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# HAGIOGRAPHIC TRADITIONS REGARDING ST MAXIMINUS (MESMIN) UP TO THE NINTH CENTURY<sup>[\*]</sup>

Satoshi Tada

[\*] This article is based on the papers I read at the University of Leeds on 3 July 2013 and 10 July 2014, during the International Medieval Congress. Some of the ideas mentioned in this article have appeared in my Japanese works: Satoshi Tada, "Organising the Distribution Network as a Monastic Function: The Case of the Monastery of Micy near Orléans in Carolingian Francia," in *The Comparative Social History of Various Regions: Europe and Russia*, ed. Tsuneyuki Dohi (Tokyo, 2007), pp. 53–87; Satoshi Tada, *The Religious Instruction of People and the Cult of Saints in the Medieval Europe: Orléans and Liège in the Carolingian Period* (Tokyo, 2014). I very much appreciate Professor Emeritus Janet L. Nelson for her kind advices.

## ABSTRACT

St Maximinus, also called Mesmin in French, was a local saint of the Orléanais. He is considered the cofounder and first abbot of the monastery of Micy, which was located approximately 6 km from the centre of Orléans city. Maximinus and Micy exhibit hagiographic and other traditions from the early Middle Ages. These traditions possess major contradictions, which researchers to date have not yet successfully explained: the contribution of the bishops of Orléans; the location of Maximinus's relics; and the connection between Maximinus and Micy. This article focuses on these contradictions and contributes to the efforts to untangle the web of these hagiographic and other traditions. Finally, a plausible timeline of the entire development of the legends concerning Maximinus and Micy will be provided.

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## Introduction

The Frankish Church under the Carolingians eagerly tried to enhance and regulate the cult of saints. Royal capitularies and conciliar decrees testify to the Church's close involvement with the cult.<sup>[1]</sup> Local churches faithfully carried out the Church authorities' programme. We can find good examples of their endeavour in the diocese of Orléans, according to the episcopal capitularies of Theodulf (bishop/archbishop before 798–818), a great figure in the Carolingian ecclesiastical world, and Walter (bishop 867–91).<sup>[2]</sup> Jonas (bishop 818–43), another prominent figure, unfortunately left us no capitulary but his contribution to the cult of saints will be discussed below.<sup>[3]</sup> Religious communities, such as Sainte-Croix or Saint-Euverte, Saint-Aignan, Saint-Avit, Fleury, and Micy, produced hagiographic literature in order to spread the fame of their guardian saints.<sup>[4]</sup>

The cult of saints in the Orléanais has gained much attention from historians since the nineteenth century. Thomas Head documented it with a great skill in his *Hagiography and the Cult of Saints: The Diocese of Orléans, 800–1200* (1990), and my recent work has sought to expand on his fine research. Various saints were venerated in the early medieval Orléanais: universal saints (such as St Stephen the protomartyr, St John the Evangelist, the Innocents, and St Martin); universal saints whose relics were located in the Orléanais (such as St Anianus and St Benedict); and local saints in the Orléanais (such as St Evurtius, St Maximinus, St Lifardus, and St Avitus).<sup>[5]</sup> However, bishops and abbots tried to develop the veneration of specific saints, usually the guardian saints of their communities. Sometimes they capitalised on the popularity of rival saints to enhance the cult of their own saints, although usually they disliked the fact that their rivals had become popular. In this way, bishops and abbots in the diocese of Orléans

[1] For example, *Die Admonitio generalis Karls des Großen*, ed. Hubert Mordek, Klaus Zechiel-Eckes, and Michael Glatthaar, MGH *Fontes iuris* 16 (Hanover 2012), c. 16, pp. 192–93; c. 42, pp. 202–03; c. 63, pp. 214–17; *Concilium Moguntinense*, in MGH *Conc.* 2, ed. Albert Werminghoff (Hanover, 1906–08; repr. 1997), no. 36, pp. 258–73 (c. 51, p. 272).

[2] Theodulf von Orléans, *Erstes Kapitular*, in MGH *Capit. episc.* 1, ed. Peter Brommer (Hanover 1984), pp. 73–142 (c. 29, p. 126); Walter von Orléans, *Capitula*, in MGH *Capit. episc.* 1:185–93 (c. 7, p. 189; c. 18, pp. 191–92).

[3] Regarding the term of office of the bishops, see Elisabeth Dahlhaus-Berg, *Nova antiquitas et antiqua novitas: Typologische Exegese und isidorianisches Geschichtsbild bei Theodulf von Orléans*, *Kölner Historische Abhandlungen*, 23 (Cologne, 1975), pp. 1–21; Debal, "Sous les Carolingiens: Renaissance et invasions," in *Histoire d'Orléans et de son terroir*, ed. Jacques Debal, Collection: Histoire des villes de France, 3 vols (Le Coteau, 1982–83), 1: *Des origines à la fin du XVIe siècle*, pp. 223–50 (pp. 234–36); MGH *Capit. episc.* 1:185.

[4] For example, Lucifer subdiaconus, *Vita fabulis fœdata sancti Evurtii episcopi et confessoris*, ed. Jean Stilting, in *Acta Sanctorum quotquot toto orbe coluntur* [hereafter AASS], Septembris 3, ed. Jean Stilting and others (Antwerp, 1750; repr. Paris, 1868), pp. 52–59; *Vita s. ac beatissimi Aniani episcopi et confessoris*, in Augustin Theiner, *Saint-Aignan, ou le siège d'Orléans par Attila: Notice historique, suivie de la vie de ce saint, tirée des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque du roi* (Paris, 1832), pp. 27–33; Adrevaldus monachus Floriacensis, *Historia translationis s. Benedicti*, in *Les Miracles de Saint Benoît*, ed. Eugène de Certain (Paris, 1858), pp. 1–14. The *Vita Evurtii* may have been produced in Sainte-Croix rather than Saint-Euvurte. The hagiography derived from Saint-Avit and Micy is discussed later in this article.

[5] Walter enumerated the feast days of saints. Avitus was omitted from this list (Walter, *Capitula*, c. 18, pp. 191–92).

[6] Thomas Head, *Hagiography and the Cult of Saints: The Diocese of Orléans, 800–1200*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, 4/14 (Cambridge, UK, 1990; repr. 2005); Satoshi Tada, "The Cult of St. Anianus in the Carolingian Period," *Catholic Historical Review*, 91 (2005): 423–37.

[7] *Cartulaire de Sainte-Croix d'Orléans (814–1300), contenant le Chartularium Ecclesie Aurelianensis Vetus, suivi d'un appendice et d'un supplément*, ed. Joseph Thillier and Eugène Jarry, Mémoires de la Société Archéologique et Historique de l'Orléanais, 30 (Orléans, 1906), no. 33, pp. 63–66 (p. 64). Also see n. 44 below.

[8] Geneviève Renaud, "Saint Aignan d'Orléans a-t-il été vénéré hors de France?," *Bulletin de la Société Archéologique et Historique de l'Orléanais*, n.s., 49 (1978): 110–13; Geneviève Renaud, "La dévotion à saint Aignan: Liturgie et toponymie," *Bulletin de la Société Archéologique et Historique de l'Orléanais*, n.s., 51 (1980): 17–32.

[9] Tada, "Organising the Distribution Network," pp. 62–69; Alain J. Stoclet, *Immunes ab omni teloneo: Étude diplomatique, de philologie et d'histoire sur l'exemption de tonlieux au haut Moyen Age et spécialement sur la Præceptio de navibus*, Bibliothèque de l'Institut Historique Belge de Rome, 45 (Brussels, 1999), pp. 203–04.

