



A Handful of Peaceful Simple Men on The Hill: Monte Cassino Monastery

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Abstract

Monte Cassino Monastery, founded by St. Benedict on the hills of Monte Cassino near Rome, Italy, in the Middle Ages, pioneered the formation of European culture and civilization and the development of Western medicine with its rich library and hospices where monks were educated and also served the patients. However, it was an important center of science and culture, offering a retreat to the leading scientists of its time (they were translating the works of Eastern scientists into Latin). Benedict's rule had three basic principles: peace, reading, and manual labor. The monastery established close relations with political and religious authorities, as it enjoyed the support of the nobility and also recruited the children of the aristocracy into its ranks. Later, with many monasteries and a chain of monasteries established in line with the teachings of St. Benedict, he contributed to the formation of the cultural and political map of Europe. He had indirect influences on the events of his time through his close relations with the leading religious and political actors of his age (papacy and royalty, nobility). During the reform movement, it was one of the leading figures of its time. And also supported the reforms of Pope Gregory VII. During the abbacy of Desiderius II. the monastery had good relations with the East Roman Empire, and as due result Byzantine art was imported to the West. In addition, it played an active role in the First Crusade by hosting the Crusaders on their way and with the loans it gave. The Abbey of Monte Cassino significantly influenced the scientific, cultural, and political life of Europe. This study aims to explore the impact of Benedictine Monte Cassino Monastery on Western Europe's scientific, cultural, and political arena.

Keywords: Europe, Monte Cassino Monastery, politics, science, architecture, reform

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Tepedeki Barışçıl Basit Adamlar: Monte Cassino Manastırı

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Öz

Orta Çağ'da İtalya, Roma yakınlarında Monte Cassino'nun tepelerinde Aziz Benedict tarafından kurulan Monte Cassino Manastırı Avrupa kültür ve medeniyetinin oluşumuna zengin kütüphanesi, keşişlerin eğitim gördüğü ve aynı zamanda hastalara hizmet verdikleri bakımevleriyle Batı tıbbının gelişimine ön ayak oldu. Bununla birlikte, çağının önde gelen bilim adamlarına inziva mekânı sunmasıyla (doğulu bilim adamlarının eserlerini Latince'ye çeviriyorlardı) önemli bir bilim ve kültür merkeziydi. Benedikt'in kuralının üç temel ilkesi barış, kitap okumak ve ele emeği idi. Manastır soyluların desteğini aldığı ve aynı zamanda aristokrasinin çocuklarını kendi saflarına kattığı için siyasi ve dini otoritelerle yakın ilişkiler tesis etti. Daha sonraları Aziz Benedict'in öğretileri doğrultusunda kurulan pek çok manastır ve manastırlar zinciriyle Avrupa'nın kültürel ve siyasi haritasının oluşuma katkıları oldu. Çağının önde gelen dini ve siyasi aktörleriyle (papalık ve kraliyet, soylular) kurduğu yakın ilişkilerle döneminin olaylarına dolaylı etkiler yaptı. Reform hareketi sırasında zamanının önde gelen isimlerinden biriydi. Ayrıca Papa VII. Gregory'nin reformlarını da destekledi. Desiderius II'nin başrahipliği sırasında. Manastırın Doğu Roma İmparatorluğu ile iyi ilişkileri vardı ve bunun sonucunda Bizans sanatı Batı'ya ithal edildi. Ayrıca yola çıkan Haçlılara ev sahipliği yapması ve verdiği kredilerle I. Haçlı Seferi'nde etkin bir rol oynadı. Monte Cassino Manastırı, Avrupa'nın bilimsel, kültürel ve politik yaşamını önemli ölçüde etkiledi. Desiderius zamanında altın çağını yaşayan manastır aynı zamanda mimari alanda da gelişmelere sahne oldu. Monte Cassino Manastırı Avrupa'nın bilimsel kültürel ve siyasi hayatını önemli ölçüde etkiledi. Bu çalışma, Benedikten Monte Cassino Manastırı'nın Batı Avrupa'nın bilim, kültür ve politik arenasındaki etkilerini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır

Anahtar Kelimeler: Avrupa, Monte Cassino Manastırı, bilim, mimari, reform, politika:

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Introduction

The Abbey of Monte Cassino, founded in the sixth century according to the Benedictine rule, was one of the most important representatives of the peaceful monastic tradition. The basic principle of its founder, St. Benedict, was 'Pax', that is, 'Peace' (Gwynn, 1944, p. 1). The community founded by Benedict was a monastery known for its wise monks, where nobles brought their younger sons to become monks. Until Benedict's death, Benedict's rule (order) was that of a single monastery (house), Monte Cassino. However, later on, many monasteries were established in line with Benedict's teachings (Deanesly, 2005, p. 35). The Abbey of Monte Cassino spread throughout Europe and continued to be one of the principal exponents of Benedictine monasticism. In the feverish climate of the tenth and eleventh centuries, he established close relations with political actors who were at the heart of religious and political events (Conant, 1971, p. 78-79). As the leading representative of Benedictine monasticism, the influence of the Abbey of Monte Cassino increased in the eleventh century, both in the monastic order and in society at large, and its fame spread (Cowdrey, 1983, p. 44-45).

The monks of Monte Cassino were skilled in scientific and cultural fields as well as religious (Cowdrey, 1983, p. 44). Education was one of the cornerstones of the Benedictine rule. Education was one of the cornerstones of the Benedictine rule. The Abbey of Monte Cassino was not only a monastery, but also a leading scientific and cultural center of its time (Sigerist, 1958, p. 138). Monte Cassino, with its rich library containing many scientific, literary, and religious works, became the most famous scientific and cultural center of Europe, where medical and scientific education was given in the Middle Ages (Tschanz, 1997, p. 6-7). In addition to being a leading educational and cultural center, the monastery also produced important works in art and architecture. Especially during the reign of the High Priest Desiderius I, art and architecture education has gained importance. Many of the best Romanesque art was made during this period. Desiderius brought the masters of Byzantine architectural art to Monte Cassino, making the monastery an important center in the field of architecture and art (Van Engen, 1986, p. 280).

