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## Archangels Michael and Gabriel in Coptic Illuminated Manuscripts from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> century AD: An Iconographical and Analytical Study

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### Abstract

Egypt has always been known for its huge collection of manuscripts since its earliest times and through its different successive historical periods. It is in Egypt that the paper manufacture has begun and the ancient Egyptian alphabet was established. The early Coptic manuscripts used to be kept in the churches, monasteries, and even in the private houses of Coptic noblemen. Religious texts, hymns, and prayers represent the majority of such Coptic texts; these were sometimes appended with characters and portraits, which enforced the meaning and added holiness to the manuscripts. This paper aims to study the miniatures and the accompanied themes in Coptic illuminated manuscripts, in particular those associated with the archangels Michael and Gabriel, who enjoyed a great veneration and holiness in Coptic traditions. This article studies the iconography of such illuminated Coptic manuscripts within and outside Egypt from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> century AD. It gives a description of such illuminated manuscripts before considering the iconography dating, and provenance and origin of the manuscripts. It finally presents an analytical study and draws out the conclusions.

## 1. Introduction

Decorating manuscripts was an ancient desire of human race as a source of beauty; the term “illuminate” means to “highlight” or “lighten up” the book pages with bright colors and polished gold edges and miniatures to portray incidents accompanying the written texts (Murray J., Street A. 1893). Illuminated manuscript had its roots in pharaonic Egypt since the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty; Egyptian funerary papyri used to be decorated with illuminated and decorated items (Bradley 1909). Clear examples can be seen in the “Book of the Dead”, which was illuminated with miniatures and floral borders surrounding the edge of the papyrus roll (Middleton 2010)<sup>1</sup>. The Copts of Egypt inherited the same tradition of decorating their manuscripts with illuminations. The Syrians and Armenians painters, who have lived in Cairo during the 13<sup>th</sup> century, were responsible for painting and decorating Coptic icons, manuscripts, and wall paintings (Gabra 2008).<sup>2</sup> The Coptic<sup>3</sup> illuminated manuscripts may contain some principle elements like a frame either gilded or not; a foliate border may be decorated by flowers or garlands, while the rubric may be written in red; in additions, a small miniature that portrays the accompanied text may be used (Brown et al., 2018). This type of art witnessed relatively a revival on a small scale by the sixth century, when spirals, plants, and birds were first introduced; other Greek influences have also appeared in the punctuation marks. The adoption of the Greek alphabet enriched the ornamentations, where the scenes portraying the accompanied text may fill a whole page (Bourguet and Ayalon 1991).

By the eighth century, Coptic illuminated manuscripts, particularly those containing religious and holy hymns, were widely flourished. Ornamental square frames were introduced to surround the whole manuscript, while ornaments and human figures were depicted on the top of the page (Bourguet and Ayalon 1991). Miniatures and illustrations have begun to illuminate Coptic manuscripts from the early 9<sup>th</sup> to the late 10<sup>th</sup> century; these were considered the earliest examples both in binding and book decorations among Coptic Christian manuscripts; this collection was assembled by Pierpont Morgan, and it is now kept in his library in the United States (Hyvernat 1912). Another collection of illuminated Coptic manuscript is kept in the British Museum in London; it is brought from different places like the White Monastery, the Fayyum, and Wadi el Natrun monasteries, and they are written in different Egyptian dialects (Crum 1905). The Middle Ages manuscripts were found in ancient monasteries like those of Wadi el Natrun, Saint Antony, and Saint Shenut (Alessandro et al. 2015).

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<sup>1</sup> Illuminated or decorative manuscripts were also known in Italy during the thirteenth century AD in one of the non-canonical bible (Pelosi et al., 2017).

<sup>2</sup> Unless otherwise stated, all dates through the article are in AD.

<sup>3</sup> The Coptic language forms the last stage of ancient Egyptian native language or the Egyptian hieroglyphs; the survival heritage of the Coptic literature is mostly religious and predominantly Christian (Bagnall 1993).