[10] Hippolyte Delehay, *Commentarius perpetuus in Martyrologium Hieronymianum ad recensionem Henrici Quentin* [hereafter *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*], AASS, Novembris 2/2 (Brussels, 1931), p. 649. Also see n. 47 below.

[11] *Vita Aviti I: Vita sancti Aviti presbyteri* [hereafter *Vita Aviti I*], in *Catalogus codi-*

controlled the cult of saints.<sup>[6]</sup>

This article examines the development process of a local saint, Maximinus, also called Mesmin in French. He is considered the cofounder and first abbot of the monastery of Micy, which was located near the confluence of the Loire and Loiret rivers, approximately 6 km from the centre of Orléans city. The monastery was under episcopal control during the Carolingian period.<sup>[7]</sup> It was demolished during the French Revolution, and today only a memorial cross marks its former location. We can expect to find similar examples throughout the Carolingian world where the saint was only locally famous because the monastery had moderate power. The veneration of Maximinus may have been limited, because only three communes in the Loiret department (La Chapelle-Saint-Mesmin, Saint-Hilaire-Saint-Mesmin, and Saint-Pryvé-Saint-Mesmin) and one in the Loire-Atlantique department (Saint-Même-le-Tenu) are named after him. In contrast, Benedict of Nursia, whose relics were held by Fleury, was a father of monasticism and well-known all over the West; Anianus, whose relics were held by Saint-Aignan, was venerated both within and beyond France, although extensive evidence of his cult has been found in the dioceses of Orléans, Bourges, and Chartres.<sup>[8]</sup> We can presume that Micy was no more than a middle-level religious community for two reasons. We can find only nine estates of Micy at most during the Carolingian period. Moreover, the Carolingian rulers permitted three ships of Micy to navigate the Loire with exemption from taxation, whereas Saint-Aignan was permitted six exemptions and Fleury four.<sup>[9]</sup>

Maximinus and Micy exhibit hagiographic and other traditions from the early Middle Ages. These traditions possess major contradictions, which researchers to date have not yet successfully explained. The present article focuses on these contradictions and contributes to the efforts to untangle the web of these hagiographic and other traditions. In the final section of this study, a plausible timeline of the entire development of the legends concerning Maximinus and Micy will be provided.

## I. HAGIOGRAPHIC TRADITIONS REGARDING MAXIMINUS

The earliest surviving reference to Maximinus is found in the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*, revised at the end of the sixth century.<sup>[10]</sup> The monastery of Micy was first mentioned either in the *Vita sancti Aviti prima* or in a poem by Bishop Theodulf of Orléans. The *Vita sancti Aviti prima* and the *Vitae sancti Aviti secunda* and *tertia* were compiled consecutively circa 800.<sup>[11]</sup> At about the same time, Theodulf of Orléans gratefully acknowledged the help of the monks of Aniane and dedicated to them a poem entitled *Ad monachos sancti Benedicti*; this dedication was in particular to Benedict of Aniane, because of the work of these monks in reorganising the community of Micy.<sup>[12]</sup> Sometime between 824 and 826, Ardo Smaragdus also depicted the activities of the monks in the *Vita Benedicti abbatis Anianensis et Indensis*.<sup>[13]</sup> The earliest hagiography on Maximinus himself is the *Vita sancti Maximini prima*, written by Bertold, a monk of Micy, who dedicated it to Bishop Jonas of Orléans.<sup>[14]</sup> An anonymous author, probably another monk of Micy, compiled the *Vita sancti Maximini secunda* between 843 and 877.<sup>[15]</sup>

It may be useful, before focusing on specific cases, to briefly present the most influential Maximinus legend of the *Vita Maximini I*.<sup>[16]</sup> Maximinus and his uncle Euspicius were natives of Verdun, and were invited to the Orléanais by Clovis I.

*cum hagiographicorum Bibliothecæ Regiæ Bruxellensis*, Pars 1: *Codices latini membranei*, ed. Hagiographi Bollandiani, Subsidia hagiographica, 1, 2 vols (Brussels, 1886–89), 1:57–63; *Vita Aviti II*: Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Codices reginenses latini 585, fols. 28r–32v; *Vita Aviti III*: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fonds latin 3789, fols. 105v–114r. Regarding the composition date, see Albert Poncelet, “Les saints de Micy,” *Analecta Bollandiana*, 24 (1905): 5–104 (pp. 16–19); Head, *Hagiography*, p. 37.

[12] Theodulfus, *Carmina*, in MGH Poetae 1, ed. Ernst Dümmler (Berlin, 1881; repr. Munich, 1978), pp. 437–581 (no. 30, pp. 520–22). As for the composition date, see Dieter Schaller, “Philologische Untersuchungen zu den Gedichten Theodulfs von Orléans,” *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters*, 18 (1962): 13–91 (p. 78); Nikolai A. Alexandrenko, “The Poetry of Theodulf of Orléans: A Translation and Critical Study” (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Tulane University, 1970), pp. 22–23.

[13] Ardo, *Vita Benedicti abbatis Anianensis et Indensis* [hereafter *Vita Benedicti*], ed. Georg Waitz, in MGH SS 15, ed. Wilhelm Wattenbach (Hanover, 1887–88; repr. Stuttgart, 1991–92), pp. 198–220 (c. 24, pp. 209–10). Regarding the composition date, see Allen Cabaniss, “Translator’s Introduction,” in *Benedict of Aniane: The Emperor’s Monk: Ardo’s Life*, trans. Allen Cabaniss, Cistercian Studies Series, 220 (Kalamazoo, MI, 2008), pp. 27–51 (pp. 42–43).

[14] Bertoldus monachus Miciacensis, *Vita s. Maximini abbatis Miciacensis: Alia Vita* [hereafter *Vita Maximini I*], in *Acta sanctorum ordinis S. Benedicti in sæculorum classes distribute* [hereafter *AASSOSB*], 1, ed. Luc d’Achéry and Jean Mabillon (Paris, 1668), pp. 591–97.

[15] *Vita s. Maximini abbatis Miciacensis* [hereafter *Vita Maximini II*], in *AASSOSB*, 1:580–91. As for the composition date, see Poncelet, “Les saints de Micy,” pp. 44–45; Martin Heinzelmann, “Clovis dans le discours hagiographique du VIe au IXe siècle,” *Bibliothèque de l’École des chartes*, 154 (1996): 87–112 (p. 108).

[16] The *Vita Maximini I* was not only influential on the medieval hagiography but also on the modern historical description. See Thomas Head, “Micy St-Mesmin,” in *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, ed. Redaktion Lexikon des Mittelalters, paperback edn (Munich, 2002; repr. 2003), 6, cols 612–13.

[17] BAV, Reg. lat, 585, fol. 28v.

[18] Bertoldus, *Vita Maximini I*, cc. 7–9, pp. 593–94.

The king granted the land of Micy to Euspicius, who established the monastery with Maximinus. Maximinus was elected first abbot and Bishop Eusebius of Orléans celebrated the founding of the monastery. During the abbacy of Maximinus, Avitus and Carileffus became his disciples. Over the course of this time, Maximinus was also credited with the following: miraculously filling an empty pot, thereby saving people from poverty; stopping the flooding of the Loire to save a boat; and blinding a wicked man; while also restoring the sight of a pious priest’s sister. He is also said to have eliminated a dragon in the Loire. Maximinus died on 15 December and Bishop Eusebius performed his funeral rites. His body was placed in the cave in which the dragon had lived and a man named Agilus built a chapel to commemorate Maximinus. Over time, this chapel deteriorated and was almost forgotten, and Bishop Sigobert of Orléans transferred Maximinus’s relics to a new chapel in eastern Orléans. Long after the removal of the relics, Abbot Heriric and the monks of Micy reclaimed their saint’s body through the good offices of Bishop Jonas and Louis the Pious, with Bishop Jonas being willing to return Maximinus’s relics to the monastery.