The Abbey of Monte Cassino did not stay away from the political developments of the age in which it lived. The monastery maintained good relations with both earthly and otherworldly powers (Deanesly, 2005, p. 36). It was important for the Abbey of Monte Cassino to establish good relations with noble and influential families (Howe, 1988, p. 321-322). In addition to being a center of science and culture, the monastery was a favorite retreat for the nobility (Meeder, 2018, p. 133). The monastery operated in areas where there were intense demands for renewal in religious life (Cowdrey, 1983, p. 44). However, he was also a prominent figure in the reform movement of the eleventh century (Gehl, 1976, p. 1-2). He was a leading supporter of papal reforms. The renewal of religious life corresponds to the golden age of the reform movement under the rule of the abbots of Monte Cassino, Desiderius, and Oderius I. Both contributed to the revival of the papacy after 1046 as the effective center of ecclesiastical authorities, reform, and the renewal of Western Christianity (Cowdrey, 1983, p. 45-46). They also established friendly relations with the Normans, who settled in Southern Italy. The establishment of peace with the Norman invaders was one of the indicators of the admirable diplomacy of Desiderius and his successors. Monte Cassino was in a peaceful approach to both the Normans and Byzantium, which opposed the papacy. It was also influential during the time of monastic

reform and Crusades (Owens, 1987, p. 158-159). Before and after the separation of the churches of Rome and Constantinople (Great Schism 1054), the monastery of Monte Cassino came to the fore in action and polemical discussions. Monte Cassino's prominence in the conflict between the Eastern and Western churches was a natural consequence of the geographical location of the region. Desiderius himself, as abbot of Monte Cassino, had the protection of the new Norman reconciliation rulers in 1059 (Bloch, 1946, p. 193). Thus, the Abbey of Monte Cassino, founded at a close distance from Rome on one of the important roads connecting Northern and Southern Italy, played a central role not only in the history of Western monasticism but also in the political and cultural life of the middle Middle Ages (Russo, 2014, p. 53).

Foundation of the Monastery of Monte Cassino

The Abbey of Monte Cassino, founded in the sixth century according to the Benedictine rule, was one of the most important representatives of the peaceful monastic tradition. The basic principle of its founder, St. Benedict, was 'Pax', that is, 'Peace' (Gwynn, 1944, p. 1). Saint Benedict of Nursia (d. 543) put his teachings into practice in his community in the south of Rome and founded his monastery at Monte Cassino in 529. At the request of his sister Scholastica, Benedict made some minor changes to his rule to meet the needs of women as well, establishing the first two Benedictine communities for both men and women. According to the Benedictine conception of monasticism, Monte Cassino was a community where Christians who devoted themselves to religion could live in peace with the love of salvation of souls and service to humanity (Krey, 1927, p. 218). The community founded by Benedict was a monastery known for its wisdom, where nobles brought their young sons to become monks. Monasticism, which originated mainly in the East, had an influence in Italy before St. Benedict. Saint Benedict also had contacts with monasteries in Byzantium. This made the Benedictines familiar with the writings of the Eastern fathers. Until Benedict's death, Benedict's rule (order) was that of a single monastery (house), Monte Cassino. However, later on, many monasteries were established in line with Benedict's teachings (Deanesly, 2005, p. 35).

The community at Monte Cassino still existed even though St. Benedict had died. In the meantime, other Benedictine communities were formed. After the invasion of Italy by the Germans in 582, the monks of the Abbey of Monte Cassino fled to Rome; The monastery fell into ruins. The monks took the bones of Benedict from among the ruins of Monte Cassino; they transferred them to the Abbey of Sur-Loire, which was the leading center of the Benedictine cult in the late ninth century. As described by Paul Deacon in his *Historia Langobardorum* (HL), in the first decades of the eighth century, only a group of 'simple men' (*virii simplices*) remained in the monastery on the hill of Monte Cassino until the abbot Petronax of Brescia (670-750) re-founded the monastery around 717. Later, with the restoration of monastic life and the contributions of its talented abbots, Monte Cassino spread from ruin to become one of the important figures of religious life with its vast lands and sister monasteries (Wickstrom, 1998, p. 31).

One of those who made important contributions to the spread of Benedictine monasticism was Pope Gregory the Great (540-604). Gregory, who devoted himself to religion at a young age, used the large mansions of which he was heir to establish Benedictine monasteries. When Gregory became pope, he sent Benedictine monks all over Europe to teach Christianity to pagan nations to expand the Benedictine ministry. This is how the

community in Canterbury was formed. The missionary movement that Christianized the Anglo-Saxons was a Benedictine initiative. Monks raised in monasteries in England traveled to distant lands in an attempt to teach Benedictine rule to their relatives on the continent. It was the Anglo-Saxon Boniface, a Benedictine priest who taught Christianity to the pagans in Germany. Boniface took a large number of religious works, including the book of St. Bede, to Germany to educate converts (Krey, 1927, p. 219). Boniface played an important role in the Christianization of Europe.