### 1.1. Archangels in Coptic Heritage:

Angels are a very dominant element in Coptic religious art and architecture; they are commonly depicted on different artifacts and are incorporated in other architectural elements (Oliver et al. 2008). The term “archangel” was derived from the Greek word “archangelos”, which means “the chief messenger” or “the chief angel; the word also can be implied to mean the “Holy One”, archangels are regarded as the link between God and the people on earth; they are often portrayed either as warriors against devil and Satan or the deliverers of divine decrees from God to his messengers on earth (Guiley 2004).

In Coptic terms, archangels enjoy a special status before God; they appear as bodiless, fiery winged creatures, and larger in size than humans. Michael is the leader of the archangels; he is followed by Gabriel in his rank, especially when they appear together; they both support and protect righteous people and carry out God’s orders and assigning duties to the lesser angels (Saweros 2019).

Archangels were created on the first day of the universe creation; they were also part of the light<sup>4</sup> (فانوس و جمال جورج 2009). They appear in human form to deliver a message revealing a God’s will; the Greek term “ἄγγελόν”, which means “angel”, was pronounced by Jesus Christ (Mt. 11:10). According to the Book of Revelation, there are seven archangels: Michael, Gabriel, Ananiel, Suriel, Raphael, Sedakiel and Sarathiel (Mayer 1996); they are usually represented as complete warriors, holding swords and lances to fulfill their duties as messengers and faith protectors (Clement 1899). The archangels Michael and Gabriel are frequently mentioned in the New Testament, for example in Luke 1:11, 19:26, Jude 9, and 12:7 (Garrett; Susan R. 2008).

#### 1. 2. The Archangel Michael:

The archangel Michael is the chief angel in both Judaism and Christianity, and the defeater of the Satan (Budge 1914). He is the most popular archangel and heavenly being for the Christians; his status is even analogous to that of the Holy Virgin (Esbroeck 1991). He is usually celebrated on the 12<sup>th</sup> Hathor and Pauni (Saweros 2019) and on the 12<sup>th</sup> of each month (Esbroeck 1991). His Hebrew name means “he who is like god” or “he who is unto God”; he is the protector of the Hebrew nation and the guardian of the soul and the sword (Clement 1899).

The archangel Michael was also associated with the Judgment Day (Gabra et al. 2008). He enjoyed high status, imperial patronage, and veneration in Egypt and Nubia, especially in the second half of the fifth century (Awad 2018). It is known that many Homilies<sup>5</sup> were written addressed to him (Saweros 2019). Mentions of St. Michael are found in the Old and the New Testaments in Daniel 10: 13; Jude 9; Revelation 12:7, Revelation 20:1 (Murray J., Street A. 1893). He is given the title of the archangel in Jude 1:9 (Saweros 2019). He is the helper of humankind and the healer of the sick people; he is also the one who leads the believer’s souls to paradise and offers the prayers of the righteous people before God. He is usually portrayed as a soldier, suppressing the Satan by one hand and holding a sword in the other showing justice and fair (Murray and Street 1893). According to Coptic tradition archangel

<sup>4</sup> (*Gen. 1:3*). (1 Cor. 10:14)

<sup>5</sup> The “homily” is derived from the Greek word “*homilia*”; it is the preachment that usually recited after the scripture’s reading (Jerome J. 2001).

Michael rolled the stone of Jesus’s tomb and announced his resurrection among the dead (Gabra et al. 2008).

### 1.3. The Archangel Gabriel

The name of the archangel Gabriel means “God is my strength”, “the strength of God”, or “the principle angel”. He is often associated with glory and dignity (Timpson 1845). He is one of the chief and high ranking angels; he is often incorporated in the main incidents of Christianity such as the annunciation, resurrection, mercy, vengeance, and death (Davidson 1967). He is the first angel named in the Book of Daniel of the Old Testament (Basset ed. 1904). He is also the guardian of the Garden of Eden (Saweros 2019). The archangel Gabriel is included in the orders of cherubim (Miller 2019). He was also known in the Old Testament as the Angel of the Lord, as mentioned in the sacrifice of Isaac in Genesis 22, Exodus 3 and Exodus 22 in the story of Moses and the sacred bush; in the story of Balaam in Acts 12:23, he appears as the angel of death (Oliver; Lewis 2008)<sup>6</sup>.