Some stories in the *Vita Maximini I* contradicted the previously produced legends, as did the descriptions written few decades later. The present article concentrates on three specific aspects of these contradictions: the contribution of the bishops of Orléans, the location of Maximinus’s relics, and the connection between Maximinus and Micy. In the following sections, I will examine the inconsistencies among the legendary texts, describe the views of previous researchers, and finally, present my own proposed solutions.

## II. THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE BISHOPS OF ORLÉANS

In some traditions, Eusebius and Theodulf are described as individuals who contributed to the organisation of the community of Micy.

Eusebius was the bishop of Orléans in the early sixth century. According to the *Vita Aviti II*, he was the founder of the monastery of Micy.<sup>[17]</sup> However, as mentioned above, Bertold in the *Vita Maximini I* attributed the founding of the monastery to Clovis I (reign 481/82–511), who was a contemporary of Eusebius.<sup>[18]</sup> The situation described in the *Vita Aviti III*, written between the *Vita Aviti II* and the *Vita Maximini I*, is somewhat complicated. We can find the name of Clovis, identified as the founder of the monastery, in the only existing manuscript, which was copied in the eleventh century.<sup>[19]</sup> However, Albert Poncelet and Jacques Charles proposed the possibility that Eusebius name was scratched out by a later scribe and substituted with the name of Clovis.<sup>[20]</sup> Head confirmed this through an ultraviolet reading which showed that the original name was indeed that of Eusebius.<sup>[21]</sup> Thus, the prototypical *Vita Aviti III* should have named Eusebius as the founder, just as he was mentioned as the founder in the *Vita Aviti II*.

Bishop Theodulf organised or reorganised the monastery of Micy before circa 800. *Ad monachos sancti Benedicti*, which he wrote, describes his activities. He compares Benedict of Aniane to Benedict of Nursia, praises him, and expresses appreciation for his contribution to Micy. The *Vita Maximini II* gives us an account of Theodulf’s activities. “It was God’s plan to restore this place through Bishop Theodulf, the leader of the Church of Orléans, and to bring monks there from the province of Septimania. He granted this place to them in order to restore the sacred order and granted the previously attached possessions to them in



[19] BN, lat. 3789, fol. 106v.

[20] Poncelet, "Les saints de Micy," p. 21; Jacques Charles, "Quelques réflexions sur les origines de l'abbaye de Micy-lez-Orléans," *Bulletin de la Société Archéologique et Historique de l'Orléanais*, n.s., 46 (1976): 395–401 (p. 397).

[21] Head, *Hagiography*, p. 205, n. 12.

[22] *Vita Maximini II*, c. 37, p. 590: "Divinitas eundem locum recuperare disposuit, per Episcopum Theodulfum Aurelianensis Ecclesiae Præsulem ex Septimania Monachi adducti sunt provincia, quibus & locum ad recuperationem sacri Ordinis dedit, & res eidem loco olim attributas, quantum satis visum fuit, impertivit."

[23] Ardo, *Vita Benedicti*, c. 24, p. 209: "Theodulfus quoque Aurelianensium presul, cum monasterium Sancti Maximini construere vellet, a iam prefato viro postulat regularis disciplinae peritos. Cui mox adsumum prebuit et bis denos illi monachos, prefecto magistro, misit." Pierre Bonnerue offered the hypothesis that some chapters, including this one, were revised by a later writer. Annette Grabowsky and Clemens Radl favour this hypothesis. However, Bonnerue's hypothesis needs more study, such as examination of the filiation among manuscripts, and it seems feeble with regard to this chapter (Pierre Bonnerue, "Introduction," in Ardon, *Vie de Benoît d'Aniane*, trans. Fernand Baumes and Adalbert de Vogüé, *Vie monastique: Monachisme ancien*, 39 (Bégrolles-en-Mauges, 2001), pp. 17–43 (pp. 22–36); Annette Grabowsky and Clemens Radl, "The Second Benedict: A Review of Recent Scholarship," trans. Cornelia Oefelein, in *Benedict of Aniane: Ardo's Life*, pp. 1–26 (pp. 15–24)).

[24] MGH DD LdF, ed. by Theo Kölzer, 3 vols (Wiesbaden, 2016), no. 49, pp. 127–29 (p. 128) "Dutresindus abbas ex monasterio sancii Maximini Miciacensis"; Walter Kettemann, "Subsidia Anianensia: Überlieferungs- und textgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zur Geschichte Witiza-Benedikts, seines Klosters Aniane und zur sogenannten 'anianischen Reform' mit kommentierten Editionen der 'Vita Benedicti Anianensis,' 'Notitia deservitio monasteriorum,' des 'Chronicon Moissiacense /Anianense' sowie zweier Lokaltraditionen aus Aniane," 2 vols (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Duisburg-Essen, 2000), 1:301–05.

[25] Bertoldus, *Vita Maximini I*, c. 24, p. 597.

[26] Head, *Hagiography*, pp. 206–08 (p. 208).

[27] Head, *Hagiography*, pp. 208–18.

[28] Bertoldus, *Vita Maximini I*, c. 25, p. 597.

abundance."<sup>[22]</sup> We also have other information from the *Vita Benedicti*: "Bishop Theodulf of Orléans also wished to construct the monastery of Saint Maximinus and requested some experts on the discipline of the rule from the above-mentioned man [Benedict]. This man immediately approved it and sent twenty monks to him with a master responsible for them."<sup>[23]</sup> The word "rule" here definitely means the *Rule of St Benedict*, which Benedict of Aniane tried to spread across the empire at that time. The word "master" may refer to Dutresindus, who is named in the charter of Louis the Pious, dated 815, as surmised by Walter Kettemann.<sup>[24]</sup> There is no trace of textual filiations among these three works. Poems are different from hagiographies in terms of literary genre. Each of the authors belonged to a different community. Therefore, the common elements of the three works were probably the historical facts. It is likely that Theodulf provided the material foundation for their development and invited the disciples of Benedict of Aniane to strengthen the spiritual base.

However, Bertold's *Vita Maximini I*, which was written after Theodulf's poem, around the same time as the *Vita Benedicti*, and before the *Vita Maximini II*, made no mention of Theodulf or his activities. The stories in the *Vita Maximini I* jump from the time of Bishop Sigobert (the second half of the seventh century) to the time of Jonas.<sup>[25]</sup>

We can easily discern these contradictions but only Head tries to explain them. He seeks a common reason for the contradictions by arguing that "Bertholdus attempted to separate Micy from the power of the bishops of Orléans."<sup>[26]</sup> Even if we admit his claim that the struggle between the bishopric and the monastery became evident only around 1000, it is highly uncertain that this struggle could have stretched back to 800, as he proposes.<sup>[27]</sup> Head seems to underestimate the significance of the fact that Bertold, a monk of Micy, dedicated the *Vita Maximini I* to the contemporary bishop of Orléans, who he believes fought against the monastery. Moreover, Bertold did not hesitate to describe Jonas' deeds for the monastery: Jonas directed the translation of Maximinus's relics from Orléans to Micy.<sup>[28]</sup> Thus we must find other, individual reasons for each of the contradictions.

