



Robert L.J. Shaw

# The Celestine Monks of France, c.1350–1450

## Observant Reform in an Age of Schism, Council and War

Amsterdam  
University  
Press

The Celestine Monks of France, c.1350–1450

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# The Celestine Monks of France, c.1350–1450

*Observant Reform in an Age of Schism, Council and War*

*Robert L.J. Shaw*

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Cover illustration: A miniature of the renunciation of St Peter Celestine (Celestine V), found in a copy of the Celestine constitutions (*Celestines of Avignon – Saint-Pierre Célestin, c.1380s*); Avignon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 727, fol. 1r.

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# Abbreviations

Avignon, BM	Avignon, Bibliothèque municipale
Metz, BM	Metz, Bibliothèque municipale
Paris, Arch. Nat.	Paris, Archives nationales
Paris, BnF	Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France
Paris, BA	Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal



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# Introduction: The Celestine monks of France and the rise of ‘Observant’ reform

The history of the Celestine monks of France – or to give them their full, contemporary title ‘the Celestine brothers of the province of France and adjacent regions’ – in the late Middle Ages has until recently lain buried.<sup>1</sup> It is the history of a congregation that no longer exists, a self-governing province of an Italian Benedictine reform of thirteenth-century origin that likewise no longer exists, and which has received very little subsequent attention. Compared to many other monastic reforms, the volume of work on the French Celestines is slight; in fact, the Celestines as a whole remain one of the least studied medieval monastic congregations. Only one modern monograph has focused on them, Karl Borchardt’s *Die Cölestiner*, an excellent study of the order’s entire institutional history, which covers their presence in Italy as well as France.<sup>2</sup> Beyond this, there is a body of work on their early Italian foundations,<sup>3</sup> while a small number of doctoral theses and articles have devoted some attention to their French wing.<sup>4</sup>

1 This is the title used in the first edition of constitutions compiled by the self-governing French Celestines, c.1420: Avignon, BM, MS 728, fol. 1r: ‘Incipit tabula in Constitutiones fratrum Celestinatorum provincie Francie et partium eidem adjacentium.’

2 K. Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner: eine Mönchsgemeinschaft des späteren Mittelalters* (Husum, 2006).

3 On the early Celestine order, see especially L. Pellegrini, ‘Dall’Ordo Morronensium all’Ordo Celestinatorum’, in *Il monachesimo italiano nel secolo della grande crisi: atti del V Convegno di studi storici sull’Italia benedettina*, ed. G.G. Picasso and M. Tagliabue (Cesena, 2004), 327–49. For earlier works, see A. Moscati, ‘I monasteri di Pietro Celestino’, *Bullettino dell’Istituto storico italiano per il medioevo* 68 (1956), 91–163; M. Galluppi, *La badia benedettina di Santa Maria di Faifoli* (Rome, 1929).

4 C. Sustrac, ‘Les Célestins de France: essai sur leur histoire et leur constitutions’, École des Chartes, PhD thesis (1899, now Paris, Bibliothèque Ste-Geneviève MSS 3904–3905); F. Isaac, ‘Les Célestins de Paris, étude historique et archéologique’, École des Chartes, PhD thesis (1965); O.H. McIntyre, ‘The Celestines of Paris: monastic life and thought in the sixteenth century’, Stanford University, PhD thesis (1984); S. Comte, ‘Les Célestins, le roi et le pape: les monastères d’Avignon et de Gentilly et le pouvoir’, *Provence historique*, 186 (1996), 229–51; S. Comte, ‘Les Célestins du Midi, une antenne de la cour de France à Avignon?’, *Cahiers de Fanjeaux*, 39 (2004), 175–208; S. Comte, ‘Vivre dans la société des Célestins: les familiers laïcs à travers les “martyrologues” de l’ordre’, in *Vivre en société au Moyen Âge: Occident chrétien VI<sup>e</sup>–XV<sup>e</sup> siècle*, ed. D. Le Blèvec and H. Taviani-Carozzi (Aix-en-Provence, 2008), 293–305; M. Chazan, ‘La Chronique des Célestins de Metz (XIV<sup>e</sup>–XV<sup>e</sup> siècle)’, in *Écrire l’histoire à Metz au Moyen Âge*, ed. M. Chazan and G. Nauroy

This lack of attention, however, is a grave injustice on every level. The history that will emerge in the course of this book is of a congregation that reached a significant apex of cultural impact and influence around the turn of the fifteenth century, on a scale disproportionate to its relatively small, albeit growing, size in this period. Theirs was a journey which has much to tell the modern reader about the ideals and practice of late medieval monastic reform; they represent one of the most prominent groups in France to label themselves as ‘Observant’ in this period, a banner for a wave of reform efforts across multiple orders of which the importance is only now coming to be fully understood.<sup>5</sup> But they also represent a powerful example of the potential that still lay within the ties that bound monasticism and wider society together. It is the history not only of a monastic congregation but of those bonds that this book sets out to uncover.

## The Celestines and the French Celestines

Who were these somewhat forgotten monks? The Celestines had their origins in Italy. They were founded by a hermit, Pietro da Morrone, later canonized as St Peter Celestine (c.1215–1296), who, according to his earliest biographers,<sup>6</sup> had first lived as a Benedictine monk at Santa-Maria di Faifoli in the Molise region before becoming a solitary in the caves of the Abruzzo mountains.<sup>7</sup> He became well known there for his asceticism and poverty, apparently maintaining himself with only the poorest clothing and food, and fasting every day except Sunday. He was also especially noted for his

(Berne, 2011), 113–52; M. Chazan, ‘Le couvent des célestins de Metz: jalons pour l’analyse d’un succès’, in *Les Gens d’Église et la ville au Moyen Âge dans les pays d’entre-deux* (2013), Centre de Recherche Universitaire Lorrain d’Histoire, <http://cruh.univ-lorraine.fr/sites/cruh.univ-lorraine.fr/files/documents/mireillechazan.pdf> (accessed 19 May 2018); F. Gadby, ‘Les Célestins en France: les lettres de Jean Bertauld’, in *Da Celestino Vall’Ordo Coelestinorum*, ed. M.G. Del Fuoco (L’Aquila, 2005), 267–86; M. Lamy, ‘Pierre Poquet: un maître spirituel chez les Célestins’, in *Expériences religieuses et chemins de perfection dans l’Occident médiéval: études offertes à André Vauchez par ses élèves*, ed. D. Rigaux, D. Russo and C. Vincent (Paris, 2012), 391–408.