Monte Cassino was the authentic home of Benedictine during the lifetime of St. Gregory. It was Gregory the Great who sent St. Augustine and his fellow monks to England for missionary work. In *Vita S. Mauri*, it is written that Maurus, one of the first disciples of Benedict at Subiaco and Monte Cassino, went to Gaul with a group of monks and established a community there (Gwynn, 1944, p. 7). In early 868, Odo, Abbot of Glanfeuil, had gone to the Abbey of Saint-Pierre-des-Fossés in Paris with his monks, fleeing from the Norman raiders who had driven them out of their monasteries in the Loire valley. Odo and the monks had brought with them the remains of the bones of St. Maurus, the legendary founder of their monastery. Shortly thereafter, Odo, who was elected abbot of both communities, wrote a *Vita* (biography) in memory of the patron saint of Glanfeuil. Odo argued that St. Maurus was none other than Benedict's disciple of that name, well known from the Dialogues of Pope Gregory. Under the special tutelage of Maurus Benedict, first at Subiaco and then at Monte Cassino, he initiated the transformation of Benedictine teachings into monastic virtues. According to Odo, at Benedict's behest, Maurus spread the teachings of St. Benedict from the mother monastery of Monte Cassino to France, establishing Benedictine monasticism there (Wickstrom, 1994, p. 53-54).

From the sixth century of its foundation, the Abbey of Monte Cassino spread throughout Europe and continued to be one of the main representatives of Benedictine monasticism. In the feverish environment of the tenth and eleventh centuries, his close relations with the political actors at the heart of religious and political events were remarkable. These centuries were a time when the fire of reform spread rapidly throughout Europe, and the monasteries were drawn to the center of this wave. To create the prevalent monastic institution of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the monks had to find new mechanisms that would in principle unite a large number of disparate houses. This was a process that started from the Carolingians. Charlemagne, deeply influenced by the rule of Monte Cassino on one of his travels in Italy; ordered that all monasteries within the borders of the empire be reorganized according to Benedictine rule. A few years after Charlemagne's death, a Benedictine community appeared in Santiago de Compostela. Eventually, this famous pilgrimage to the Galician region originated with the help of Benedictine houses along the St. James Road (among others) (Conant, 1971, p. 78-79).

Another Benedictine Monastery that operated around the same time as Monte Cassino was Cluny. The Cluny chain of monasteries played an important role in the religious and political events of its time. Both monasteries were influenced by each other. However, in the chronicles of Monte Cassino, there is no mention of the role of Odo, Abbot of Cluny, in the rehabilitation and restoration of the Abbey of Monte Cassino in the middle of the tenth century. When Hugh of Cluny visited the monastery in 1083, he was greeted with a magnificent ceremony. At that time, each monastery was admitted to the brotherhood of the other. Hugh was influential in political affairs at the time and was respected by both papal and imperial supporters (Loud, 1985, p. 77).

In the second half of the eleventh century, the Abbey of Monte Cassino, the leading representative of Benedictine monasticism, grew in influence and spread its fame, both in the monastic order and in society at large. The consolidation and expansion of the order of St. Benedict's Holy Land (Terra Sancti Benedicti), the transfer of both land and other riches to the monastery through donations, formed the material basis of a large monastic community housed in magnificent buildings that many prominent people admired and tried to imitate. Although Monte Cassino did not make major innovations in monastic life, it became the most important education and training center of its age with its multifaceted scientific and cultural success (Cowdrey, 1983, p. 44-45).

Medicine and Science

Education was a cornerstone of the Benedictine rule. St. Benedict, the founder of the Monte Cassino Monastery, criticizes laziness in the eighth chapter of his teachings; the monks in the monastery survive by the labor of their hands; he emphasized that they should occupy themselves with sacred readings and prayers at certain times of the day. During the Lent fast, the monks had to read the books they had taken from the library (Berthoud, 1966, p. 62). Monasteries became schools that trained scholars in part on the occasion of their emphasis on education in leisure time; They established rich libraries that preserved Latin and Greek texts. Throughout its long history, the Library of the Abbey of Monte Cassino has been one of the important actors in the formation of the culture of the Middle Ages (Berthoud, 1966, p. 64).

The life of every Benedictine community, large or small, was built on the foundation of St. Benedict's canons. The essence of Benedictine life can be found in obedience to the high priestess and in the common day-to-day performance of liturgical worship, which Benedict simply called '*the Work of God*' (*Opus Dei*). In the skillful adaptation of his rule to the weaknesses of human nature, he gives each of them nothing necessary for the realization of that ascetic ideal, which draws young novices from the temptations and anxieties of a semi-pagan world to the serene silence of Monte Cassino; The legislative and science-supporting qualities that gave it its unique position in European medieval civilization and culture were kept alive in the Benedictine monastic tradition (Gwynn, 1944, p. 3).

The Abbey of Monte Cassino was not only a monastery, but also one of the leading scientific and cultural centers of its time. It became the cradle of important developments in the fields of theology, medicine, and pharmacy. In the ninth century, called the century of monastic medicine, the clergy and monks were the most educated class of society. Monasteries, especially the Benedictine monasteries north of the Alps, such as St. Gall, Fulda, and Reichenau, were centers of science and culture. Other important centers were the cathedral schools, both of which maintained a peaceful rivalry with the monastic schools, which would lead to the establishment of universities several centuries later (Sigerist, 1958, p. 138). The interest of Benedictine monks in medical matters led to the establishment of medical schools, first in Monte Cassino and then in Salerno. The first medical school in medieval Europe was developed by established under the patronage of the Benedictine monks of the Abbey of Monte Cassino in southern Italy (Walsh, 1903, p. 228).