As for Bishop Eusebius, we must note that Bertold did not delete his name entirely. He was described as the guardian of Maximinus and his uncle Euspicius; as the co-organiser of the consecration of Micy; and as the officiant at their funerals.<sup>[29]</sup> If Bertold had aimed at suppressing episcopal power, it seems unlikely that he would have ever assigned such important roles to Eusebius. Thus, we must simply believe that Bertold, the author of the *Vita Maximini I*, changed the name of the founder of the monastery from Eusebius to Clovis I because he wished to attach high prestige to this monastery. It does not matter here who the actual founder was. This will be discussed below.

Regarding Bishop Theodulf, we must remember his career. He was deposed from the bishopric in 818 because he criticised the *Ordinatio Imperii* issued by Louis the Pious on July 817, or because he was involved in the *coup d'état* against Louis led by King Bernard of Italy in the same year. After that, Louis appointed Jonas as bishop.<sup>[30]</sup> In these circumstances, writers in the Orléanais, like Bertold, might not have praised Theodulf in the episcopate of Jonas, especially in its earlier phase. It is highly likely that Bertold omitted the name and the deed of Theodulf for political reasons at that time, because we know that Theodulf came to be referred to in literary works again a few decades later. The author of the *Vita Maximini II* remembered to mention the activities of Theodulf.<sup>[31]</sup>

[29] Bertoldus, *Vita Maximini I*, c. 6, p. 593; cc. 9–13, p. 594; c. 22, pp. 596–97.

[30] Dahlhaus-Berg, *Nova antiquitas*, pp. 15–21; Thomas F. X. Noble, “Some Observations of the Deposition of Archbishop Theodulf of Orleans in 817,” *Journal of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association*, 2 (1981): 29–40; Jacques Debal, “Sous les Carolingiens,” pp. 232–34; Philippe Depreux, “Le comte Matfrid d’Orléans (av. 815–836),” *Bibliothèque de l’École des chartes*, 152 (1994): 331–74 (pp. 347–48).

[31] *Vita Maximini II*, c. 37, pp. 590–91.

[32] Theodulfus, *Carmina*, no. 30, p. 521, lines 37–45: “Maximinus ibi fratrum vernante corona | Praefuit, his scandit iunctus ad astra poli, | Corpora sunt quorum variis tumulata sepulcris. | Sunt animae in sinibus sed, patriarcha, tuis. | Has fera barbaries, exempto munere pacis, | Deiecit sedes, destituitque locum, | Qui proprios tenuit cineres, utque ales Eoa | De cinerum lapsu tendit ad alta caput.” We have a new translation of this poem. See Theodulf of Orléans, *The Verse*, trans. and intro. Theodore M. Andersson, *Medieval and Renaissance Texts & Studies*, 450 (Tempe, AZ, 2014), pp. 111–13.

[33] Bertoldus, *Vita Maximini I*, cc. 22–23, pp. 596–97.

[34] *Vita Maximini II*, c. 36, p. 590.

[35] *Vita Maximini II*, c. 37 [38], p. 591: “corpore patroni sui beati Maximini fraudarentur.”

[36] *Vita Maximini II*, c. 37 [38], p. 591: “congratulus eorum est petitionibus, evocatoque jam dicto venerabili Iona Episcopo non modo praeepto imperavit, verum voce ac sermone supplicii postulavit, ut petitioni Servorum Dei [...] non solum non negaretur sed ne protelaretur effectus. Sed vir Domini Ionas dum non invitus sed voluntarius quod jubebatur praestabat, citissime quod petitione iussum est peregit.”

[37] Bertoldus, *Vita Maximini I*, c. 25, p. 597.

[38] Bertoldus, *Vita Maximini I*, c. 1, p. 592.

### III. THE LOCATION OF MAXIMINUS’S RELICS

These activities of Theodulf that related to the monastery of Micy probably contributed to the formation of a cult centre. He created an organisation for the purpose of praying for Maximinus and enhancing his cult, and he was able to secure the assets to maintain this organisation. His poem, written around 800, strongly implies that he took the first step in developing the cult of Maximinus. “Maximinus was in charge of the blooming wreath of brothers there [at Micy] and he ascended to the stars of heaven with them. Their bodies are buried in various tombs. However, O Patriarch, their souls are in your arms. Ruthless barbarians, exempted from the duty of peace, cast down these graves and deserted the place which preserved their own ashes. However, like a Phoenix, his head rises from the falling ashes to the sky.”<sup>[32]</sup> According to this poem, Maximinus was buried at Micy; his tomb was ransacked by barbarians, but his remains were raised in the time of Theodulf. This recounting of events suggests that the *inventio* of the Maximinus relics took place at Micy.

The *Vitae Maximini I* and *II* tell us a different story. Bertold, the author of the *Vita Maximini I*, reported that the saint had been buried into a grotto at La Chapelle-Saint-Mesmin located across the Loire from Micy in the sixth century; and thereafter, a chapel was built in this location.<sup>[33]</sup> According to the *Vita Maximini II*, Bishop Sigobert of Orléans moved the saint’s body from La Chapelle-Saint-Mesmin to the eastern suburbs of Orléans, and constructed a chapel over it in the seventh century. This chapel came to be known as Saint-Mesmin.<sup>[34]</sup> It was a long time after the time of Sigobert when the monks of Micy lamented that “they had been defrauded of their blessed patron’s body” and reclaimed it for Bishop Jonas of Orléans, Theodulf’s successor.<sup>[35]</sup> Furthermore, Abbot Heriric and the monks invoked the aid of Louis the Pious. Louis “rejoiced in their petition. And he not only summoned the above-mentioned venerable bishop, Jonas, and commanded him by an order but also asked him by voice and supplicant speech that the petition of the servants of God not only should not be neglected, but its effects not to be delayed. Jonas, the man of God, while he was carrying out what he had been ordered to do not reluctantly but voluntarily, put into effect most quickly what he was ordered to do by request.”<sup>[36]</sup> Bertold described the *translatio* of Maximinus’s relics from Saint-Mesmin in Orléans. The ritual attracted various categories of people – lay and clerical, men and women, noble and humble, old and young. They stampeded to carry the saint’s coffin, danced round in praise of him and finally reached the monastery of Micy. Thenceforth, many pilgrims came to Micy seeking the saving grace of Maximinus.<sup>[37]</sup>

One of the major contradictions between Theodulf’s poem and the *Vitae Maximini I* and *II* was on the location of Maximinus’s relics in the early ninth century. The poem indicates that they were situated in Micy; however, the *Vitae Maximini I* and *II* state that they were situated at Saint-Mesmin in Orléans.

In previous scholarship, only Head refers to this inconsistency, as mentioned below. However, we can go further in our examination of the contradictory traditions.

Bertold probably wrote the *Vita Maximini I* immediately after the translation of Maximinus in order to commemorate the event. According to the preface, Bertold aimed to convey the saint’s tales to a wide audience.<sup>[38]</sup> If the story about the

translation had been too obviously fictitious, it would not have been believed by the audience. Therefore, we can hardly avoid concluding that a translation of relics from Saint-Mesmin to Micy was actually performed during the episcopate of Jonas and that a great many contemporaries believed that the relics belonged to Maximinus. Information from a third party may support this hypothesis. Ermold the Black, in a praise poem for Louis the Pious, mentions the saints of Orléans. Louis visited Orléans en route from Aquitaine to Aachen, after he received news of Charlemagne's death on 28 January 814: "The emperor soon enters the city of Orléans, with a huge ovation, where the sign of the Cross and Anianus remain; blessed Evurtius, who originally constructed this cathedral, Maximinus, and saint Avitus glitter."<sup>[39]</sup> In the last years of Theodulf's episcopate, therefore, Ermold believed that Maximinus's relics, alongside those of other saints, lay in Orléans.