5 See below (14–15) for a discussion of ‘Observant’ reform.

6 *Die ältesten Viten Papst Colestins V (Peters vom Morrone)*, ed. P. Herde, *MGH SRG*, n.s., xxiii (2008), provides editions of three texts which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2; P. Herde, *Cölestin V* (Stuttgart, 1981), provides the best modern account of his life.

7 *Die ältesten Viten*, 114; *Vita C* (‘Tractatus de vita et operibus atque obitu ipsius sancti viri’), written in 1306 or earlier, states that the abbot of Santa Maria in Faifoli had first given him the habit.

penitential efforts, maintaining arduous cycles of repeated genuflections and prayers for this purpose.<sup>8</sup> His devotion rapidly attracted followers whom Peter organized into communities, their first being founded close to one of his hermitages at Mount Maiella.<sup>9</sup> These communities would not develop along the semi-eremitic lines of the Carthusians or the Camadolese brothers of St Peter Damian, but rather into a distinctive reform of the Benedictines, the coenobitic order in which Peter had professed prior to becoming a hermit.<sup>10</sup> Peter and his followers were officially incorporated into the Order of St Benedict in 1264 following the command of Urban IV to Nicolas da Fossa, bishop of Chieti, in 1263,<sup>11</sup> and received further confirmation of their status as a self-governing Benedictine congregation on 22 March 1275 from Gregory X.<sup>12</sup> They expanded rapidly in Italy, comprising thirty-five communities by 1300, both through new foundations and the reform of existing Benedictine houses.<sup>13</sup> Peter's growing fame as an ascetic and healer led to his election as pope on 5 July 1294. A familiar name at the Curia by this point, he was chosen as a compromise candidate to break nearly two years of factional deadlock in the conclave. While he had misgivings over leaving his seclusion – he was once again living as a hermit, this time on Mount Morrone – to take up the papacy, he was eventually persuaded by a delegation led by the Angevin ruler of Naples, King Charles II and his son, Charles Martel, who escorted him to Aquila (now L'Aquila) where he was consecrated Celestine V (29 August 1294) in the monastery of Santa-Maria di Collemaggio that he had founded. His papacy was subject to a strong Angevin influence: he appointed seven French cardinals. His tenure would prove to be very short, however. Four months after his consecration, he abdicated (13 December 1294), removing himself from authority just as he had earlier stepped down from the leadership of his own order. He was willingly assisted in his resignation – a first in the history of the popes – by the canonist Cardinal Benedetto Caetani, who became his successor, Boniface VIII.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, his brief reign brought valuable privileges to his order, including indulgences for those who visited Celestine houses,<sup>15</sup> and exemption from paying tithes on their

8 *Die ältesten Viten*, 91–100.

9 Herde, *Cölestin V*, 7–8; Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 19.

10 Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 13–14.

11 *Ibid.*, 20.

12 Bull of Gregory X (*Religiosam vitam*, 22 March 1275): Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 375–7.

13 *Ibid.*, 354–5.

14 Herde, *Cölestin V*, 31–142.

15 L. Beurrier, *Histoire du monastère et couvent des Pères Célestins de Paris* (Paris, 1634), 105–7.



lands and from episcopal jurisdiction.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, the congregation became known as the Celestines from the 1340s, in remembrance of Peter's papal title.<sup>17</sup>

The expansion of the Italian Celestines continued through the fourteenth century, so that they possessed around 100 houses by 1400, although it is clear that it had begun to slow by the turn of the fifteenth.<sup>18</sup> The congregation in France would always be far smaller; nevertheless, the French province was growing rapidly at around the same time that Italian expansion was beginning to slow down, and this time solely through new foundations. The congregation had been introduced there in 1300 by Philip the Fair, against the background of that king's conflict with Peter's papal successor, Boniface VIII. Their early fourteenth-century expansion was limited. Between 1300 and 1350, only four monasteries were founded: Notre-Dame at Ambert, near Orléans (1300–4, by Philip the Fair), Saint-Pierre at Mont-de-Châtres (1309, by the same), Sainte-Croix at Offémont (1331, by Jean de Nesles, lord of Offémont) and Notre-Dame at Ternes (1338, by Roger le Fort, bishop of Limoges), the latter three all being very modest houses at foundation.<sup>19</sup> However, in the century that followed, the congregation went from strength to strength. Thirteen new houses were built between 1350 and 1450 within France, the papal *comtat* of Venaissin, and the duchy of Lorraine (see Appendix 1), beginning with that of Paris in 1352 (founded by Garnier Marcel and the College of the Notaries and Secretaries of the King). This Paris house, dedicated to Notre-Dame de l'Annonciation, became the mother house of the French province, with Charles V and his son Louis, duke of Orléans (d.1407), its most generous backers. It grew from a convent of roughly four to six monks just after foundation to one of thirty to forty monks (and eight or nine oblates) in 1414, and that at a time of regional economic instability. Backed by a cast of powerful founders and benefactors, also including Charles VI, Charles VII, John, duke of Bedford (as regent of France for the Lancastrian Henry VI), and the Avignonese pope Clement VII, the turn of the fifteenth century arguably marked the peak of royal and aristocratic

16 Bull of Celestine V (*Etsi cunctos*, 27 September 1294): Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 377–84. This privilege also sets out the congregational government of the order (discussed in Chapter 2, 85) and lists its possessions.

17 Pellegrini, 'Dall'Ordo Morronensium all'Ordo Celestinatorum', 338.

18 Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 355.