The monastery was known all over Europe in the ninth century for its scientific and cultural activities (Walsh, 1903, p. 236). Among the various scientific activities in the

monastery were grammatical training, eremitic life, and theological discussions. A large number of people who were engaged in important scientific activities were raised in this monastery. Lawrence of Amalfi, Almanus of Salerno, Leo Marsicanus, Desiderius, Amatus, Guaiferius, and Alberic were among them (Gehl, 1976, p. 7). The Abbey of Monte Cassino founded a hospice (hospital) in the ninth century where monastic medicine was developed. Although not a true medical school in its present form, Monte Cassino was a scientific center where medical studies were conducted. Medical education began with the establishment of various nursing homes corresponding to today's hospitals, for which the monks were responsible, and the monks were assigned to these homes to receive education and help the sick. One of the main activities of the nuns during this period was the care of the sick. The practice of medical sciences was associated with the existence of the monastery, and the tradition of establishing hospitals was continued by the Benedictines in various parts of Europe. The Abbot of Monte Cassino, Desiderius (Pope Victor III), wrote books on the Medical Miracles of St. Benedict. Patients came from all over Europe to the famous hospice of Monte Cassino for treatment (Francis, 1944, p. 336). The fame of the medical school at Monte Cassino became so widespread in the eleventh century that Henry II of Bavaria (951-995), who was suffering from a stone in his kidney, left his home province and came to the nursing home at Monte Cassino for treatment (Walsh, 1903, p. 229).

The monks of Monte Cassino and the scientists who resided there for certain periods contributed to the development of medicine by translating Arabic works into Latin. In the tenth and twelfth centuries, there were notable advances in the field of medical care and education at the Salerno School of Medicine (Roguin, et al., 2021, p. 175). The training in Salerno was more about diet than medication. In addition, the origin of the medical schools in southern Italy owed in part to the fact that in the very early Middle Ages, the monasteries undertook the task of cultivating various plants used in the medicinal field. The botanical gardens at Monte Cassino and Salerno were one of the most important parts of the monasteries (Walsh, 1903, p. 236).

With the capture of the Lombard kingdom, the famous Lombard scholar Paul Deacon came to Charlemagne's court. The palace of a wandering king was an ideal place for intellectual development, where the scholars in his retinue were constantly confronted with information in new libraries. After leaving the Carolingian palace, Paul went to the Abbey of Monte Cassino. Paul's letter to Abbot Theudemar of Monte Cassino in 783, in which he asks about some members of the monastery, shows that he had strong ties to the community even before he retired to the monastery. Paul was in a key position to establish the intellectual links between the Carolingian intellectual elite and the Abbey of Monte Cassino (Meeder, 2018, p. 136).

Monte Cassino became the most famous cultural, educational, and medical center of Europe in the Middle Ages, with its rich library containing a large number of scientific, literary, and religious works. Constantine Africanus of Salerno (also known as Leo) (1020-1087), an eleventh-century physician, retired to the Abbey of Monte Cassino near Salerno after traveling for nearly forty years studying medical sciences in Mesopotamia, India, Ethiopia, and Egypt. In the monastery, he translated many books of the great masters of Arabic medicine and scientific works in Greek into Latin (Tschanz, 1997, p. 6-7). Africanus translated Ali bin Abbas Haly Abbas' encyclopedic medical book '*Kitab al-Maliki*' from Arabic into Latin and called it '*Liber Pantegni*' (*Pantegni*) was the first work to bring

together a broad array of anatomy, physiology, and therapeutic texts in a single work. Africanus also translated the works of Hippocrates, Galen, and Avicenna (Roguin, et al., 2021, p. 173).

Peter Damian, cardinal-bishop of Ostia, one of the leading clergymen and thinkers of the eleventh century, expressed his admiration for Monte Cassino's spiritual development under Desiderius and praised his contributions to the development of monastic ideals (Bannister, 2010, p. 223). In a letter entitled '*De Natura Animalium*' written in 1061, Damian expressed his gratitude to Desiderius and the entire community of Monte Cassino in his capacity as '*archangelus monachorum*' (the archangel of monasticism) for preparing the 'monastic ships' against the present flood (Letter 86) (Damian, 2013, p. 255). Damian had close relations with the Abbey of Monte Cassino, especially with the Abbot Desiderius (1058–1057). Damian was one of the visitors to the Abbey of Monte Cassino (Bannister, 2010, p. 221). In the eleventh century, Abbot Desiderius transformed the Benedictine Abbey at Monte Cassino into one of Italy's most important centers of art. Damian was not only a cardinal-bishop, but also a monk in the Benedictine Monastery of Fonte Avellano. (Frothingham, 1917, p. 326). Damian visited the Abbey of Monte Cassino during his numerous trips to the Via Flaminia. As can be seen from these visits and his correspondence with the monks, Damian was an influential figure in the life and habits of this community (Jotischky, 2012, p. 88).

The monks of Monte Cassino were skilled in scientific and cultural fields as well as religious. (Cowdrey, 1983, p. 44). Monte Cassino's scientific and literary activities in the second half of the eleventh century led to an increase in his fame throughout Europe. During the abbot of Desiderius, Monte Cassino became a considerable center of knowledge and culture of its age. In this circle of learned monks, Alberic Deacon stood out as an important personality. However, at least until 1065, probably as early as 1057, Alberic had taken up residence at Monte Cassino and had begun his literary career in the rich cultural atmosphere of the Desiderian Renaissance at the same time (Jotischky, 2012, p. 87-88). On the occasion of his familiarity with Benedict's rule, there was a bond of friendship between Peter Damian and Alberic of the Deacon, which had probably begun earlier and deepened over time. Alberich wrote '*Quamplurimae Epistolae*' addressed to the cardinal-bishop of Ostia. Peter Damian, on the other hand, wrote three letters to Alberic on matters related to the interpretation of the Scriptures. It is important that Alberic was the only one among all the monks of Monte Cassino with whom Damian corresponded (Jotischky, 2012, p. 88-89).

Another outstanding feature of Monte Cassino was the energy of Abbot Desiderius and his success in diplomacy. The expansion of the monastery's territory and the increase in its wealth; The reconstruction of its buildings was highly regarded by religious and secular rulers, largely the result of Desiderius' zeal and skill. During his abbacy, Desiderius was a towering figure in terms of his achievements in Monte Cassino, in terms of donations, buildings, and the fame of his religious and cultural life, compared to that of his contemporary, Hugh Semur, Abbot of the Benedictine Cluny Abbey (Cowdrey, 1983, p. 45- 46). The Abbey of Monte Cassino was praised in the '*Liber Pontificalis*' (the book describing the Popes) as a school of intellectual and spiritual development that attracted talents from all over the region under the rule of Desiderius (Wickstrom, 1998, p. 36).