The archangel Gabriel is shown in the Old Testament as an elucidator, who explained the vision of Prophet Daniel that shows the knowledge given to him by God. He also announced the Holy Virgin Mary with her divine birth of Jesus Christ and foretold Zachariah the birth of his coming son “John the Baptist” (Muehlberger 2008).; he also saved the Hebrew youth at the fiery furnace and accompanied Michael to destroy the city of Sodom and Gomorrah (Danielon, 1987). He is also responsible for many missions, such as the seer over the serpents, the paradise, and the cherubim. His role was also observed on the Judgment Day to set punishment for the unbelievers. The Coptic liturgy celebrates his feast on the 30<sup>th</sup> of Pharmuthi as the feast of annunciation and on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of Khoiak as the celebration of the consecration of his church at Caesarea (Perez, 1991). He is usually depicted on the right side of Jesus Christ along with the archangel Michael on the left. He accompanies the Holy Virgin Mary in most of her scenes (Smith & Cheetham 1875). The exact relationship between Gabriel and Michael is not clear. It is also unknown whether Michael has authority over Gabriel to assign certain mission to him or not; their titles are also confusing since they are both known as the messengers of life (Saweros 2019).

## 2. The Iconographical Study

<b>Figure number</b>	1	<b>Depicted theme</b>	The archangel Michael
<b>Place of preservation</b>	Pierpont Morgan Library MS M. 607.	<b>Dating</b>	Egypt, before Aug. 30, AD 895 (Depuydt 1993)
<b>Accompanied inscription</b>	name inscribed in Coptic- Coptic, the Sahidic dialect	<b>Provenance</b>	Fayyūm Province, Egypt <sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> King Herod has not paid enough praise and respect to God he was punished by the angel of the Lord as he struck him down to die and he was eaten by worms of the earth.

<sup>7</sup> A group of Coptic manuscripts discovered by Egyptian farmers in a stone vat near the village of al-Hamuli of the Fayyum Oasis; they were purchased by J. Pierpont Morgan; and are on display in a Morgan Library and Museum in New York. The collection is known nowadays by St. Michael Collection as it was found nearby to his monastery (Achi 2018).

**Description:** The painting is a part of a manuscript written by Theodosius, the archbishop of Alexandria. It depicts a miniature of Michael accompanying hymns and prayers addressed to him. He is represented standing facing the viewer; with a yellow halo surrounding his head and what appears to be a crown is placed on its top. He holds a long staff in right hand and cross-inscribed globe in the left. He wears a dark red tunic surmounted by a yellow outer garment; the two wings attached to his back are decorated with circles and simple lines. His somber features reflect a typical Coptic



art; a clear disproportion is noticed in his features and his body as well

Figure1: Archangel Michael (Leroy 1974).

<b>Figure number</b>	2	<b>Depicted theme</b>	miscellaneous in Honor of the Virgin Mary ( Annunciation scene)
<b>Place of preservation</b>	The Morgan library and museum, New York.No. 597.	<b>Dating</b>	913-914; the ninth century ( Depuydt 1993)
<b>Accompanied inscription</b>	Coptic, the Sahidic dialect	<b>Provenance</b>	Fayyum Province

**Description:** the scene depicts the central incident of annunciation; it decorates the first page of a manuscript that consists of 75 leaves formed of 2 columns and 30-32 lines, about 351 x 268 mm (Depuydt 1993.) The scene depicts the two main figures sitting next to each other, and their heads are surrounded by a halo. Archangel Gabriel is wearing a long dark brown garment that reaches his foot. He is wearing sandals, and a shawl covering most of his body except for an opening showing his chest. His elongated face shows somber features, and a thin white stripe decorates his hair. Thick eyebrows, round eyes, thin lips, and frontal pose, reflect pure Coptic artistic features. His right arm is pointing at Virgin Mary, and his left hand immerses from the shawl and holds a sword with a pointed edge forming a cross.