Head argues that "Theodulf found a number of tombs at the abbey and mistakenly believed that of Maximinus to be among them."<sup>[40]</sup> Thus, Bertold's accounts have been favoured with regard to this contradiction. If so, did Theodulf fail to identify what he discovered at Micy? However, it is highly unlikely that Theodulf made a simple mistake, as Head argues, because he was one of the most experienced theologians of his generation. It was Theodulf who authored the *Libri Carolini*, wherein he theoretically justifies the cult of relics theoretically.<sup>[41]</sup>

One possible explanation is that Theodulf fabricated the *inventio* exclusively for poetic effect. However, we must note that there is consistency in the burial place of Maximinus between Theodulf's poem and a series of lives of Avitus that was compiled around the same time. According to the *Vitae Aviti I, II, and III*, Maximinus's funeral was performed at his monastery and he was buried immediately afterwards.<sup>[42]</sup> The authors do not mention the translation of the body, and thus we can hardly think he was buried at any place other than the monastery. The authors of the *Vitae Aviti I, II, and III* must therefore have believed that Maximinus's tomb was located somewhere in the monastery.

Theodulf likely influenced the compilations of these authors because most of them were written by canons of Saint-Avit in Orléans.<sup>[43]</sup> The relationship between Theodulf and Saint-Avit was indicated in the charter Charles the Bald granted to Bishop Jonas of Orléans, dated 840 to 843. "[Jonas] asked me to decree the precept under my authority so that the chapels and properties which my grandfather or my father had returned to the Church [of Orléans] and what this Church held and possessed before this return lawfully and legally should be held, possessed and protected by this Church firmly and peacefully at present and in future."<sup>[44]</sup> Charles the Bald accepted Jonas's request and listed twenty-six chapels, among which Saint-Avit was mentioned. If we believe the previous proprietorship described in this charter, Saint-Avit was a possession of the Church of Orléans from the time of Charlemagne and Theodulf. Thus, Theodulf's opinion should have been significant for the community of Saint-Avit. He composed a poem and also encouraged some canons of Saint-Avit to write hagiographies with the same purpose. Therefore, Theodulf's claim to have found the relics of Maximinus at the monastery of Micy cannot be said to have been a fictitious statement made merely for poetic effect. More than likely, he was convinced that the saint was buried at the monastery, or had reason to insist that was the case.

The proposed hypotheses of this article are as follows. There were some places connected with the memory of Maximinus when Theodulf became the bishop of Orléans: a church dedicated to Maximinus existed in the eastern

[39] Ermold le Noir, *Poème en l'honneur de Louis très chrétien César Auguste*, in *Poème sur Louis le Pieux et épîtres au roi Pépin*, ed. and trans. Edmond Faral, *Les classiques de l'histoire de France au Moyen Age*, 14, 2nd edn (Paris, 1964), pp. 2–201 (liber 2, p. 62, lines 790–93): "Aurelianus ovans Caesar mox visitat urbem, | Quo vexilla Crucis sive, Aniane, manes, | Heburti felix, qui primo hanc perficis arcem, | Seu, Maximine, sancte-ve Avite, micas."

[40] Head, *Hagiography*, p. 204.

[41] *Opus Caroli regis contra synodum (Libri Carolini)*, ed. Ann Freeman, *MGH Conc. 2, Supplementum 1* (Hanover, 1998), liber 3, c. 24, pp. 448–52. Introduction of this edition, containing the question of authorship, was recently translated in English by Freeman: Ann Freeman with Paul Meyvaert, *Opus Caroli regis contra synodum: An Introduction*, in Ann Freeman, *Theodulf of Orléans: Charlemagne's Spokesman against the Second Council of Nicaea*, *Variorum Collected Studies Series*, CS772, (Aldershot, 2003), I. As for the *Libri Carolini's* attitude towards the cult of relics, see Patrick J. Geary, *Furta Sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages*, Princeton Paperbacks, rev. edn (Princeton, 1990), pp. 36–37; David F. Appleby, "Holy Relic and Holy Image: Saints' Relics in the Western Controversy over Images in the Eighth and Ninth Century," *Word & Image: A Journal of Verbal/Visual Enquiry*, 8/4 (1992): 333–43 (pp. 334–36).

[42] *Vita Aviti I*, c. 3, pp. 57–58; BAV, Reg. lat. 585, fol. 29v; BN, lat. 3789, fol. 107v.

[43] Head, *Hagiography*, p. 37.

[44] *Cartulaire de Sainte-Croix*, no. 33, p. 64: "Postulavit itaque nobis ut de eisdem cellis et rebus, sive quas [...] avus noster sive genitor noster eidem reddiderunt ecclesiae, necnon et de his quas ante ipsam redditionem jure et legaliter [...] tenebat et possidebat ecclesia, nostrae auctoritatis praecipuum [...] fieri decerneremus, per quod firmiter et securius praedictas res modernis futurisque temporibus ipsa teneat et possideat atque defendat ecclesia." This charter indicates that the Church of Orléans possessed the twenty-six

shrines, including Saint-Avit, Saint-Euverte, and Micy.

[45] Bertoldus, *Vita Maximini I*, cc. 22–23, pp. 596–97.

[46] MGH DD LdF, no. 252, pp. 626–29.

[47] *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*, p. 649 (38–44): “in civitate Aurelianis Maximi [sic] presbyteri et confessoris.”

[48] MGH DD Mer., ed. Theo Kölzer, 2 vols (Hanover: 2001), no. 2, pp. 3–6.

[49] Theodulfus, *Carmina*, no. 30, p. 521, line 35: “prisca vetustas.”

[50] Poncelet, “Les saints de Micy,” p. 7; Marie-Marguerite Lemarignier, “Études sur les anciennes chartes de l’abbaye Saint-Mesmin de Micy et essai de restitution des cartulaires,” 3 vols (unpublished doctoral thesis, École nationale des chartes, 1937), pp. lxx–lxxx; Charles Vulliez, “L’abbaye de Micy-Saint-Mesmin et Clovis dans la tradition et l’histoire,” in *Clovis: Histoire & mémoire*, ed. Michel Rouche, 2 vols (Paris, 1997), 2: *Le baptême de Clovis, son écho à travers l’histoire*, pp. 129–46; MGH DD Mer. pp. 4–5.

suburbs of Orléans; La Chapelle-Saint-Mesmin was at least known as the place where a chapel had been dedicated to Maximinus, even if it was demolished by the time of Theodulf;<sup>[45]</sup> and the village of Micy might have concerned Maximinus in some way. At that time, the place which held his relics was not agreed upon by all. However, the bishops of Orléans and Micy attempted to manipulate local opinion so that people would believe that Micy held the saint’s relics; the only difference between the two bishops was in how they manipulated people. Theodulf staged the *inventio* of the relics, but some people still doubted their location. Thus, a generation later, Jonas and Heriric must have performed a spectacular ritual of *translatio* to relieve these doubts.

A charter by Louis the Pious and Lothar I, dated 826, confirmed that some economic privileges of Saint-Mesmin of Orléans were transferred to Micy.<sup>[46]</sup> This act seems to have been related to the translation of the saint’s relics.