19 Ambert was founded for twelve monks; Mont-de-Châtres had six; Offémont had four; Ternes had six to eight, despite being founded for twelve. See Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 70–5, 263; Paris, BA, MS 5145 (*Histoire abrégée de la congrégation des Célestins de France*, anonymous, 18th century), 80.

interest.<sup>20</sup> Apart from the mother house at Paris, the very well-supported monastery of Saint-Pierre Célestin in Avignon (1393–5), which perhaps reached a similar size, and the houses of Amiens (1392), Lyon (1407–21) and Marcoussis (1404–08) probably represented their largest convents, all of which were founded around that time.<sup>21</sup>

Concurrent with this peak, the Celestines of France found both independence and independent influence. On 25 January 1380, following the outbreak of the Great Schism (1378–1417) and with the support of Charles V, the growing French congregation was granted self-government by Clement VII, the French-backed papal claimant whose election had caused the Schism. From that point onwards, the French Celestines were governed by their own provincial chapter at Paris, which elected a new provincial prior every three years.<sup>22</sup> This self-governing status, which included the right to make their own constitutions, was maintained after the end of the Schism in 1417, despite the initial attempts of the Italian abbot to send his visitor to restore the French province to the control of the Italian general chapter. A concordat with their Italian brethren (September 1418) secured French Celestine self-government in return for a contribution of 20 ducats at every Italian general chapter and the presence of the provincial prior at the same every six years, relaxed to every twelve in 1423.<sup>23</sup> This continuing arrangement was confirmed by Martin V on 27 September 1423.<sup>24</sup> Crucially, however, the French Celestines came to see themselves as the reform wing of their own order: they proclaimed themselves the strictest proponents of ‘regular observance’ (*observantia regularis*) within the congregation and proactively sought to gain a measure of supremacy over the Italian general chapter, winning the support of the Curia to do so.<sup>25</sup> It was to the care of French province that the papacy would attach several Italian Celestine monasteries for the purposes of reform: Eugenius IV granted them control

20 Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 76–93. See Chapter 4, 181–2, 191, on the size of the Paris convent and on benefaction.

21 Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 264; Avignon was founded for twelve monks, but sixteen more brothers were added up to c.1450 (see Chapter 4, 186); the convent may have totalled thirty to forty monks in good times.

22 Bull of Clement VII (*Sacre vestre religionis observantia*, 25 January 1380): Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 412–14; see Chapter 2, 65–7.

23 Concordat (2 September 1417): Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 414–17; on the relaxation of visits to the general chapter, see Paris, BA, MS 5145, 439–43.

24 Bull of Martin V (*Regimini universalis ecclesie*, 27 September 1423): Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 417–19.

25 See Chapter 1, 61, on Jean Bassand’s proactive efforts to influence Martin V and Eugenius IV to hand over the monastery of Aquila to the French province.

of the houses of Santa-Maria di Collemaggio near Aquila – where St Peter Celestine was buried – and Sant'Eusebio in Rome in 1444, and Innocent VIII did the same with that of Norcia in 1488.<sup>26</sup> The French Celestines also exerted significant influence over a wider attempt to reform the Italian congregation: in 1453, the former prior of Mantes, Jean Bertauld (1413–1473) was elected (with the backing of Nicolas V) as abbot-general of the entire congregation following a general chapter held at the French-run monastery of Santa-Maria di Collemaggio.<sup>27</sup> The French Celestines would also gain the allegiance of Emperor Charles IV's Celestine foundation of Oybin in Bohemia from 1426, much to the consternation of the Italian brethren.<sup>28</sup>

By the point of their independence, the French monks had taken on a character somewhat distinct from the Italian Celestines. They were certainly rather more urban and more privileged than their Italian brothers, as Borchardt has noted. Their houses were more often found in or in close proximity to towns and cities, and the monks appear to have maintained closer ties to the powerful princes, aristocrats, and ecclesiastical magnates who provided them with so much funding.<sup>29</sup> Where clues to their origin survive, their monks do not, however, appear to be the lesser offspring of great noble or ecclesiastical lineages, although the important exception of Robert de Bordes (d.1384, provincial prior in 1360–3, 1367–70 and 1383–4), a nephew of Cardinal Pierre Bertrand, founder of the house at Colombier, should be noted.<sup>30</sup> Rather, men of emergent, bourgeois backgrounds seem to have been particularly prominent. The most notable French Celestines in this study, Pierre Pocquet (d.1408) and Jean Bassand (d.1445), were respectively a lawyer *in utroque jure* who had frequently appeared before the Parlement of Paris,<sup>31</sup> and the son of an important citizen in Besançon who had left an Augustinian house to join the Celestines.<sup>32</sup> Two of the younger brothers of

26 Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 132–7, 140–1.

27 Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 138; J. Aurélien, *La vie admirable de notre pere Saint Pierre Celestin Pape* (Bar-le Duc, 1873), 327–8.

28 A. Becquet, *Gallicae Coelestinorum Congregationis, Ordinis S. Benedicti, monasteriorum fundationes virorumque vita aut scriptis illustrium elogia historica* (Paris, 1719), 65–8, 73; Paris, BA, MS 5145, 313–7; Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 125–43.

29 Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 284–5.

30 Avignon, BM, MS 1439 (Nicolas de la Ville, *Vitae provinciales et priorum congregationis Celestinorum provincie Gallice*, 1653), 206–7; see also Aurélien, *La vie admirable*, 319, and Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 284.

31 O. Caudron, 'Poquet (Pocquet, Pierre), Célestin, V. 1340–1408', in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, ed. M. Viller *et al.*, 17 vols (Paris, 1937–95), xii, 1922–6, at 1922; Avignon, BM, MS 1439, 200–1; Aurélien, *La vie admirable*, 320.

32 See the analysis of his *vita* in the next chapter; Aurélien, *La vie admirable*, 322–3.

the noted theologian and Church reformer Jean Gerson – Nicolas (professed at Villeneuve-lez-Soissons in 1401) and Jean the Celestine (professed at Limay-lez-Mantes in 1407) – were likewise prominent members of the order.<sup>33</sup> A similar background and pattern can be seen in the case of the aforementioned Jean Bertauld. Born to a bourgeois family in the city of Amiens, he had received an education (it is not known to what level) at the University of Paris before going on to join the Celestines: he became prior of Sainte-Trinité in Mantes (1444–53), then Santa Maria di Collemaggio (1453), before his elevation as abbot-general in Italy in the same year. Four of his brothers also joined the Celestine order, two of them also becoming priors.<sup>34</sup> Mirielle Chazan's prosopographic research on the monks of Metz, based on the chronicle kept there in this period, has found that at least 15 of the 103 professions between 1376 and 1469 arrived from existing ecclesiastical careers, while at least 5 or 6 had completed a university education.<sup>35</sup> In short, they could attract young men with options. Professor Borchardt emphasizes that they did especially well among men who could easily have taken advantage of the expanding opportunities for bureaucratic careers.<sup>36</sup>