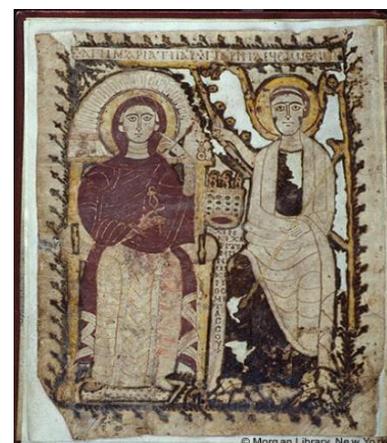


Figure 2: Annunciation (Leroy 1974); pl. B

<b>Figure number</b>	Three	<b>Depicted theme</b>	The archangel Michael
<b>Place of preservation</b>	The Morgan library and museum, New York. No. 603.	<b>Dating</b>	902-903; the ninth century (Institut du monde Arabe 2000)
<b>Accompanied inscription</b>	Archangel Michael, name inscribed (damaged) in Coptic.	<b>Provenance</b>	Fayyum Province

**Description:** the manuscript consists of 24 leaves formed of 2 columns and 30-32 lines, bound; about 314 x 248 mm. It is a sermon attributed to Severus of Antioch. Saint Michael is depicted on a background most probably a red curtain. He is wearing a half-sleeved long tunic with a triangle scarf ornamenting his chest; a golden collar surrounding his neck, pair of sandals of the same color is placed in his feet. He is holding a sword with a pointed edge forming a cross, and the other hand holds a circular object with a cross inscribed in its middle.



Figure 3: St. Michael Archangel (Institut du monde Arabe 2000) and (Leroy 1974).

<b>Figure number</b>	Four	<b>Depicted theme</b>	The archangel Michael
<b>Place of preservation</b>	British museum oriental no. 7021	<b>Dating</b>	987 A.D, the 10 <sup>th</sup> century (Leroy, 1974)
<b>Accompanied inscription</b>	Coptic inscription mentioning the name of Saint Michael (Leroy, 1974).	<b>Provenance</b>	Edfu; Esna (Leroy, 1974).

**Description:** The manuscript contains about 48 pages; it measures 28 cm in length and 18 cm in width written in 30 lines. The painting depicts the Archangel Michael while the accompanying text contains prayers and hymns addressed to him written by Saint Theodosius of Alexandria. The archangel is represented as a youthful man with a full circular face standing on a pedestal; most of it is ruined due to the damage in the lower edge of the manuscript. A frontal fringe covers the sides of his forehead while his monobrow surmounts his oval eyes, thin nose, and circular lips reflecting his somber features. He is wearing a long tunic that covers his knees and reaches around his calf. A *pallium* surmounts his half-sleeved tunic covering his left shoulder and tied with a buckle on his right shoulder; a belt is fastened around his waist with two circular rings hangs dangling on his lower kilt; shell-shaped ornamentation adorns the lower edge. He is dressed more like a warrior; holding a long stick ends by a cross-shaped end while his right-hand holds the circular glob. The wings are covered by circles covering the whole surface and had a bird feather end.



Fig. 4: Archangel Michael; the British museum site: <https://www.bl.uk/collection-guides/coptic-collections>

<b>Figure number</b>	Five and six	<b>Depicted theme</b>	Archangel Gabriel; Annunciation to Virgin Mary and Zachariah
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<b>Place of preservation</b>	The National library of Paris	<b>Dating</b>	1179/11780- 12 <sup>th</sup> century (Leroy 1974)
<b>Accompanied inscription</b>	Inscriptions written in Coptic and translated in Arabic.	<b>Provenance</b>	A copy of the four Gospels written by bishop Michael of Damietta.