## VI. THE CONNECTION BETWEEN MAXIMINUS AND MICY

We find a reference to Maximinus on 15 December in the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*: “In the city of Orléans, Maximinus the priest and confessor.”<sup>[47]</sup> This reference testifies that he was venerated in the sixth century at the latest. The *Martyrologium Hieronymianum* is the only record of Maximinus before the Carolingian period. However, as mentioned above, Maximinus was the cofounder and first abbot of Micy, according to the *Vita Maximini I* of the Carolingian hagiographer Bertold. In addition, Bertold noted the connection between Clovis I and Maximinus. This foundation narrative had an influence on later traditions, including that of the *Vita Maximini II*.

This problem concerns the argument about the origin of the monastery of Micy. The foundation charter granted by Clovis I surely fits with Bertold’s statement.<sup>[48]</sup> Theodulf’s poem, written around 800, apparently corresponds with them as well: the history of the monastery of Micy goes back to “old antiquity.”<sup>[49]</sup> In those days, Maximinus governed it with the assistance of monks and, after his death, it was devastated by savage barbarians. Theodulf discovered the ruins and reconstructed the monastery, as mentioned above. Based on his account, Micy could have been founded in the fifth or the sixth century.

Several researchers have doubted the foundation narrative presented by Bertold because they recognised that it contradicts the statement in preceding hagiographies, as mentioned above. They also questioned the authenticity of the foundation charter. Poncelet and Marie-Marguerite Lemarignier have highlighted in their research that this charter was forged, and Charles Vulliez reinforced their arguments by declaring that the charter was falsified in the Carolingian period. Recently, Theo Kölzer concluded that it was created in the eleventh century.<sup>[50]</sup> Thus, the oldest surviving charter granted to Micy was dated 815, as mentioned in the section II. With regard to the expression “old antiquity” by Theodulf, it is known that he quoted it from Ovid’s poem.<sup>[51]</sup>

We can reject the idea that Clovis I contributed to the founding of the monastery, but we cannot conclusively determine whether its founding can be traced back to his time. It is not surprising that a small chapel or shrine was located in the village of Micy because, in Clovis’ time, it was already cultivated land.<sup>[52]</sup> However, how can we know if the village kept a community deserved for a monastery? Previous researchers pointed out that, at the beginning of the ninth century, the tombs of the saints remembered in connection with Micy were located



[51] MGH Poetae 1:521, n. 2. Theodulf was one of the most enthusiastic admirers of Ovid in the Carolingian literary circles (Patrizia Lendinara, *Mixed Attitudes to Ovid: The Carolingian Poets and the Glossographers*, in *Alcuin of York: Scholar at the Carolingian Court: Proceedings of the Third Germania Latina Conference Held at the University of Groningen, May 1995*, ed. L. A. J. R. Houwen and A. A. MacDonald, Mediaevalia Groningana, 22 (Groningen, 1998), pp. 171–213).

[52] Jacques Soyer, *Les noms de lieux du Loiret: Recherches sur l'origine et la formation des noms de lieux du département du Loiret*, ed. Société Archéologique et Historique de l'Orléanais, rev. edn (Roanne, 1979), pp. 95–96.

[53] Poncelet, "Les saints de Micy," pp. 8–14; Charles, "Quelques réflexions," 395–401; Vulliez, "L'abbaye de Micy-Saint-Mesmin," pp. 140–42; Jean-Marie Berland, "Conciles et Abbayes du VIe au IXe siècle," in *Histoire d'Orléans et de son terroir*, 1:209–22 (pp. 219–20); Head, *Hagiography*, p. 24.

[54] See n. 11 above. Chapter numbers referred to in this article correspond to this Bollandist edition.

[55] *Vita Aviti confessoris Aurelianensis* in MGH SS rer. Merov. 3, ed. Bruno Krusch (Hanover, 1896; repr. 1977), pp. 380–85.

[56] I am grateful to Professor Anne-Marie Helvétius for her comment on the word

not there but rather in Orléans. The legends about saints of Micy, other than St Avitus, were unknown before the ninth century. Poncelet, Charles, and Vulliez remained undecided about this matter. Jean-Marie Berland suggested that Micy was established during the Carolingian period. Head did not agree with Berland and argued that the monastery dated back to before the ninth century, because he emphasised the evidence from the poem of Theodulf.<sup>[53]</sup> Consequently, we have no decisive evidence to resolve these problems.

In the present article, another potential solution will be proposed as I attempt to explain the inconsistencies between the Merovingian and the Carolingian traditions. Three preliminary possibilities are as follows: first, the legends about Maximinus may have been suddenly transformed in the Carolingian period; second, the legends could have been transformed sometime between the end of the sixth century and the Carolingian period, although we have no evidence of this process occurring; third, two types of traditions may have existed independently before the Carolingian period, however, we cannot trace the tradition which developed into the tales told by Bertold. We must identify when the Merovingian saints, such as Maximinus, Avitus, and Carilleffus, were connected with the monastery of Micy so that we can specify the development of their traditions.

Hagiography preceding the *Vita Maximini I* sheds some light on this question. According to the *Vitae Aviti II* and *III*, the monastery of Micy, located three miles from Orléans, was founded by Bishop Eusebius. In those days, Maximinus was an abbot and Avitus was one of his disciples, as mentioned in the section II. Therefore, the hagiographers clearly situated the founding of the monastery in the time of Clovis and defined the connection between Micy and the Merovingian saints as well as the relationship between Maximinus and Avitus, as told by Bertold. The only difference between them involves the name of individual who contributed to the founding.

However, the oldest *Vita Aviti I* would have described them differently. We find a variation among manuscripts with regards to expressions that apparently connect the Merovingian saints with Micy. Five manuscripts, including the *Vita Aviti I*, survive: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fonds latin 15436, Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Codices latini monacenses 18546, and Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Codex 430 were dated to the eleventh century; further, Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België (Bibliothèque royale de Belgique), 98-100 was dated to the twelfth century; and the last, Trier, Stadtbibliothek, 1151/455 was dated to the thirteenth century. The Bollandist edition of the *Vita Aviti I* is based on the Brussels manuscript.<sup>[54]</sup> However, Bruno Krusch's partial edition, published by the MGH, is based on the remaining four manuscripts.<sup>[55]</sup>

In the second chapter of the *Vita Aviti I*, it is said that Avitus joined a monastery when he was a child. The Brussels manuscript never mentions the name of this religious community, although this is the first reference to the community in the text. In contrast, the others clearly indicate that it is "Micy." "Micy" has three different spellings among the four manuscripts. (see appendix 1 below)

We note another curious variation in the third chapter with regards to the funeral and burial of Maximinus at the monastery. According to the Paris and Trier manuscripts, he was buried on the "bank of the Loire." This expression is an additional piece of geographic information on the monastery. In the Paris manuscript, the Loire is expressed in the Latin spelling "Ligerico," while in the Trier manuscript, the vernacular spelling "Luere" is used.<sup>[56]</sup> We find the past participle "conditum" (embalmed/aromatised), instead of the expression "bank of the Loire"

in the Munich and Vienna manuscripts. The participle "conditum" modifies the preceding noun "cadaver" (corpse). The Brussels manuscript mentions neither "bank of the Loire" nor the participle "conditum." (see appendix 2 below)

We must identify the relationship between the manuscripts in order to specify the original wording and phrasing. Unfortunately, Krusch only states that the manuscripts from Munich, Vienna, and Trier belong to the same group.<sup>[57]</sup> The aim of the present article is therefore to propose two hypotheses about the transmission of keywords and phrases between these documents. First, the original document states that Avitus entered the monastery of Micy (chapter 2), and Maximinus was buried on the bank of the Loire (chapter 3). The original words and expressions were damaged through the process of the text's transmission. The second hypothesis is that, in the original document, neither the name of the monastery nor the burial place was indicated, and words and expressions came to be added over the course of the text's transmission. Even if the actual process of transmission may have been more complicated, the two hypotheses can indicate the core path of that transmission. Suggesting the core path does not mean here, however, that we can arrange the manuscripts in chronological order. The content of the oldest surviving manuscript is not necessarily close to that of the original text because the two are separated from each other by more than two centuries. However, a scribe in the relatively later period could have consulted a text that was close to the original. Thus, for the moment, we do not address the question of the date on which each manuscript was copied.