In the period between the end of the tenth century and the first decade of the twelfth century, the Abbey of Monte Cassino ensured the writing of some of the most important texts representing the origins of official French historiography in the Middle Ages, as it played a central role in the French political scene and because of its strong organic link with the Capetian dynasty. The monastery is important in historiography in terms of recording the events close to the First Crusade. The crusader edicts and charters preserved in the library of the Monastery of Monte Cassino contain important information about the first crusaders. At the call of the expedition, many crusaders turned to religious communities for material and moral support before heading east. Many statutes and letters that have survived to this day are available in the library of the monastery. II. The monasteries of the period made significant contributions to Urban II's spread of the Crusade message. Because monasteries were among the best sources of accessible liquid wealth in their areas; Many institutions were accustomed to the pilgrimage both by being centers of pilgrimage and by encouraging pilgrimages by their lay neighbors; and most fundamentally, religious communities played a formative role in shaping the very devotional and penitential impulses that could be carried into the crusade (Bull, 1993, p. 370). The monastery of Monte Cassino was already a center of pilgrimage, where it preserved the remains of the body of St. Benedict. Monte Cassino Chronicle reports that many Christians from all over Europe mobilized to participate in this holy journey (Kostick, 2008, p. 106- 107).

The Abbey of Monte Cassino, founded close to Rome on one of the important roads connecting northern and southern Italy, played a central role not only in the history of Western monasticism but also in the cultural life of the Middle Middle Ages (Russo, 2014, p. 53). All the important events that took place in southern Italy in the eleventh and twelfth centuries were recorded by the members of this Benedictine monastery (Russo, 2014, p. 55). In this context, it became one of the important religious institutions in European history by making significant advances in historiography as well as scientific and cultural developments.

Reform Movement and Monte Cassino Monastery

The impacts of the monastery founded on Monte Cassino hill went beyond the borders of the monastic world; It spread to the far reaches of Europe through the political authorities and especially the new Norman leaders of the Southern Italian mainland. They also offered their resources to the religious leaders of Southern Italy to reform local churches and encourage higher standards of widely practiced Christian life, the apostolic life aspiration. The monastery operated in regions where demands for the renewal of religious life were intense (Cowdrey, 1983, p. 44). Monte Cassino was considered an authority on the implementation of Carolingian religious reforms during Theudemar's abbotship. The monastery had a strong influence on the nobility and was known for its contributions to court culture (Meeder, 2018, p. 139). Monte Cassino was built independently of the papal reform and in fact by Pope Leo IX. It had added a new color to religious life even before it began systematically under Leo's papacy. With its equipment, the monastery became one of the main supporters of the papal reforms (Cowdrey, 1983, p. 45). The Popes played an important role in spreading the influence of Monte Cassino. A large number of Monte Cassino monks were elected bishops. For

example, in 1059, two Cassinese monks from Northern Italy were appointed bishops (Loud, 1985, p. 42).

One of the principles underlying reform in practice in the West insisted upon in the rhetoric of almost all reform foundations, was that monks should live off the products of their handcraft. The first monks practiced this basic principle. One of the earliest texts mentioning manual labor is the chronicle of Monte Cassino. In the 990s, a group of monks left Monte Cassino for a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, followed by the Greek monastery on Mount Sinai and Mount Athos. When they returned to Monte Cassino in 998, one of the monks, Liutius, founded a dedicated monastery in which he devoted himself to the ascetic life, to the consternation of both his contemporaries and the chronicler of Monte Cassino, who wrote about a century later, to manual labor, such as grinding grains that the monks would eat. Founded on Mount Athos in the early tenth century as a conscious revival of the practices of the first monks of the holy land, this monastery was not the first. In 933, John of Gorze, after seeing Greek monks working at Monte Gargano in Italy, implemented monastic life based on the principle of manual labor in his new foundation (Jotischky, 2012, p. 64-65).

In addition to the innovative practices he brought to clerical life, Monte Cassino was also an influential figure in the papal reforms. The unimpeded advance of the Normans in southern Italy caused the intervention of the pope. During this period, far-reaching changes were taking place in the Roman Church. Throughout Western and Central Europe, the reform ideas propagated by the Benedictine Cluny order began to gain support. In 1046, Humbert, cardinal-bishop of Silva Candida, the Pope's closest adviser, was one of the leading figures in the advocates of reform, in the person of Pope Leo IX. In the Church of Rome, the predecessor of the archdeacon Hildebrand (Papal Gregory VII by his papal name), with his belief in the primacy of the Roman church. In all the edicts of Leo IX, his strong eloquence, and the indomitable personality of the cardinal stood out. The appointment of Cardinal Humbert, Bishop of Sicily, Leo's repeated trips to Salerno and Siponto, and the councils held (1050) were projections of the pope's political intentions (Bloch, 1946, p. 189-190). The envoys visited Monte Cassino on their way to Constantinople. When they returned, they brought to the monastery a grant from Emperor Constantine Monomachus, who granted two pounds of gold to be paid to the monastery every year (Bloch, 1946, p. 191).