The Celestines lived on in both Italy (until 1810) and France (until 1790), but their late medieval expansion ground to a halt in the late fifteenth century. In the French province, there would only be six further houses added to the province between 1450 and dissolution: Villarsalet, in the duchy of Savoy (1470), Milan (1515, by Francis I of France during his invasion of Italy), Annecy, again in Savoy (1516), Heverle in Belgium (1525), Esclimonte (1546, in the Beauce country) and Bordeaux (1631).<sup>37</sup> While that history is doubtless not without interest, it is the French Celestines in their most energetic and best-supported state, between c.1350 and 1450, that this book addresses. In part, it aims to complement the work of Karl Borchardt's excellent and wide-ranging history of the Celestines by focusing on a period and a region that deserve more in-depth study. While Peter Herde's work on St Peter Celestine and that of an active community of Italy historians have shone further light on the early period of Celestine history, their expansion in France and the reformist aspirations of the monks there have not received the same level of interest. While the outlines of French Celestine institutional history

33 Ibid., 326; Avignon, BM, MS 1439, 159. The youngest, Jean the Celestine, was made prior of Marcoussis (in 1415), Lyon (in 1421 and 1432) and Vichy (in 1427).

34 Gadby, 'Les Célestins en France', 267–9.

35 Chazan, 'Le couvent des Célestins de Metz'.

36 Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 284.

37 Becquet, *Gallicae Coelestinorum*, 72, 74, 76, 77, 79, 81. On the dissolution of the Celestines, see Borchardt, *Die Cölestiner*, 345–51.

are clear, there is far more depth to uncover regarding their culture, their legislative standards, how they lived out their religious lives together, what they read and what they wrote. But this study's focus is far from just internal, and it aims to do more than just add colour to our historical knowledge of the Celestines. Above all, it seeks to explore how late medieval monastic reform both drew from and shaped its sociocultural landscape.

## Later medieval monasticism and reform

Against what contexts should French Celestine reform be understood? One is that of monastic reform, for their reformist bent was far from exceptional in the period. Many traditional views of late medieval monasticism have emphasized 'decline', a widespread weakening of discipline and zeal for reform that left monastic institutions ripe targets for Protestant attacks.<sup>38</sup> More recently, historians have suggested that the relevance of monasticism to society declined, especially in the face of growing lay piety.<sup>39</sup> These views are under increasing challenge however. A number of so-called 'Observant' reform movements in the late Middle Ages have been brought back into focus by Kaspar Elm and his students,<sup>40</sup> and most recently by James Mixson and Bert Roest.<sup>41</sup> Such work has self-consciously set about to escape what Mixson describes as 'the deeply rooted traditions and stereotypes [that] once distorted our approaches to the religious history of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries', in particular the 'the looming shadow of a seemingly

38 A view that has been broadly upheld in the classic English general studies of monastic history: G.G. Coulton, *Five Centuries of Religion*, 4 vols (Cambridge, 1950), and D. Knowles, *Christian Monasticism* (London, 1969). P. Schmitz, *Histoire de l'ordre de Saint-Benoît*, 7 vols (Paris, 1942–56), iii, takes a similar view, but is more circumspect about the generality of ascetic decay.

39 H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism* (New York, 1984), 224. See also A. Vauchez, 'The Religious Orders', in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. v: c.1198–c.1300, ed. D. Abulafia (Cambridge, 1999), 220–55. F. Rapp's discussion of religious developments in this period barely mentions religious orders. See F. Rapp, 'Religious Belief and Practice', in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. vii: c.1415–c.1500, ed. C.T. Allmand (Cambridge, 1998), 203–19.

40 See especially: K. Elm, 'Verfall und Erneuerung des Spätmittelalterlichen Ordenswesens: Forschungen und Forschungsaufgaben', in *Untersuchungen zu Kloster und Stift*, ed. J. Fleckenstein (Göttingen, 1980), 189–238; K. Elm, 'Les ordres monastiques, canoniaux et militaires en Europe du Centre-Est au bas Moyen Âge', in *L'Église et le peuple chrétien dans les pays de l'Europe du Centre-Est et du Nord (XIV<sup>e</sup>–XV<sup>e</sup> siècles)* (Rome, 1990), 165–86.

41 J. Mixson, *Poverty's Proprietors: ownership and mortal sin at the origins of the Observant movement* (Leiden, 2009); B. Roest, *Order and Disorder: the Poor Clares between foundation and reform* (Leiden, 2013); *A Companion to Observant Reform in the Late Middle Ages and Beyond*, ed. J. Mixson and B. Roest (Leiden, 2015).

inevitable Reformation.<sup>42</sup> The ‘Observant’ label derives from the favoured maxim of late medieval monastic reformers: ‘regular observance (*observantia regularis*)’, the same banner which the French Celestines took up in this period. That maxim itself was hardly new and in and of itself would appear to denote little more than having or following a particular rule. Nevertheless, its use became more loaded with reformist significance in the late Middle Ages. In the Franciscan order from the mid-fourteenth century onward, it denoted the belief in the stricter, literal observance of the Rule in contrast to the more moderated observance followed by the wider order (described as ‘conventuals’).<sup>43</sup> The use of ‘regular observance’ and ‘Observant’ as bywords for monastic reform and reformers soon became common in other orders, and not only among the Franciscan’s mendicant rivals (Dominicans and Austin Friars). From the late fourteenth century and onwards into the fifteenth, Observants sprang forth with no less energy in the most ancient form of coenobitic monasticism then in existence, that to which the Celestines themselves belonged, the Benedictines. The Observant Benedictine congregations of Subiaco (c.1370), Castl (1380), Santa Giustina (1407), Melk (1418) and Bursfelde (1433) all reformed houses at a pace: Santa Giustina added twenty-nine in just sixty years, while the Bursfelde congregation contained at least ninety-four houses in Central Europe by 1530.<sup>44</sup>

Recent research into Observant reform has recognized the multifaceted character of these groups and the results naturally present no small variety: how far one can speak of an ‘Observant’ movement across so many orders remains an open question. Nevertheless, certain traits appear common. A world has been uncovered where reformers built on the legacy of monastic piety of the Cistercian age as well as the ‘apostolic poverty’ promotion of the thirteenth century,<sup>45</sup> but also adopted new manners. If ascetic effort had long been a monastic hallmark, the Observants demanded unusual levels of precision and conformity in this respect, girding themselves with an outlook on the written codes of monastic life – Rules, but also supplementary legislation (e.g. customs, statutes, constitutions) – that urged great practical

42 J. Mixson, ‘Introduction’, in *Companion to Observant Reform*, ed. Mixson and Roest, 1–20, at 1.

43 D. Nimmo, ‘The Genesis of the Observance’, in *Il rinnovamento del francescanesimo: l’Osservanza; atti dell’XI Convegno Internazionale*, 1983 (Perugia, 1984), 109–47.