If we admit the first hypothesis, the Paris and Trier manuscripts were close to the original. As for the second chapter, the slight differences in the spelling of "Micy" among the four manuscripts might have resulted from the inevitable variations that came from transmission. However, the scribe of the Brussels manuscript must have made or reproduced the critical error of omitting "Micy," because the second chapter is the first reference to this monastery, as mentioned below. As for the third chapter, the scribe of the Brussels manuscript must have made or reproduced the error of leaving out the expression "bank of the Loire" as the burial site. His error is relatively excusable because the naming of the site was not necessarily in order to understand the sentence. However, it is hard to explain how the scribes of the Munich and Vienna manuscripts could have substituted the word "conditum" for the expression "bank of the Loire." If they had attempted to modify the word "cadaver," they could have inserted "conditum" into the original text instead of deleting it.

If we admit the second hypothesis, the Brussels manuscript was close to the original. Possibly the scribes of the Munich, Vienna, Paris, and Trier manuscripts who were unconvinced by the silence of the monastery's name in the second chapter, gathered the information from the *Vita Aviti II* as well as from the *Vita Aviti III* and restored the name. Alternatively, they may have copied the manuscripts of other scribes who did this. The different spellings may have resulted from those, which each scribe understood differently. Perhaps the scribes who had problems with regards to chapter 3 held two different attitudes. Some scribes may not have been content with the silence surrounding the burial place and so may have added it as the "bank of the Loire." The scribe of the Paris manuscript possibly described or copied "Loire" in the Latin spelling, whereas the scribe of Trier described or copied it in the vernacular one. The scribes of the Munich and Vienna manuscripts may have been dissatisfied with there being no description of the saint's body, and may have added the word "conditum" after "cadaver." Al-

ternatively, they may have transcribed such manuscripts. They could show different attitudes because the burial site might not have been considered a fundamental element of the story, as mentioned above.

The second hypothesis appears to be the more plausible of the two. Therefore, it seems reasonable to suggest that the Brussels manuscript may be closer to the original text, notwithstanding its relatively late copying.

According to the Bollandist edition based on the Brussels manuscript, the abstract of the *Vita Aviti I* is as follows: Avitus was born in Orléans (chapter 1). He entered a monastery as a child, but the names of the abbot and monastery are not mentioned (chapter 2). The abbot died, and the author finally reveals the abbot's name as Maximinus (chapter 3). Avitus succeeded to the abbacy, but soon escaped to the region of the Perche to become an anchorite with his colleague (chapters 4 to 7). Avitus temporarily returned to Orléans to free prisoners from a prison (chapter 8). The author describes Avitus's colleague, who is mentioned in chapter 4, as "a monk from Micy" (chapter 9). After Avitus died, his funeral was performed. At that time, it was initially said that he was "from the monastery of Micy" (chapter 11).<sup>[58]</sup> Some communities struggled to acquire his relics. However, Micy is not mentioned in this struggle (chapters 10 to 12). Childebert I (reign 511–58) ordered the construction of a church over Avitus's tomb in Orléans (chapter 13).

Thus, Maximinus was never mentioned as an abbot of Micy. Moreover, there was no direct statement regarding the mentorship between Maximinus and Avitus.

We recognise the resemblance between the *Vita Aviti I* and the Merovingian traditions about Avitus. According to the *Libri historiarum X* by the historian Gregory of Tours, when Chlodomer (reign 511–24) captured Sigismund (reign 516–24) at Orléans and attempted to execute him, he was remonstrated "by blessed Avitus, the great abbot and priest at that time." *Liber historiae Francorum* tells the same story. He is described as "blessed Avitus, who was then a holy man of God and the abbot in the city of Orléans."<sup>[59]</sup> According to the *Liber in gloria confessorum*, also by Gregory of Tours, "Abbot Avitus in the county of Chartrain, which is called the Perche" was buried in Orléans and the church over his grave was constructed by the faithful. He also wrote in the *Libri historiarum X* that Guntram (reign 561–92) prayed to the saint in the "church of the holy abbot Avitus's when he visited Orléans."<sup>[60]</sup> In the 17 June entry of the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*, he is enumerated as "a priest Avitus in the city of Orléans."<sup>[61]</sup>

The author of the *Vita Aviti I* might have consulted the prototype, which was similar to those in the Merovingian traditions. He might not have been a very accomplished hagiographer; and therefore may have added Maximinus's name once and on the abbot's last appearance. This author describes a colleague of Avitus as "a monk from Micy," but he does so on his second appearance. As for Avitus, the author finally inserted the expression "from the monastery of Micy" after his death. His poor work would then eventually have been ameliorated by the hagiographers of the *Vitae Aviti II* and *III*.

Carolingian martyrological calendars compiled outside the Orléanais also provide evidence that the connection between the saints and the monastery is relatively new, because almost all of them indicate that Maximinus and Avitus were not the saints of Micy but of Orléans.<sup>[62]</sup>

The conclusions from this section are as follows: this article has outlined three possible reasons for the significant differences between the Merovingian

[58] *Vita Aviti I*, c. 9, p. 60: "unus ex Micciacensium monachorum"; c. 11, p. 61: "ex Miccianensi monasterio."

[59] Gregorius Turonensis, *Libri historiarum X*, ed. Bruno Krusch and Wilhelm Levison, MGH SS rer. Merov. 1/1 (Hanover, 1937–51; repr. 1993), liber 3, c. 6, p. 102: "a beato Avito abbate, magno tunc tempore sacerdote"; *Liber historiae Francorum*, in MGH SS rer. Merov. 2, ed. Bruno Krusch (Hanover, 1888), pp. 215–328 (c. 20, p. 276): "Beatus [...] Avitus, qui erat tunc vir sanctus Dei abba in Aurilianis civitate."

[60] Gregorius Turonensis, *Liber in gloria confessorum*, in MGH SS rer. Merov. 1/2, ed. Bruno Krusch (Hanover, 1885; repr. 1969), pp. 294–370 (c. 97, p. 360): "Avitus abba Carnoteni pagi, quem Pertensim vocant"; Gregorius, *Libri historiarum X*, liber 8, c. 2, p. 371: "basilica sancti Aviti abbatis."

[61] *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*, pp. 322–23 (p. 323): "in Aurelianis civitate Aviti presbyteri."