**Description:** The manuscript is written in 2 languages; Arabic and Bohairic dialects read as;

زكريا و هو يرفع البخور... الملاك غبريال و هو يبشره بيوحنا"

"The second figure: "و هو يبشر مريم العذري "

This manuscript forms a copy of the four Gospels written by bishop Michael of Damietta; adorned by some scenes accompanying the main text. The Annunciation to Virgin Mary and Zachariah forms a very important epoch of St. Gabriel's deeds as he acts as a messenger to inform both of them of the coming child Jesus and John the Baptist. The Archangel Gabriel seems almost identical in the two scenes. He is painted as a youthful man with a yellow halo surrounding his head; he is wearing a long tunic surmounted by a *pallium* that covers only one of his shoulders and leaves the other shoulder uncovered; two huge wings are attached to his back forming a pointed arch at its top and ends by feathers as a bird-like end. Beautiful drapery folds are noticed in his outer cloak and the ends of his garments; his facial features are slightly somber with elongated eyes thin eyebrows and lips. He is pointing to the Virgin Mary and Zachariah with his right hand while his left hand is holding a long stick ended by a cross-shaped ending.



Figs. 5, 6: Annunciation to Virgin Mary and Zachariah; gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France. Département des Manuscrits. Copte 13

<b>Figure number</b>	Seven and eight	<b>Depicted theme</b>	Saint Mark the Evangelist and the Archangel Michael
<b>Place of preservation</b>	The Vatican library (Leroy 1974)	<b>Dating</b>	1202/5 the 12 <sup>th</sup> century (Leroy 1974)
<b>Accompanied inscription</b>	Coptic inscription mentions the name of the Archangel Michael and Saint Mark and Luc.	<b>Provenance</b>	Monastery of St. Antony the eastern desert

**Description:** the manuscript consists of 504 pages about 24 cm in length. It is a Coptic- Arabic copy of the four gospels; the accompanied figure shows the beginning of the gospel of Saint Mark the Evangelist and the gospel of Luke; both saints are almost identical sitting on a high back throne faced by Archangel Michael; who is represented standing; stretching one of his hands to the sitting. Fig (7) shows the archangel Michael wearing an imperial custom lavishly decorated in the form of a red tunic adorned with golden edges around his neck collar, and his wrist edges and the end of his tunic which reaches his red high neck shoes; his wings are beautifully portrayed on his back, and his head is surrounded by a golden halo. The delicate features of the archangel are beautifully depicted with slightly long brown hair looking at the sitting saint and holding a long stick with a cross-shaped end. The archangel in the second fig (8) is depicted on a slightly taller scale, maybe because he is standing on a pedestal a bit leaning toward the sitting figure, dressed in a different custom full of drapers and folds. His outer garment is slightly transparent showing an under-tunic reaches to his feet.



Fig. 7 Saint Mark and the Archangel Michal, Attalah 2000



Fig. 8 Saint Luke and the Archangel Michal; Attalah 2000

<b>Figure number</b>	Nine	<b>Depicted theme</b>	The announcement of Jesus birth and the announcement to Zacharias.
<b>Place of preservation</b>	Catholic institute in Paris ( Leroy 1974)	<b>Dating</b>	1249-1250 the 12 <sup>th</sup> century ( Leroy 1974)
<b>Accompanied inscription</b>	Arabic inscriptions	<b>Provenance</b>	Cairo ( Leroy 1974)

Description: the manuscript is written in two languages; Arabic and Coptic read as follows الملك : و هو يبشر العدري؟ السيد الروح القدس؟ زكريا الكاهن و الملك يبشره بمولد؟

This page represents the beginning of the gospel of Luke; it is decorated by miniatures about 6 cm in length representing different episodes of Zachariah and the Virgin Mary's life. The archangel Gabriel is depicted in two scenes from left to right (the annunciation to Zachariah and the annunciation to Virgin Mary.) He is depicted almost in the same vestment except for his vestment color which is colored contrary to the surmounted shawl. It is not

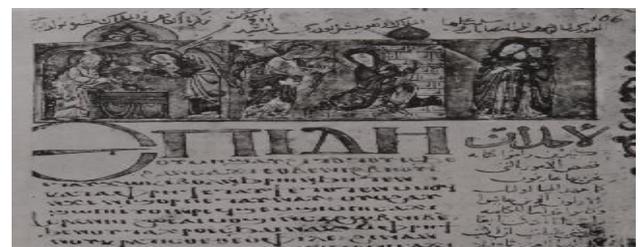


Fig.9: Annuciation to Mary and Zacharia; مرقس سميكه و آخرون (1939)

clear what object he is carrying in his hands, but the wings attached to his back are seen.