Close relations with the local aristocracy were important for Monte Cassino since the base of the monasteries' material resources were the grants of the nobility. The nobility also played an active role in the spread of reform movements. Abbot Desiderius had connections with the Tuscan family, one of the noble and prestigious families in Italy, which continued to develop over the years. This began in 1056 during the reign of Peter, Abbot of Monte Cassino, when two brothers, Roland and Henry, gave Monte Cassino the Church of San Giorgio on their estate. This was followed by other gifts in 1064 when it became a monastic house attached to St. Giorgio Monte Cassino. Desiderius, on the other hand, made efforts to develop the monastery's estates in Lucca and other parts of Tuscany. In this way, he spread the influence of Monte Cassino in this region, which was in a key position in terms of communication at the center of reform activities, and obtained a guarantee for the settlement of Cassinese in Sardinia. He also connected with Matilda, Countess of Tuscany. In addition, Pope Francis VII was the first to express the monastery's idea of a holy expedition to the east. Gregory and the initiator of the Crusade,

Pope John II. Urban's relations with the countess, his chief supporter, were not limited to Desiderius's time, but continued after the abbot's death (Loud, 1985, p. 68). In 1080, the monks of Monte Cassino were exempted from tolls and payments for textiles taken by following the route of Pisa and Lucca. This connection would be of great importance in political developments after the death of Pope Gregory VII in 1085 (Cowdrey, 1983, p. 11). intellectual centre, such as the monastery of Montecassino or the palace of Matilda, Countess of Tuscany in the time of Urban II; or a mass movement such as Pataria in Milan. The origins and supporters of this trend within the Principality of Capua were the monastery of Monte Cassino (Loud, 1985, p. 10).

Monte Cassino shared the spiritual aims of Pope Gregory VII's reforms (the Gregorian Reforms). In his *ludicium de Regno et Sacerdotio*, Desiderius (along with Guimund, the future bishop of Aversa) called himself a staunch Gregorian. According to the report on the alleged events that took place in the Cassinese region of San Maria di Pallaria, Rome, Gregory VII's first act as pope was to write a letter to Desideria announcing his election. It is possible to see interest in the papacy in the monastic records in the library of Monte Cassino. According to the *Chronicles of Monte Cassino*, the canonical collection, which played an important role in the 'Appointment Dispute', the starting flare of Gregory VII's power struggle, was probably prepared at Monte Cassino. In addition, the works and chronicles in the libraries of the monastery testify to the interest shown in the teachings of St. Gregory, which was also shared by Gregory VII. Desiderius took Gregory the Great as an example when he wrote his book *Dialogi Desiderius* (Loud, 1985, p. 66- 67). In addition, the monastery had connections with Gregory's chief supporter, Matilda, Countess of Tuscany. These relations continued not only in the time of Desiderius but also long after his death. Cassinese support was essential for moral reform. Desiderius claimed that a famine arose in Florence because they accepted a bishop who had been made episcopal by simony (simony: the sale or purchase of ecclesiastical offices). He spoke of the plight of the Church before Leo IX. Priests and deacons took wives and lived like laymen. The references to Gregory VII in the *Dialogues of Desiderius* and the poem of Amatus dedicated to him were both written around 1078. During this period, Monte Cassino maintained friendly relations with the papacy (Loud, 1985, p. 68-69).

Since Monte Cassino's territory was not within the borders of any kingdom, it had a political advantage over other monasteries. Because. The so-called 'Terra di San Benedetto' (land of St. Benedict) of Monte Cassino was often considered an independent entity. Therefore Fleury, St. In Ouen or Winchester, he enjoyed political freedom and self-determination. Never satisfied with the Byzantine presence in southern Italy, the papacy at first encouraged Norman efforts to conquer Southern Italy. Two prominent leaders among the Normans were Norman Robert Guiscard, Count of Apulia, Calabria, and Richard, Count of Sicily and Prince of Capua. Monte Cassino had initially opposed the existence of the Normans. Even the abbot Richher (1038-1055) expelled them from the territory of the monastery. However, during the high priesthood of Desiderius (1058-1087), warm and mutually beneficial relations were established between Monte Cassino and the Norman invaders. The establishment of peace with the Norman invaders was one of the indicators of the admirable diplomacy of Desiderius and his successors. Monte Cassino maintained close relations with both the Normans and Byzantium, which opposed the papacy (Owens, 1987, p. 158-159).

In the late eleventh century, new concerns dominated the monastic world: Debates over the relationship of secularists to religious power already existed. Issues of church hierarchy and rightful succession were central to these discussions. Controversy over devotion to the Eucharist and the nature of this rite developed in connection with the growing prestige of the priesthood. The rebuilding of the monastery church by Abbot Desiderius, which was closely related to the points mentioned, was a sign of Monte Cassino's power in the new church construction; Benedict's position as successor and vizier reflected the growing concern of the popes, who were considered the heirs of St. Peter, for their authority. Desiderius' concern for monastic chastity also found expression as a source of authority in an atmosphere of anxiety about the celibacy of monks (clerical marriage). According to the monasticism of Monte Cassino, Benedict communicated the old law to his congregation just as Moses received it from God on Mount Sinai and passed it on to his people. New Benedictine laws were enacted for the ideal monastic life, which emerged as a result of Benedict's adoption of monastic habit (Wickstrom, 1998, p. 33-34).

The reform movement in religious life corresponds to its golden age under the rule of the abbots of Monte Cassino, Desiderius, and Oderius I. Both contributed to the revival of the papacy after 1046 as the effective center of ecclesiastical authorities, reform, and the renewal of Western Christianity (Cowdrey, 1983, p. 45-46). The monastery also became a prominent figure in the reform movement of the eleventh century. Alberic, who produced the most important literary works in the Gregorian reform movement, lived in the Abbey of Monte Cassino and was one of the leading reformers of the time of Abbot Desiderius (Gehl, 1976, p. 1-2). The monastery of Pope Gregory VII's successor, Abbot Desiderius of Monte Cassino, was located on the territory of the Norman lords, to whom Gregory often turned for protection. However, Desiderius was an old and sick man when he was appointed to the papal office (Gwynn, 1944, p. 10). However, he became a personality who deeply influenced the religious and political climate of his time with the policy he followed during his abbot at the Abbey of Monte Cassino.