[62] *Der karolingische Reichskalender und seine Überlieferung bis ins 12. Jahrhundert*, ed. Arno Borst, MGH Libri mem. 2 (Hanover, 2001), p. 994, n. 11; p. 1589, n. 3.

traditions, such as the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*; and the Carolingian traditions about Maximinus, such as the *Vita Maximini I*. The first supposition is most plausible: that the legends about Maximinus were suddenly transformed in the Carolingian period. The Merovingian saints, such as Maximinus, were intentionally connected to the monastery of Micy during this time. The author of the *Vita Aviti I* stood exactly at this point. We must note that Bishop Theodulf must have influenced the compilation of the *Vita Aviti I*, and that he also described Micy's antique history in his poem. Therefore, we must not accept his poetic description as any kind of historical evidence.

We may conclude that Theodulf was the founder of Micy. Ardo's *Vita Benedicti* hints that Theodulf desired to "construct" the monastery of Micy.<sup>[63]</sup> This word should not only indicate the construction of buildings but also the founding of the monastery because the *Vita Benedicti* distinguishes the construction from the reconstruction.<sup>[64]</sup>

[63] Ardo, *Vita Benedicti*, c. 24, p. 209 (see n. 23 above).

[64] According to Ardo, Bishop Leidrad of Lyon wished to "rehedificare" the monastery of Île Barbe in Lyon (Ardo, *Vita Benedicti*, c. 24, p. 209). Previous scholarship has confirmed Leidrad's reconstruction of this monastery (Paul-Albert Février and others, "Lyon," in *Topographie chrétienne des cités de la Gaule des origines au milieu du VIIIe siècle*, ed. Nancy Gauthier and others, 4: *Province ecclésiastique de Lyon (Lugdunensis prima)* (Paris, 1986), pp. 15–35 (p. 28); Jean-François Reynaud, *Lugdunum christianum: Lyon du IVe au VIIIe s.: Topographie, nécropoles et édifices religieux*, Documents d'Archéologie française, 69 (Paris, 1998), p. 199).

## CONCLUSION

The developments of the legends regarding Maximinus up to the ninth century are exhibited here in their entirety. 1) Maximinus was first mentioned as a priest in Orléans at the end of the sixth century. On the other hand, Avitus was already famous in the sixth century when some historians, including Gregory of Tours, recorded him. He is referred to as an abbot or a priest in Orléans and the Perche. Both of these men were recognised as men of Orléans, but their relationships were unknown in this century. They may have been venerated separately. 2) Bishop Theodulf might have founded the monastery of Micy at his earliest episcopate, probably at the end of the eighth century. He planned to provide Micy with a guardian saint and an ancient tradition. Around 800, Theodulf altered Maximinus's character from that of a priest of Orléans to an abbot of Micy; Micy was regarded as the keeper of the relics of Maximinus. The origin of the monastery was thus pushed back to go in the time before the barbarian age. Next, he might have been persuaded the hagiographers of Saint-Avit to change the identity of Avitus. Avitus became a disciple of Maximinus and, consequently, a monk/abbot of Micy. Besides, the hagiographers attributed a historical figure to the founding of Micy: Bishop Eusebius of Orléans was named as the founder in the early sixth century. 3) Bishop Jonas of Orléans was unsatisfied with his predecessor's plan, although they shared the same goal. Around the second quarter of the ninth century, Bertold, a hagiographer of Micy, replaced the founder of his community with Clovis I, although Eusebius held an important position. Bertold revealed the origin of Maximinus and created new characters such as Agilus, Euspicius, and Carileffus. Next, Abbot Heriric, Jonas, and Bertold reset some parts of Theodulf's plan. They gave up making their contemporaries believe that Micy had the relics of Maximinus and thus created new stories that the relics were transferred several times prior to their arrival at the final destination of Micy. Bishop Sigobert of Orléans was mentioned as an organiser of a seventh-century translation. Furthermore, Theodulf's name was deleted from the history of Micy for a political reason. 4) In the middle of the ninth century, when the episcopate of Jonas ended, the late Theodulf's honour was restored.

The examples given in this article confirm that traditions about saints were not necessarily developed in a straightforward manner. Bishops, abbots, and hagiographers not only added some elements to the legends of saints, but also



distorted or falsified some records of saints. These plans sometimes failed. In such cases, their achievements were swept away by the following generations, which created new plans. Our examples also show the importance of the relics of saints in the Carolingian society as Patrick Geary stated.<sup>[65]</sup> A religious community needed the relics to be identified because the community did not enjoy the idea that their ownership was in doubt and must have beaten rivals who claimed to keep the same relics. Pedigreed relics of saints were vital not only for churchmen, but also for the lay people who wished to venerate them.

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#### **APPENDIX 1: CHAPTER 2 OF THE *VITA AVITI I***

Bollandist edition (see n. 11), c. 2, p. 57: “Cumque ætatis infantia rudimenta transisset, ad monasterii congregationem devotus illico convolvavit [...]”

MGH edition (see n. 55), c. 2, p. 383: “Cumque aetatis infantiae rudimenta transisset, ad Miciacensis monasterii congregationem devotus ilico convolvavit [...]”

BN, lat. 15436, fol. 176r: “Cumque ætatis infantiae rudimenta transissent, ad Miciacensis monasterii congregationem devotus ilico convolvavit [...]”

BSB, Clm 18546, fol. 162v: “Cumque aetatis infantiae rudimenta transisset, ad Mictiacensis monasterii congregationem devotus ilico convolvavit [...]”

ÖNB, Cod. 430, fol. 148r: “Cumque etatis infantiae rudimenta transisset, ad Mictiacensis monasterii congregationem devotus ilico convolvavit [...]”

KBR, 98-100, fol. 10r: “Cumque etatis infantiae rudimenta transisset, ad monasterii congregationem devotus ilico convolvavit [...]”

Trier, Stadtbibliothek, 1151/455, fol. 42(xlvi)r: “Cumque etatis infantie rudimenta transisset, ad Micciacensis monasterii congregationem devotus ilico convolvavit [...]”

#### **APPENDIX 2: CHAPTER 3 OF THE *VITA AVITI I***

Bollandist edition, c. 3, p. 58: “[...] vir sanctissimus Maximinus, qui tunc temporis abbatiae fungebatur officio, sibi debitos migravit ad cælos. Sanctumque cadaver monachi tumulantes [...]”

MGH edition, c. 4, p. 383: “[...] vir sanctissimus Maximinus, qui tunc temporis abbatiae fungebatur officio, sibi debitos migravit ad caelos, sanctumque cadaver Ligerico in littore monachi tumulantes [...]”

BN, lat. 15436, fol. 176r: “[...] vir sanctissimus Maximinus qui eiusdem tempore abbatiae fungebatur officio, sibi debitos migravit ad cælos. Sanctumque cadaver Ligerico in littore [...]”

BSB, Clm 18546, fol. 163r: “[...] vir sanctissimus Maximus qui tunc temporis abbatiae fungebatur officio, sibi debito migravit ad caelos, sanctumque cadaver conditum monachi tumulantes [...]”

ÖNB, Cod. 430, fol. 148v: “[...] vir sanctissimus Maximus qui tunc temporis abbatiae fungebatur officio sibi debito migravit ad celos, sanctumque cadaver conditum tumulantes monachi [...]”

KBR, 98-100, fol. 10r: “[...] vir sanctissimus Maximinus qui tunc temporis abbatie fungebatur officio, sibi debitos migravit ad celos, sanctumque cadaver monachi tumulantes [...]”

Trier, Stadtbibliothek, 1151/455, fol. 42(xlvi)v: “[...] vir sanctissimus Maximi-

nus, qui tunc temporis abbatis fungebatur officio, sibi debitos migravit ad celos, sanctumque cadaver Luere in littore monachi tumultantes [...].”

*Chukyo University  
Nagoya, Japan*