<b>Figure number</b>	Ten and eleven	<b>Depicted theme</b>	Annunciation and a worrier Archangel
<b>Place of preservation</b>	The library at the monastery of Saint Paul	<b>Dating</b>	Most probably the 13 <sup>th</sup> century
<b>Accompanied inscription</b>	Coptic and Arabic inscription	<b>Provenance</b>	The library at the monastery of Saint Paul

**Description:** This manuscript comprises grammar and vocabulary of the Coptic language written in Arabic while the preface of its parts is adorned with miniatures depicting annunciation and other different depictions of Archangels drawn by the priest Guirgus from Shihet. This grammar book is written by Abu Farag Ibn Al-Assal (Atallah 2000); a Coptic scholar from the thirteenth century. Fig (10) depicts the annunciation scene. The archangel Gabriel is



Fig.10: Annunciation (Attala 2000)



Fig. 11: Archangel; (Attala 2000)

identified by the accompanied text written in Arabic mentioning his name "صورت الملاك جبرائيل"; he is depicted wearing a long tunic that reaches his feet, surmounted by an outer vestment that reaches to his ankles. A simple rim decorates his tunic edges and around his neck's opening; his upper torso is turning toward the viewer, and his both hands are raised in praise as he is announcing the birth of the coming Jesus to Virgin Mary the second miniature fig. (11) that shows an armed costumed archangel, standing on the chest of an enemy, holds a stick ending by a cross in his right hand while his left-hand holds a sword, his somber features can be recognized in both scenes

<b>Figure number</b>	Fig. 12	<b>Depicted theme</b>	Annunciation
<b>Place of preservation</b>	Coptic museum collection (Attala 2000)	<b>Dating</b>	1689 A. D
<b>Accompanied inscription</b>	Arabic inscription	<b>Provenance</b>	

Description: It is a copy of the four gospels written in Arabic; adorned with miniatures corresponding to the accompanied text; fig. (12) Shows the annunciation scene following the traditional popular style of Coptic art accompanied by a text on the upper rim read as: صورہ الملاك الجليل غبريال يبشر الست السيده . بحلول كلمه الله في أحشائها و روح القدس حالي؟ عليها. The archangel Gabriel represented in the traditional form as a young youthful man standing on a cloud; wearing a dark red tunic and a black outer vestment; he is pointing at Virgin Mary with his right hand while his left hand holds a long stem ending with a flower bouquet; his head is surrounded by a golden halo; the whole scene the emphasizes as he has just come to announce Virgin Mary for the coming of Jesus Christ.

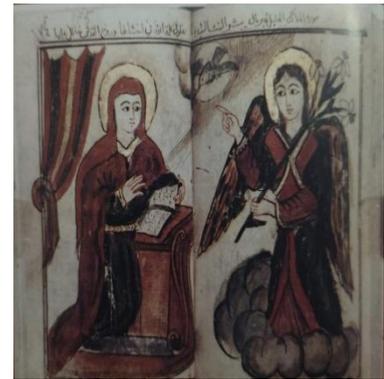


Fig. 12 Annunciation (Attala 2000)

<b>Figure number</b>	Fig. 13 and 14	<b>Depicted theme</b>	Annunciation and resurrection events
<b>Place of preservation</b>	Walters’s art museum library Ms. W.592, Gospels.	<b>Dating</b>	1684 A.D
<b>Accompanied inscription</b>	The accompanied text written in Arabic	<b>Provenance</b>	Egypt; unknown provenance

Description: The manuscript is an Arabic copy of the four gospels written in *Naskh* handwriting with black and rubrics in red ink. Fig. (13) depicts the famous scene of the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary by the archangel Gabriel, while the other Fig. (14) represents the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The depictions of the two archangels are almost identical they are depicted as young men either sitting or standing with black long hair tied from the back forming a hair lock rests on their shoulders, and a golden halo surrounds their heads while the traditional wings seen attached to their back with a curved edge at its top. Gabriel is depicted wearing a long tunic that reaches to his ankles surmounted by a red *pallium*.