Relations with The Papacy

Monte Cassino had good relations with both earthly and otherworldly powers. Over time, the monastery had to obtain the financial resources necessary for education from abroad. The first ten years of the newly founded monastery were spent under papal sponsorship. Pope John II Gregory (r. 715-731) and Pope Zacharias (r. 741-752) encouraged Petronax (Abbot of Monte Cassino) to rebuild Monte Cassino (Meeder, 2018, p. 132). The papal protectors of the monastery were Pope John II. Gregory and Zacharias; His protectors in the empire were Charles Martel (686- 741) and Pepin the Short (714 – 768). Both rulers asked for help from Boniface for the restoration of the Frankish Church. As the product of the two-way transformation of England by Celtic and Roman monks, Boniface reflected in his works the enthusiasm that the Celtic monks needed for their journey among the pagans (Deanesly, 2005, p. 36).

In the eleventh century, St. Peter and St. Benedict were at the heart of Latin Western Christianity. (Bannister, 2010, p. 223). Pope IX Stephen, his predecessor IX. Leo and II. When he came to the papal office, he wanted to revive the anti-Norman policy that had been abandoned during the papacy of Victor Victor (1054-1057), and an embassy was opened in Constantinople to establish a new alliance with the Byzantine Empire. Desiderius, the future abbot of Monte Cassino, was a member of the embassy –IX in 1058.

Following Leo's death, Desiderius established friendly relations with Norman Robert Guiscard in line with his new policy. This situation brought Desiderius from time to time to Pope Gregory VII. It was the first evidence of the political plane that made it suspicious for men like Gregory or archbishop Hugh of Lyon. The separation of Eastern and Western churches (Schism (1054)) was one of the most important issues. Therefore, before and after the period of secession, Monte Cassino's men played an important role in polemical debates and activities within this scope. Undoubtedly, Monte Cassino's prominence in the conflict between the Eastern and Western churches was a natural result of the geographical location of the region (Bloch, 1946, p. 192- 193).

Monte Cassino was an important center of Benedictine monasticism in Italy, simultaneously with the period when Benedictine monasticism spread in France at the Cluni Monastery under the rule of Abbots Odilo and Hugh. Their connections with Rome were very tight (Bannister, 2010, p. 223). These connections, established even before Desiderius became abbot, were two-way, both economic and political. In 1049, during Richer's abbotship, Pope IX. Leo gave the Roman Monastery of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme to the possession of Monte Cassino. Pope John II In Alexander's will, Desiderius replaced it with the Church of Santa Maria (now known as San Sebastiano alla Polveriera) in Palatine Pallara. Its abbot would be chosen by the monks but would be blessed by the pope. These gifts were followed by economic privileges granted to Monte Cassino. As early as 1055, during the reign of Abbot Richer, a ship was allowed to trade in Rome without paying taxes and tolls. Desiderius, II. During Victor's papacy, he pawned some valuables and borrowed money to use in Monte Cassino. When Desiderius began rebuilding the basilica at Monte Cassino in 1066, he brought from Rome many of the columns, capitals, and marble pieces he needed for this. He obtained the right to use the Garigliano River, making it possible for the materials in question to be transported by water most of the way to the monastery. One of the most outstanding achievements of Monte Cassino's golden age under Desiderius was the construction of the new basilica and the renovation of the old monastic buildings. The security, expansion, and wealth of 'terra sancti Benedicti' and the collection of donations and property in a very wide area were made possible by the connections Desiderius established in Rome and other centers of power (Cowdrey, 1983, p. 11-12).

Although monasticism meant turning away from the world to dedicate oneself to God and choosing a kind of voluntary exile, Monte Cassino could not stay away from worldly life. He always established close relations with the political and religious powers of his time (Wickstrom, 1998, p. 45). One of the prominent abbots of Monte Cassino was III. Abbot Desiderius (1026- 1087), who was elected pope under the name Victor (1086- 1087) (Wickstrom, 1998, p. 36), had good relations with the secular aristocracy. In 1071, aware of common interests, he turned to his powerful neighbors, the Normans. Desiderius was a peaceful and conciliatory personality. One of the clearest indicators of this situation was the participation of leaders from all over the peninsula in the dedication ceremony of the monastery basilica of Monte Cassino in 1071, thanks to his success in communicating well with all Italian political authorities (Wickstrom, 1998, p. 46). With both their close relations with the papacy and their support for papal reforms, Monte Cassino could not stay away from the religious powers. Despite the close relations it established with the papacy, the monastery continued its relations with Byzantium even after the Schism.

Monte Cassino Monastery's Relations with Political Powers and Nobilities

The Monastery of Monte Cassino was a center of science and culture, as well as a retreat for the nobility. Lombard King Ratchis retired to the Monastery of Monte Cassino in 749. About two years before this event, Zacharias had persuaded Carloman to retreat to Monte Cassino instead of Monte Soratte. At the same time, Boniface sent Sturm the Bavarian, the first abbot of his foundation in Fulda, to Abbot Optatus to learn about Benedictine life. In 751, Boniface established the bond of spiritual unity and brotherhood between Fulda and Monte Cassino. The first relations between the monastery and the lands north of the Alps had already been established by the residence of the Englishman Willibald, who was there not to learn but to teach Benedictine monasticism to the community of Petronax, Abbot of Monte Cassino, beginning in 729 and lasting for about ten years. Even if these royals and foreign visitors did not bring the texts and books themselves, they created the potential for scientific development through their connections with other centers and influential people elsewhere. One of the earliest Monte Cassino manuscripts, Monte Cassino, Archivio dell'Abbazia (753), was associated with Willibald's stay at the monastery (Meeder, 2018, p. 133).