44 G. Melville, *The World of Medieval Monasticism: its history and forms of life*, trans. J. Mixson (Collegeville, 2016), 306–10; B. Collett, *Italian Benedictine Scholars and the Reformation: the congregation of Santa Giustina of Padua* (Oxford, 1985), 5.

45 On ‘apostolic poverty’, see H. Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, trans. R.E. Lerner (Notre Dame, 1995).

caution, especially over issues of property and poverty, and admitted to little variation.<sup>46</sup> They developed the ideals of monastic community by way of their thoroughgoing attack on greed and pride. Of particular importance among the Benedictines were congregational chapter systems that allowed for the alignment of practice across monasteries and the oversight of abbots. While this practice had originated with the Cistercians and been copied by the Cluniacs at the turn of the thirteenth century,<sup>47</sup> and had technically been made mandatory for Black Monks by the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) and the papal bull *Summi magistri* (1336), Observant reform was critical in bringing it to fruition among previously unreformed Benedictines, since outside of England, obedience to these demands had been occasional at best.<sup>48</sup> Some Observants went further than simply breathing new life into this model. The Observant Benedictines of Santa Giustina went far beyond moderating the role of abbots and the independence of convents through collegial oversight, as per the Cistercian model, and developed a system that was closer to the Franciscan and Carthusian models, where superiors were centrally appointed.<sup>49</sup> Monks there made their vows to the congregation, not the abbots of their houses; those abbots were in turn enjoined to renounce their offices yearly, and be replaced by a chapter president elected every year by the abbots and convent representatives gathered there.<sup>50</sup> As will be seen in Chapter 2, the Celestines had earlier concocted a system which, in Benedictine terms at least, was no less radical.

What inspired this new wave of Observant reform? Disciplinary issues within orders cannot be – and have not been – ignored. Within many Benedictine houses, as James Mixson has revealed, there was a culture of little luxuries, of exemptions for the possession of personal property, that had crept into communities. Given that this was a clear contravention of the Rule of St Benedict, it is no surprise that some within their communities would find fault in this and that there was conflict between the *observantes* – those who stuck steadfast to the Rule in this regard – and the *conventuales* – those

46 Mixson, *Poverty's Proprietors*, 205–12; J. Mixson, 'Observant Reform's Conceptual Frameworks between Principle and Practice', in *Companion to Observant Reform*, ed. Mixson and Roest, 60–84, at 75–7.

47 Melville, *World of Medieval Monasticism*, 148–51, 167–8; for an in-depth study of the Cistercian and Cluniac general chapters, see F. Cygler, *Das Generalkapitel im hohen Mittelalter, Cisterzienser, Prämonstratenser, Kartäuser und Cluniazenser* (Münster, 2002), 23–118.

48 J.G. Clark, *The Benedictines in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2011), 289–94.

49 Melville, *World of Medieval Monasticism*, 164–5, 214–15; see Cygler, *Das Generalkapitel*, 214–313, for a detailed study of the Carthusian system.

50 Collett, *Italian Benedictine Scholars*, 2–4; T. Leccissotti, *Congregationis S. Iustinae de Padua O.S.B. Ordinationes Capitulorum Generalium* (Montecassino, 1939), xxvi–xlii.

who followed the moderated practices of their communities. This conflict, however, was not one that existed in a vacuum. That the *conventuales* held their personal allowances so dearly reflected a society where access to little luxuries was becoming more widespread, especially in the towns, as standards of living improved in the wake of the Black Death.<sup>51</sup> Most importantly, the Observants were not so much apart from, but a part of late medieval society and culture, despite their undoubtedly earnest and reinvigorated efforts to deny the world. Their attitude towards monastic legislation, as Mixson has commented, is hard not to relate to the rising influence of law and the legal profession in society at large.<sup>52</sup> They copied texts and extracts in the manner of the Modern Devout.<sup>53</sup> And while they saw themselves as traditionalists, they often flourished in close proximity to humanist circles, which were not without respect for the idealism of monastic seclusion.<sup>54</sup> Their membership and supporters also suggest their place within a specifically late medieval social context. Much like those of the French Celestines, their leaders were frequently drawn from the ranks of the upwardly mobile, educated middle classes who began to prosper in these centuries, and whose depth of pious interests would also flourish outside the cloister. They had support networks that included not only ecclesiastical and lay magnates but also the intellectuals and Church reformers who were finding audiences beyond the schools, and the same bourgeois society they had so much success in recruiting from.<sup>55</sup> Nevertheless, the image of the Observants within society still feels somewhat uncertain. On the one hand they seem to represent a coherent ‘religious option’ within late medieval society, as contextually appealing as many paths of lay pious expression.<sup>56</sup> On the other hand, we still draw lines between this option and others: Observant religion has been presented as having something of an opposing, competitive relationship with lay piety,<sup>57</sup> while the history of conflict within cloisters enjoys pride of place as a shaper of specifically Observant values

51 Mixson, *Poverty's Proprietors*, 48–64.

52 Mixson, ‘Observant Reform’s Conceptual Frameworks’, 66.

53 Mixson, *Poverty's Proprietors*, 178–90.

54 G. Zarri, ‘Ecclesiastical Institutions and Religious Life in the Observant Century’, in *Companion to Observant Reform*, ed. Mixson and Roest, 23–59, at 37–9.

55 Mixson, ‘Introduction’, 9.

56 J. Van Engen, ‘Multiple Options: the world of the fifteenth century Church’, *Church History*, 77 (2008), 257–84.

57 Mixson, ‘Observant Reform’s Conceptual Frameworks’, 67; B. Roest, ‘Observant Reform in Religious Orders’, in *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, iv, ed. M. Rubin and W. Simons (Cambridge, 2009), 457.



in Mixson's analysis.<sup>58</sup> Given the spectacular rise of Observant reform in this period, a rise that could only have taken place with significant external support, there is surely greater depth and nuance to be uncovered concerning the ongoing conversation between monastic reform and external society that occurred in this period.