Fig. 13 and 14; Annunciation and Jesus Resurrection;  
<https://www.thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/html/W592/description.html>

### 3. Analytical Study

Archangel's Figure	Provenance	Date in AD	Manuscript type	Archangel description	Objects held by the Archangels	Accompanied text
Fig: (1) The archangel Michael	Fayyūm Province	9 <sup>th</sup> century	hymns and prayers addressed to archangel Michael	A simple primitive lines shows the archangel Michael in a standing attitude	A long stick and a circular glob inscribed by a cross	Coptic; Sahidic dialect mentions the name of Saint Michael
Fig: (2) The archangel Gabriel Annunciation scene	Fayyum Province	9 <sup>th</sup> century	Miscellany in Honor of the Virgin Mary	Different depiction; shows slightly elongated face round eyes and thin lips	A sword with a pointed edge forming a cross.	Coptic Text, Sahidic dialect
Fig: (3) The archangel Michael	Fayyum Province	9 <sup>th</sup> century	Hymns and prayers addressed to archangel Michael	Archangel Michael in a standing attitude shows youthful features	A long stick with a cross end and a circular glob inscribed by a cross	Coptic text ; mentions the name of Saint Michael
Fig: (7,8 ) Archangel Michael with Saint Mark and Saint Luc	Monastery of St. Antony the eastern desert	12 <sup>th</sup> century	A Coptic-Arabic copy of the four gospels	Fig (7) shows the archangel Michael wearing an imperial custom lavishly decorated; while fig (8); shows a tunic and a slightly transparent outer garment.	A long stick with ornamented by different crosses at the end.	Coptic inscriptions mention the name of the Archangel Michael and Saint Mark and Luc.
Fig: (9) Annunciation to Mary and Zacharia	Cairo	12 <sup>th</sup> century	the beginning of the gospel of Luke	He is depicted almost identical in both scenes; wearing the same vestment except for its color which is colored in contrary with the surmounted shawl.	It is not clear what is object he is carrying in his hands	الملاك و هو يبشر العذري ؟ السيد الروح زكريا الكاهن القدس؟ و الملك يبشره بمولد ؟
Figs: (10 and 11 )	The monastery	Most probably	grammar and	He is wearing a long tunic	Fig.10 shows Gabriel	"صورت الملك"

Annunciation scene and an armed archangels	of Saint Paul	the 13 <sup>th</sup> century	vocabularies of the Coptic language	surmounted a vestment reaches till his ankles, fig. (11) Shows an armed costumed archangel; standing on the chest of an enemy.	raising hands in praise; while Fig. 11 holds a stick ends by a cross in his right hand while his left hands holds a sword	جبرائيل.." The other scene carries no inscriptions
Fig. 12 Annunciation		The 16 <sup>th</sup> century	a copy of the four gospels written in Arabic	The archangel Gabriel represented in the traditional form as a young youthful man standing on a cloud; wearing a dark red tunic and a black outer vestment.	a long stem ends a flowers bouquet	صوره الملاك الجليل غيريال يبشر الست السيدة بحلول كلمه الله في أحشائها و روح القدس حاللي؟ عليها

**4. Conclusion:** The archangels Michael and Gabriel enjoyed high importance and played prominent roles in Coptic heritage; either as heavenly creatures who are deeply incorporated by the ultimate power of Jesus Christ or as the messengers of God's divine words to the chosen people on earth. Coptic manuscripts are a vital part of Coptic heritage in Egypt and sometimes decorated or illuminated with heavenly, who accompanied the holy text to articulate the meaning and bless the whole manuscript. According to the above mentioned table; it can be noticed that:

- Texts accompanying the depictions of Archangels in Coptic manuscripts either mention the name of the accompanied figures as in figs: 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10 or mentioning the verse of the holy tale like figs; 5, 6, 9, 12, 13, 14.
- The depictions of Archangels as miniatures were sometimes used to adorn the pages of the manuscript and add blessings to the texts. Fig. 10, 11.
- Illuminated manuscript may vary in its usage; some were intended as hand book for private liturgical purpose (Metzger 1976); which explain the imperfection in art in some miniatures and miss proportional figs 1, 2, 9, 10.
- Archangel Michael was frequently depicted as a standing figure in hymns and prayers addressed to him especially in St. Michael's as they were found nearby to his monastery figs: 1, 3, 4.
- He was also depicted accompanying the four writers of the Gospels; like Mark and Luc, as a heavenly inspiration to enforce their writings. Figs. 13, 14.
- According to the Coptic traditions the archangel Michael was the one who announced the ladies of Jesus Christ resurrection; the incident itself was

mentioned in Matthew 28:1-7, Mark 16:1-7, Luc 24:1-7, and John 20:12. Thus fig. 12 can be interpreted the depicted archangel is Saint Michael.

- A rare depiction of Archangel Michael shows him wearing a cap over his round halo fig. 1; this can be interpreted as reflecting the painter's desire to imitate the usual depiction of the Archangel Michael. This why a royal crown is added on his head to emphasize his royalty and dignity.
- It is often assumed that the depiction of the archangel Michael holding a circular object in his left hand as a reference to the whole globe in the form of a ball; as it used to be carried by emperors and kings during their celebrations (Costigan 1937); while it has been also interpreted it as the *haml* or the liturgical loaf the oblation (Madsen 1975). On the other hand, Budge suggested that the object was meant to represent an orb in early Coptic art, while by the 7<sup>th</sup> century it was used to refer to the Eucharistic loaf (Budge et al., 1894). Thus, the circular item in figs. 3 and 4 refers to the Eucharistic loaf.
- Archangel Michael was frequently depicted as a standing figure in hymns and prayers addressed to him, especially those found nearby his monastery (figs: 1, 3, 4). He is also depicted accompanying the four writers of Gospels like Mark and Luke as a heavenly inspiration to enforce their writings (Figs. 13-14). According to Coptic traditions, the archangel Michael was the one who announced the ladies of Jesus Christ resurrection; the incident itself is mentioned in Matthew 28:1-7, Mark 16:1-7, Luke 24:1-7, and John 20:12. Thus, the archangel depicted in fig. 11 can be interpreted as Michael.
- The archangel Gabriel was commonly depicted as a young man holding a long stick with a pointed end forming a cross. Figs: 2,5,13 or raising both hands in praise fig: 10. Rarely, he is shown holding a long stem ends with a flower bouquet as in an example from the 16<sup>th</sup> century (fig. 12).

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## تمثيل رؤساء الملائكة ميخائيل و جبرائيل في المخطوطات القبطية المصوره من القرن التاسع إلي القرن السادس عشر الميلادي: دراسته تصويريه و تحليليه

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### المستخلص

تضم مصر مجموعه كبيره من المخطوطات والتي تعود إلي أقدم العصور وإلي فتراتھا التاريخيه المختلفه، ففي مصر بدأ تصنيع الورق و إختراع الكتابه و الأبدنيه المصريه القديمه . وكانت المخطوطات القبطيه الأولي عاده ما تحفظ في الكنائس و الأديره أو منازل النبلاء الأقباط و عاده ما تحتوي نصوص دينيه أو ترانيم وصلوات، و بعض تلك المخطوطات قد تكون مصوره ببعض الشخصيات المقدسه و التي تعزز المعني و القدسيه لهذا المخطوط. تتناول هذه الورقه البحثيه دراسته المنمات و الموضوعات المصاحبه لهذه المخطوطات المصوره و تخص بالبحث تمثيل رؤساء الملائكه ميخائيل و جبرائيل و الذين كانا يتمتعا بقدسيه خاصه و مكانه متميزه في التراث و العقيدہ المسيحيه من خلال دراسته المخطوطات المصوره داخل مصر و خارجها و تتبع الدرسته خلال ذلك دراسته تصويريه و تحليليه.

### الكلمات الدالة

مخطوطات قبطيه مصوره  
منمات  
رئيس الملائكه ميخائيل  
رئيس الملائكه جبرائيل