

VI.2.e.

The New Monastics

The nature of life in this period made the development of more and more rigid scholastic orders of monastic nature mandatory. There was a need for a disciplined life if one were to put attention to formal study and production of theological works. Obviously the monasteries were the place for this activity. But in the passage of time many of the monastic orders had become little more than holding tanks for part of the societal dregs (but not true of all, of course) and there came to the scene a few persons who, fearing what was in existence could not be reformed, determined to form new orders that could carry out spiritual goals without the inhibitions existing in the older economies. Of these we will mention the most prominent while not going into depths of detail on lesser movements as we see them.

The Cistercians

The order is marked by a complicated beginning. The chief founders are Robert of Citeaux (Molesme), Stephen Harding, and the cleric, Alberic. They acted somewhat independently and somewhat together. The order was begun as a Benedictine order in 1098 and eventually turned from the Benedictine rule to one composed by the aforementioned persons. The order rejected feudal incomes, eventually accepted white robes, and depended on the monks' working powers for their stabilization. They promoted agriculture and meditative piety and argued for a simplicity of life style. To make this more realistic the Cistercians sought to build monasteries in very remote places. A number of prominent monastics will be found in the group including Bernard of Clarvaux. The society tended to dislike pageantry and pomp and objected to the excessive life that many monastics reflected. The rule of life was drawn by Harding and for a few centuries it was one of the more diligent monastic orders.

The Carthusians

Founded in 1084 this order concentrated on the meditative life almost absolutely. Silence was the monastic rule and the monasteries were supported by a lay community dedicated to