To think of the interaction between monastic reform and society as a 'conversation' encourages us to continue the work of recent research in mapping the ties of Observant reformers to the deep-lying cultural and social trends of the late medieval West: this book will cover those areas in depth in the Celestine context. But it also forces us to think of monastic reform in the context of the events and affairs of the society that surrounded them, and the world of shifting perceptions that brought underlying trends to life for contemporaries. This brings us to another historiographical problem. Traditional discussions of late medieval religious culture have focused heavily on 'crisis'; to discuss Observant reform in relation to events such as bubonic plague, the Great Western Schism (1378–1417) and political conflicts might seem to draw one back to that focus, as James Mixson has commented.<sup>59</sup> But to understand the relationship of Observant reform with the world, it is necessary to view these contexts through the eyes of the time, rather than through the lens of teleological ideas of religious transition.

From the perspective of contemporary perception, some oft-cited late medieval 'crisis' factors seem less decisive, such as the endemic bouts of pestilence that followed the Black Death (1346–53). There is no doubt that these had immense socio-economic impact, and it is well known that monasteries were often very badly disrupted by mass mortalities and falling returns from their patrimonies due to depopulation; fundamentally, as will be discussed in Chapter 4, demographic collapse had an enormous effect on the economic grounding of monastic life. But the evidence regarding the impact of mass mortality on the religious mood and tastes of the period is more ambivalent. While it has been argued that recurrent bouts of plague engendered a fearful, morbid religious atmosphere that affected the intensity of lay pious practice,<sup>60</sup> others have been more sceptical as to any revolutionary impact in this regard. For instance, Jacques Chiffolleau's study of religious culture surrounding death in the Avignon region in the late Middle Ages finds that the practices he uncovered (e.g. wills that commanded elaborate

58 See J. Mixson, 'The Poor Monk and the Proprietors: Observant reform of community as conflict', *Saeculum*, 66 (2016), 93–110.

59 Mixson, 'Introduction', 15.

60 J. Delumeau, *La peur en Occident* (Paris, 1978), 98–142.

funerals and liturgical commemoration) were more informed by longer-term trends, above all a greater sense of the loss of oneself in death that went back to the twelfth century, rather than by the shock and depression of pestilence mortalities.<sup>61</sup> Despite an apparent alignment of dates – French Celestine growth accelerated from c.1350 –, the evidence examined in this book likewise offers no suggestion that bubonic plague had a defining impact on how the monks and society perceived each other. Other dramatic events, however, do appear to have had a spiritual significance for the educated, urban culture that surrounded Observant reformers, including the French Celestines.

The Great Western Schism (1378–1417) had perhaps the most pointed effect in this regard. The historical background to the Schism was altogether mundane. The papal court of Gregory XI returned from Avignon (where it had resided since 1309) in 1377, much to the consternation of Charles V, king of France. Following the death of Gregory XI on 27 March 1378, Bartolomeo Prignano, formerly the archbishop of Bari, was elected as Urban VI on 8 April. Unhappy with the decision and with Urban's autocratic outlook, however, a dissident group of French cardinals rejected the election of Urban VI, citing that the presence of the Roman mob had led to an invalid decision: they elected Robert of Geneva as 'Clement VII' at Forlì (20 September 1378). Failing to gain control of Rome, Clement fled to Avignon, and set up his administration there; he had the backing of France, Navarre, Naples and in time the kingdoms of Aragon, Castile and Scotland, as well as parts of Germany.<sup>62</sup> For all the politics, however, one should not underestimate the effect that this split exercised upon minds, especially in the continental West, where the dividing lines between the competing papal obediences were most visible. While the collapsing claim of universality could even rear its head in the prophetic visions of the relatively unlettered, the issue caused particular strain within the educated, reformist milieu that Observants appear especially tied to.<sup>63</sup> Here access to information and opinion abounded with the distribution of tracts and the rise of certain 'public intellectuals', among whom one might include both Jean Gerson (d.1429) and Pierre d'Ailly (d.1420), both of whom

61 J. Chiffolleau, *La comptabilité de l'au-delà* (Paris, 2011), 94, 117. See also P. Aries, *L'homme devant la mort* (Paris, 1977).

62 R.N. Swanson, *Universities, Academics and the Great Schism* (Cambridge, 1979), 5–9.

63 M. Rubin, 'Europe Remade: purity and danger in late medieval Europe', *TRHS*, 11 (2001), 101–24; R. Blumenfeld-Kosinski, *Poets, Saints and Visionaries of the Great Schism, 1378–1417* (University Park, 2006), discusses the examples of a number of female visionaries with little or no formal education, including the French examples of Constance de Rabestan, Ermine de Reims and Marie Robine: the latter was connected with the Celestines (see Chapter 5, 244).

the French Celestines counted among their friends.<sup>64</sup> In this environment, the challenge raised by the Schism was not merely political, but appeared to attack the very spiritual fabric of Christian society. The predominant path of human salvation and redemption – through the intervention of the clerical order – could seem more suspect, given the presence of competing Church hierarchies.<sup>65</sup> Pierre d'Ailly seems to have been so deeply concerned about portents of the apocalypse during this time that he looked to the stars and the study of astrology and the prophetic works of Hildegard of Bingen for answers towards what the future might hold.<sup>66</sup> If the effects were judged on a spiritual as well as temporal plane, it was natural that the primary causes would be found in sin. In an atmosphere where ecclesiastical magnates appeared to have placed ambition over care for the flock, 'pride', 'avarice' and 'lust' began to stalk the scene – and indeed often not in a manner that was confined to one papal court alone – for informed observers such as the former courtiers Eustache Deschamps and Philippe de Mézières, as well as for theologians like Pierre d'Ailly and Nicolas de Clamanges.<sup>67</sup>

France, meanwhile, had been locked in an intermittent struggle over Valois succession since the 1330s that lasted until the end of the Hundred Years War in 1453. On the one hand, such political instabilities and the wars they brought were nothing new. On the other hand, a crisis over monarchy had more religious weight attached to it than ever before, at least among those closest to it. Kingship had taken on increasingly sacramental overtones from the reign of St Louis onward. Philip the Fair's conflict with Boniface VIII – the same conflict that had given the Celestines their entry into France – had resulted in high claims not only for the king's temporal power over the papacy, but also for his own priestly qualities. This did not necessarily result in a population that was religiously devoted to the person of the king. Amid the dynastic confusion and upheaval of the 'hot' periods of the Hundred Years War, pragmatic, everyday interests of safety and security often appear critical to allegiance. On the other hand, expressions of the religious humility and the purity of the royal office were ramped up in line

64 D. Hobbins, *Authorship and Publicity before Print* (University Park, 2009); on the relationship of D'Ailly and Gerson with the Celestines, see Chapter 5, 251–60.

