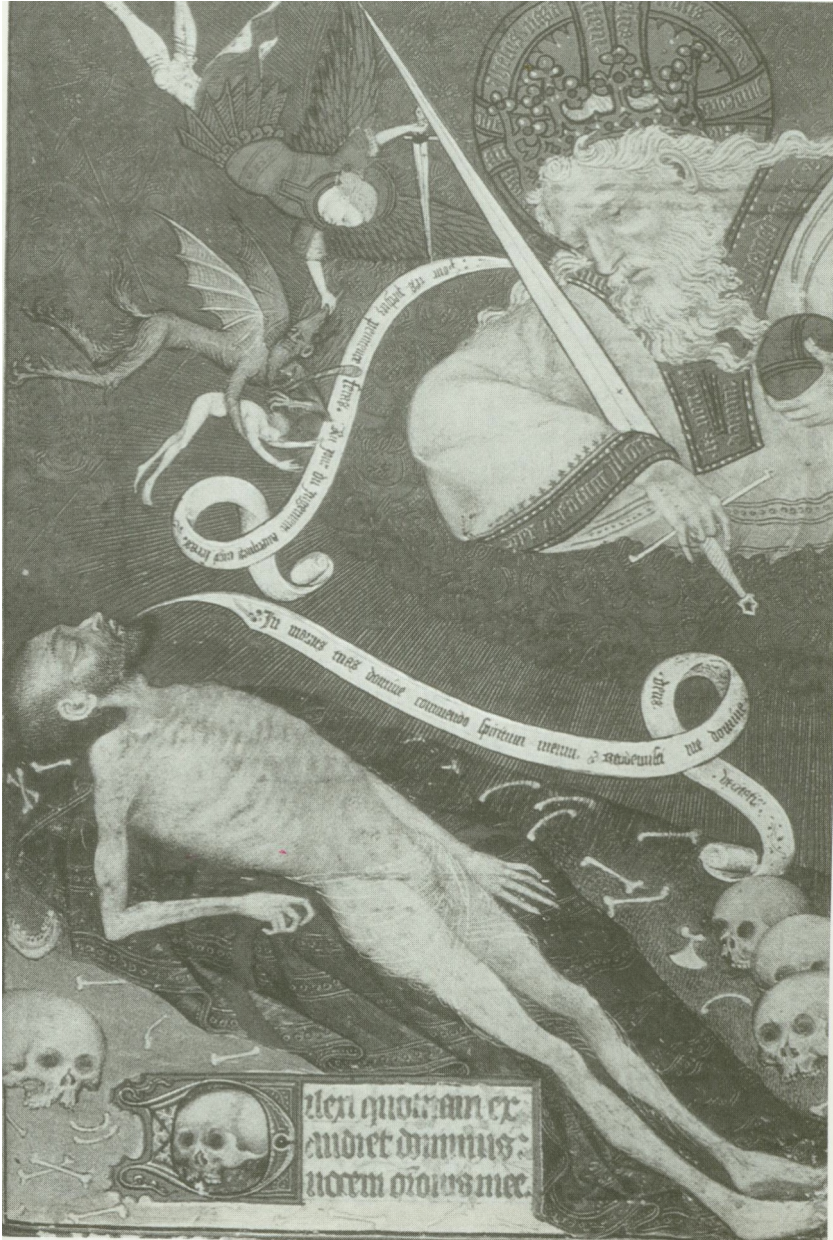


Plate 6: St. Michael battles with the devil from an early fifteenth-century manuscript. Anonymous.²⁰¹

²⁰¹ Wright, *The Maze and the Warrior*, 181.

Vita

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