

good number of the protagonists of the book are nurses – were required by the nature of their enterprise to mediate between multiple languages, including English, Gaelic, Spanish and Quechua. Instead of opening mission stations in the largest cities of Peru, they settled the Andean region. For the earliest missionaries, access to the stations of Cajamarca and Moyobamba required long and dangerous travels on the back of mules across hilly areas. Modes of travel became faster and more sophisticated from the 1960s onwards, when missionaries acquired Land-Rovers and benefitted from regular air flights. Interestingly, as they travelled across the Andes, they found that the dramatic landscape of that mountainous area and the habits of the local population reminded them of their native Highlands (pp. 46–7, 54–5, 75, 117, 129–30, 267). The appendices at the end of the book introduce the main characters of the Free Church's missionary enterprise in Peru and provide additional information on other Protestant missionary endeavours in the area.

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The archangel Michael in Africa. History, cult and persona. Edited by Invidl Sælid Gilhus, Alexandros Tsakos and Marta Camilla Wright. Pp. xvi + 246 incl. 26 ills and 5 maps. London–New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021 (paper) (first publ. 2019). £28.99 (paper). 978 1 3502 4267 8
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This collection of essays is the outcome of a collaboration instigated by three researchers based at Bergen in Norway who co-ordinated a varied group of researchers, including art historians at the Universities of Warsaw and Pretoria, to discuss and share insights into ways in which the archangel Michael has influenced church life in Africa to create, as they put it, a network of Michaelic studies.

Michael, and other angels, occupy and traverse the boundary between the transcendent divine space of heaven and the confused, immanent and immediate world of human experience. A monotheistic faith in a one creator God inevitably raises the existential question of how creator and creation can connect and communicate.

Angels, as an introductory essay shows, inhabit this space as 'a universal category of intermediate beings' (p. 11). Angels appear across the Middle East in different forms in both monotheistic and polytheistic forms of faith. Some have names, some acquired wings (to enable them to move between heaven and earth), some are divine messengers, some are superhuman beings. Whatever form they appear in, they have an impact on human life. Signs of their importance are shown not only in Christian iconography and stained glass windows but also in less expected places such as modern retail, with the St Michael brand popular in Marks & Spencer stores.

Africa is a good place to look in order to discover why angels matter. The roots of religion in Africa reach back into pre-Christian times with influences coming from Egyptian, Greek, Jewish and Christian traditions leading in to later forms of faith.

Spirits are vividly present and active within African society where the management of both evil and benign spirits is an essential function of religious faith. In Africa, faith cannot be separated from daily life to form its own distinctive space, so much so that the concept of religion, apart from life, makes little sense. For the early Christians of Africa, Constantinople with its ecumenical councils defining faith was located at a safe distance and so the doctrinal preoccupations and credal definitions had little impact on African society and there was less attention given to intellectual forms. All this enabled angels to flourish in Africa.

The archangel Michael is mentioned in four places in the Bible. He is a supporter and protector of the Jews in the book of the prophet Daniel (Daniel x.13; xii.1); he overcomes Satan (Revelation xii.7); and is involved in an obscure dispute over the body of Moses (Jude 9). From this biblical basis comes a rich tradition of literature, a conspicuous presence in iconography and an active role in healing and overcoming evil in popular religion.

The essays in this book approach the subject of angels in radically different ways. There are four sections each of which refers to a centre of faith on the eastern side of Africa – from Egypt to Nubia to Ethiopia to South Africa; and these geographical spaces relate to different periods from the beginnings in Egypt and to contemporary experience in South Africa.

These four sections also show the different roles which Michael fulfils within the life of Christians. In Egypt, the veneration of Michael is demonstrated in a text entitled 'The Investiture of the Archangel Michael', which describes Michael as intercessor, minister and protector of worshippers. The earliest texts of this work date from the ninth century and show Michael's importance in apocryphal literature. His place as protector is further shown in liturgical texts which recognise and pray for Michael's action in ensuring the annual flooding of the Nile river.

Within iconography Michael is present in icons of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary. This points to his role as psychopomp, the one who conducts the soul through death into the next world. A traditional symbol of this role is the set of scales in which good deeds outweigh evil. These themes are also present in the iconography of the Nubian Church which flourished until the fifteenth century.

Michael's role as protector derives from his primordial victory over Satan. This overcoming of evil is shown in the experience of Ethiopian Christians, as they seek healing from Michael in times of illness and also to be freed from the power of spirits. A further aspect of this protection is shown in the context of the conflict between British and Afrikaner communities in South Africa from the end of the nineteenth century. The figure of Michael is claimed by both sides as both guide and protector. He appears in stained glass windows in English churches and also as an influence on Dutch memorials celebrating the Great Trek. Here the presence of the St Michael brand in shopping denotes quality and luxury – among these products being the desirable St Michael elephant soap.

The book brings together a wide range of themes and disciplines from different areas and periods. Alongside discussion of a historic text is the review of iconography, including the results of a research project on Nubian icons carried out by Polish researchers. There is a report by an anthropologist of interviews with a contemporary Ethiopian Christian, and also themes in South African society by Afrikaner scholars. This diverse set of themes is held together by general essays,

which place the research into context. These describe the development of Christianity in the various regions, and also the wider traditions of who angels are and how they work.

The breadth of the discussion points to the consistency and pervasiveness of the themes through the life of the Church and the important place of Michael the Archangel in the lives of believers. Angelology, we discover, is not a remote and abstract theme of theology but is the direct experience of Christians enabling them to manage their lives and be protected from harm.

The rich set of themes suggests that there is more to come, with more contributions from other parts of the continent and other Churches to further enrich our understanding of popular faith.

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Evangelicals and the end of Christendom. Religion, Australia, and the crises of the 1960s. By Hugh Chilton. (Studies in Evangelicalism.) Pp. x + 256 incl. 9 ills. London–New York: Routledge, 2020. £36.99 (paper). 978 1 03 208210 3
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The decay of Christendom and the secularisation of society affected Australia in the 1960s as much as most other English-speaking lands. The sense of disruption, however, was accentuated there by the fading of the nation's bond with Britain, the country from which the Christian denominations of the country derived. Hugh Chilton, Director of Research and Professional Learning at The Scots College, Sydney, depicts the responses in the Australian Evangelical Churches. Unlike many earlier commentators on religion in Australia, but, like Stuart Piggin and Robert Lander in their recent volumes *The fountain of public prosperity* (Melbourne 2018) and *Attending to the national soul* (Melbourne 2020), Chilton treats a Christian Australia as a reality in the years before the 1960s. Faith helped to create a sense of identity for the people. Chilton's book is about how Evangelicals, a high proportion of the religious public, addressed the issues arising from the disintegration of that identity. By taking a different response in each of six chapters, the author demonstrates that there was a great variety of understandings of how best to address the crisis that extended into the 1970s.

The first substantive chapter examines what was perhaps the most obvious strategy, resistance. Fred Nile, a Congregational minister who from 1981 was to be a member of the New South Wales legislative council, had been appointed in 1965 the first full-time national director of the Christian Endeavour movement. For Nile its slogan of 'Christian Citizenship' meant primarily opposition to the sapping of the moral fibre of the nation and so it was natural that, when the Australian Festival of Light was formed in the following decade to struggle against the decay of public standards, he should become its leading figure. Militant and outspoken, Nile adopted an uncompromising stance against the social changes of the period. The subject of the next chapter is very different. Hans Mol, a post-war Dutch immigrant, generated a reasoned academic approach to formulating a Christian strategy for the era. As a member of the Department of