65 D.Z. Flanagan, 'Extra ecclesiam salus non est – sed quae ecclesia?: ecclesiology and authority in the later Middle Ages', in *A Companion to the Great Western Schism*, ed. J. Rollo-Koster and T.M. Izbicki (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 333–74, at 333–8.

66 L.A. Smoller, *History, Prophecy, and the Stars: the Christian astrology of Pierre d'Ailly, 1350–1420* (Princeton, 1994).

67 R. Blumenfeld-Kosinski, 'The Conceptualization and Imagery of the Great Schism', in *Companion to the Great Western Schism*, ed. Rollo-Koster and Izbicki, 123–58.

with majestic visions of kingship, especially from the early confusion of Charles V's reign.<sup>68</sup> If that context, as will be discussed in Chapter 5, provided important grounding for the support the French Celestines received from royals and their functionaries from the 1350s, the confluence of the Schism with the contest and conflict between the followers of the dukes of Orléans and Burgundy for control of royal government during the mental illness of Charles VI (d.1421) created a perfect storm within the wider intellectual and cultural milieu of the monks: a perceived crisis of greed and pride seemed to inhibit any sort of lasting unity. Burgundian propaganda painted Louis, duke of Orléans (d.1407), the brother of Charles VI, as a man who had completely given way to these sins, and who had sown disunity both in the realm and in the Church as a result.<sup>69</sup> An Orléanist courtier like Christine de Pisan would conversely make every effort to paint him as the opposite, while Jean Gerson begged for greater humility on all sides, extolling the virtues of that simple labouring father, St Joseph, to the warring aristocracy.<sup>70</sup> That the French-speaking world in this period was quite fertile soil for monastic reform efforts should be set against this background. The Burgundian court made great efforts to support not only the Carthusians, but also the Observant-influenced reform of the Poor Clares by St Colette.<sup>71</sup>

In the midst of such perceived 'crises' within the world, crises that informed contemporaries so often related to 'worldly' behaviour, re-emphasizing ascetic – i.e. monastic – values was a natural response. But religious houses were more than just institutions where people sought solace and salvation in trying times: they could also be seen as a resource for the purification and reform of the Church and Christian society. In Prague, the Paris-educated Dominican Mattias of Janov made a novel proposal in 1380, just after the start of the Schism, which was probably addressed to John of Jenstein, the archbishop of the city. Lamenting the state of the clergy and noting, 'just how many devout, chaste, learned and humble men, wise and suited to all manner of good work for the edification of Christ's body and the people of the church are shut away' in the houses of Carthusians, the Benedictines, the Cistercians and the Austin Friars, he called for these religious take up the ecclesiastical duties in which the secular clergy had

68 Guinée, *Un meurtre*, 19–118; J. Krynen, *L'empire du roi* (Paris, 1993); J. Quillet, *Charles V: le roi lettré* (Paris, 1984).

69 Guinée, *Un meurtre*, 170–2.

70 Christine de Pisan, *Le livre des faits et bonnes meurs du sage Roy Charles V*, ed. N. Desgrugillers-Billard (Clermont Ferrand, 2009), 141–2; P. Payan, *Joseph: une image de la paternité* (Paris, 2006), 143–4, 153–5, 184–7.

71 E. Lopez, *Culture et sainteté: Colette de Corbie* (Saint-Étienne, 1994), 447.

failed.<sup>72</sup> Janov's words attest to the continued and evolving relevance of ascetic separation: it is interesting to observe that he leads with enclosed religious, rather than with men of his own order. But beyond this, his words suggest that monastic institutions represented hope for a Christian society placed back on the road towards a greater perfection. With bad clerics replaced, 'Then you will see how much utility you will confer to the sacred unity of the family of Christ, how great will be the edification of the people believing in the crucified Jesus, and what common illumination of the unrefined and simple peasants will come to pass.'<sup>73</sup>

Janov's sober optimism was shared by others; so too was his belief in the importance of monasticism to the overall picture of 'reform'. Philip Stump has shown that the Council of Constance (1414–17) was marked by a strong restatement of the medieval Christian idea of reform, inherited from the patristic period: 'the idea of free, intentional and ever perfectible, multiple, prolonged and ever repeated efforts by man to reassert and augment values pre-existent in the spiritual-material compound of the world' as Gerhart Ladner identified it.<sup>74</sup> A succinct example of this idea of 'reform' is found in the critical conciliar decree *Frequens* (9 October 1417). In demanding that the pope call ecumenical councils at regular intervals, its authors expressed hope in something more than a simple restoration of a past state of affairs: 'The frequent celebration of general councils is the best method of cultivating the field of the Lord. It extirpates the thorns, briars, and thistles of heresies, errors, and schisms; it corrects excesses, reforms the things which are deformed, and brings the Lord's vineyard to the fruits produced by richest fertility. The remembrance of times past and the consideration of present things places this before our eyes.'<sup>75</sup> Monastic reform was an important plank of the Council's work. In early 1417, it summoned the Benedictine 'abbots, priors, and superiors' of the province of Mainz to Petershausen, on the outskirts of Constance, to celebrate a reform chapter, where they would

72 *Mathiae de Janov, dicti Magister Parisiensis Regulae Veteris et Novi Testamenti*, 277–8, cited in Rubin, 'Europe Remade', 108, and R.E. Weltsch, *Archbishop John of Jenstein (1348–1400): papalism, humanism and reform in pre-Hussite Prague* (The Hague, 1968), 166–7.

73 *Ibid.*

74 G.B. Ladner, *The Idea of Reform: its impact on Christian thought and action in the age of the Fathers* (Cambridge, MA, 1959), 35. On the later Middle Ages, see especially P.H. Stump, *The Reforms of the Council of Constance (1414–1418)* (Leiden, 1994); P.H. Stump, 'The Influence of Gerhart Ladner's *The Idea of Reform*', in *Reform and Renewal in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: studies in honour of Louis Pascoe*, ed. L.B. Pascoe, T.M. Izbicki and C.M. Bellitto (Leiden, 2000), 3–17; C.M. Bellitto, 'The Reform Context of the Great Western Schism', in *Companion to the Great Western Schism*, ed. Rollo-Koster and Izbicki, 302–31.

75 Stump, *Reforms of the Council of Constance*, 157; *COD*<sup>3</sup> (1978), 438–9.

be assisted by the ‘many abbots and priors of this order from many regions’ who were already present at the Council. Taking their cue from the ‘healthy statutes’ of the Fourth Lateran Council, Honorius III and Benedict XII that had called for the regular celebration of provincial chapters among the Black Monks, they believed that ‘from the celebration of these [now] deformed chapters, the correction, the reformation of morals, the avoidance of many bad things and the promotion of multiple goods doubtless tend to come about.’<sup>76</sup> The language here, balancing correction with amelioration, was not dissimilar to *Frequens*, and indeed was issued before the final version of the latter; if it could be read as the conciliar reform spirit being applied to Benedictine monasticism, there is also the sense that these Benedictines were being called to act as a model in miniature for the wider reform those at the Council were still developing.

Late medieval monastic reformers also appear responsive to some of the key paths of correction and reform dear to those engaged in the wider renewal of the Church and Christian society, above all the two that emerge most strongly in the Petershausen bull: the enforcement of legislation of good tradition, and the absolute importance of coming together in unity. In an age where a Church reformer like Cardinal Zabarella could construct a vision of conciliar government solely on the basis of canon law,<sup>77</sup> and where a Christianized vision of Roman law, as a translation of the virtue of justice, played its part in the sacralization of royal majesty,<sup>78</sup> that Observant reformers sought religious comfort in conforming their lives to a body of legislation with precision was not only a relatively natural development of monastic tradition, but something that found parallels at the highest levels of external society. If Mixson has commented that strict observance of legislation helped to differentiate monastic life from lay piety, it can also be seen as placing the Observant reformers at the cutting edge of a wider religious culture, indeed of spiritual aspiration: a ‘yearning for law’, as Van Engen has described it, can also be witnessed in the precise exercises of the Modern Devout and even the emphasis of Wyclif and Hus on the *lex dei* of the Bible.<sup>79</sup> Moreover, the

76 J. Zeller, ‘Das Provinzialkapitel im Stifte Petershausen im Jahre 1417, ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Reformen im Benediktinerorden zur Zeit des Konstanzer Konzils’, *Studien und Mitteilungen zur Geschichte des Benediktinerordens und Seiner Zweige*, 41 (1921/2), 1–71, at 47–8.

77 B. Tierney, *Foundations of the Conciliar Theory* (Cambridge, 1955), 199–237.

78 J. Krynen, ‘Droit romain et état monarchique’, in *Représentation, pouvoir et royauté*, ed. J. Blanchard (Paris, 1995), 13–23; see also W. Ullman, *The Medieval Idea of Law as Represented by Lucas de Penne* (London, 1946).

79 Mixson, ‘Observant Reform’s Conceptual Frameworks’, 67–74; Van Engen, ‘Multiple Options’, 273.

fact that monastic reformers sought closer, tighter monastic communities and congregations was highly pertinent to the contemporary atmosphere, especially following the arrival of the Schism. Gerson's influential *De unitate ecclesiae* (1409), written at the time of the Council of Pisa – the first conciliar attempt to heal the Schism – argued that 'the essential unity of the Church always remains in Christ, her bridegroom, for He is the head of the Church in which we are all one', and that the members of the Church – not only cardinals, but princes and indeed any Christian – could and should act to preserve and enhance that unity.<sup>80</sup> The striving for more perfect community could itself be divisive. Recent literature has not incorrectly emphasized the divisions that the Observants' rigorous vision of common life caused, while the conciliar government of the Church pronounced at Constance at the end of the Schism would fall apart in the 1430s and 1440s through the internecine conflicts of the Council of Basel-Ferrara-Florence (1431–49) and a reinvigorated papacy that itself espoused reform. Nevertheless, ideas concerning unity and common action were a powerful reformist thread throughout the period.

The French Celestines in the late Middle Ages provide an excellent case study in which to understand the conversation between Observant reform and society. Although this study examines both aspects – internal religious culture and external context – it seeks above all to analyse the connections and interactions that took place between the two. Part I opens with an analysis of the *Vita* of Jean Bassand (Chapter 1), which exemplifies many aspects of French Celestine ideology and practice at the height of their influence in the fifteenth century; Chapter 2 discusses the development of their constitutions, the highly physical and action-orientated notion of justification and the reformist hope in law on which they were built, and the interaction with external society and culture – both excluding the world and borrowing from it – which informed them; and Chapter 3 examines the extent to which the French Celestines were able to maintain their rigorous Benedictine asceticism in practice, and their attempts to avoid the excesses associated with 'regular observance'. These led to profound reflection on the quandaries of reformed monastic life, which drew deeply on contemporary spiritual and reformist currents, above all the thought of Jean Gerson, but also showed significant creativity. Part II focuses on the monks' sociocultural context, and how they positioned themselves within the world. Chapter 4 looks at the benefactions and benefactors of the congregation, drawing attention to the difficulties that weighed against founding new monasteries

80 Jean Gerson, 'De unitate ecclesie', in *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. P. Glorieux, 10 vols (Paris, 1960–73), vi (1965), no. 272, 136–45, at 137.

in this period and the Celestines' surprising growth within this context; Chapter 5 focuses on the symbolic significance acquired by the congregation in a cultural milieu that was not only troubled by the twin threats of war and ecclesiastical schism but also animated by ambitions for the reform of Christian cultural milieu. It also examines the range of the Celestines' interpersonal and ideological influence and the extent to which the monks were able to offer solutions for problems confronting the wider society, in the context of French political divisions and the Great Western Schism. More particularly, the impact of their own thought on reformers outside their walls, especially Jean Gerson, is reconsidered.