As for other monasteries, it was important for the Monte Cassino Monastery to establish good relations with noble and influential families. Nobles rebuilt old religious houses that had been destroyed in the wars and invasions of the late ninth and early tenth centuries. Initially, rather than founding new monasteries, they worked to restore abandoned ones or develop religious communities in existing private churches and chapels. As can be seen from old foundation maps, political and material support from the nobility was of great importance for monasteries wishing to reunite their original heritage. Thus the Terra Sancti Benedikti of Monte Cassino was re-established; Monastic estates in southern France were restored, reclaiming much land and buildings (Howe, 1988, p. 321- 322). The Canossa family, which had a strong influence in Italy, spread the cults of local saints and relics. Older monasteries such as Monte Cassino and Cluny offered more luxurious and prestigious homes for family converts; a source of family identity, combining spiritual strength with great prayer fellowship; They continued to be an institution that offered sacred lands to bury their dead, keeping the memory of the deceased members of noble families fresh (Howe, 1988, p. 335).

The Norman conquest of southern Italy ended Byzantine rule (Bloch, 1946, p. 188). Meanwhile, IX. The holy war organized and led by Leo against the Normans ended in disappointment with the crushing defeat of the pope at Civitate in 1053. This event discredited the anti-Roman attitude of Michael I Cerularius (Greek Orthodox Patriarch 1043-1059) in Constantinople and thus brought the supporters of Argyrus to power. The plan of unity and alliance with the Pope was now openly expressed by the emperor Constantine IX Monomachus. Cerularius was named by the emperor in IX. He was forced to sign a conciliatory letter to Leo, proposing that he should send an embassy to Constantinople to resolve all the difficulties awaiting the pope. The pope received Humbert de Silva Candida, Archbishop Peter of Amalfi, and the papal chancellor Frederick of Lorraine, who three years later became abbot of Monte Cassino. However, the fate of this famous embassy would result in a great separation between the two churches. The temperament of the three leading figures in the debate, Humbert, Frederick, and Michael Cerularius, made the course of events in Constantinople quite dramatic. They had brought letters with them, urging him to openly conclude an

agreement that Humbert had donated to Cerullarius, implying that Constantine owed his crown to the Church of Rome (Bloch, 1946, p. 190-191).

When Desiderius became abbot, he allied with the new Norman rulers of Southern Italy, Prince Richard of Capua and Robert Guiscard, Duke of Apulia; and took a stand according to the changing realities of political conditions. Richard completed the conquest of Capua in 1062; he then took over the Duchy of Gaeta and the Aquino region in 1063 and 1065, respectively. Duke Richard was Monte Cassino's most powerful neighbor until he died in 1078, and to the south, Robert Guiscard vied with him for political and military power. Abbot Desiderius aimed to preserve friendly relations with both the Normans of Capua and Apulia and to improve cooperation between them. He took advantage of the Norman alliance, and especially the friendship of Richard of Capua, to expand and secure Terra Sancti Benedicti. This friendly relationship was established as early as 1058, when Richard I of Capua confirmed the entire land ownership of Monte Cassino, including the Rocca d'Evandro (Cowdrey, 1983, p. 4).

After the death of Desiderius in September 1087, articles were written that spoke of the anxieties affecting all sections of the Church of Capua. Cardinal Humbert condemned the rule of a church by a layman, claiming that it was the same as raping a priest's wife. But the picture of the relationship between the church and secular society was more complex than this. The church and its constituents needed the economic support of the laity, and the political control of the laity over the monasteries was an inevitable consequence of this situation. Even the leading monasteries of Christendom were not immune from this situation (Loud, 1985, p. 85). According to Humbert's writings, there were three types of fraud. One of these was the possession of the remains of St. Benedict's body. Monte Cassino's claims to being the leader of Western monasticism were certainly not limited to their possession of the body of its founder. But it was closely linked to this situation. It was during the reign of Desiderius that the cult of Benedict became a greatly encouraged phenomenon, with the discovery of what was thought to be his tomb during the reconstruction of the Monastery church of Monte Cassino in 1066. One of the indicators of this situation is the emphasis on the existence of this cherished property in Cassino in charters after 1066 (Loud, 1985, p. 176).

Monte Cassino Monastery has always established close relations with political authorities. II. Desiderius held friendly negotiations with Constantinople on 1 October 1071, a year after Bari, the last Byzantine stronghold in Italy, fell to the Normans. More importantly, in the following years, during the First Crusade, the issues in the reply to the first letter of Oderisius, Desiderius' successor, between the Crusaders and Emperor Alexios I were respected. He emphasized what was offered to the Crusaders. The letter gifted to the monastery is an important document in which Alexios called for the first Crusade (Bloch, 1946, p. 222). Desiderius had good relations with the Normans. As abbot of Monte Cassino himself, he was protected by Norman leaders in 1059 (Bloch, 1946, p. 193).

Monasticism has a long tradition of being interpreted as a sacred or semi-sacred space in the material universe. The monastery is a composite use of metaphors that create and preserve the sanctity of physical space, whether it is described as a kind of military camp for Christ's demon-fighting soldiers, or its spaces are conceptualized as an abode of God on earth, or the monastery is a mass graveyard of monks. It also functions as a mediator

between the earthly and the otherworldly (Baker, 2015, p. 57-58). However, The Benedictines in general, and the Monastery of Monte Cassino in particular, did not stay away from the political developments of the age in which they lived. During the First Crusade, they not only gave loans against mortgages to the Crusaders but also hosted the Crusaders in their monasteries. Since hospitality was considered sacred in Benedictine monasteries, starting with the first Crusade in 1096, Crusaders welcomed at the monastery had no shortage of accommodation during the journey (Fabiani, 1968, p. 150-151; Palmarocchi, 1913, p. 141).

Architectural Contributions of Monte Cassino Monastery

The restoration process was initiated by the abbot Henry II, who rebuilt the monastery basilica on a large scale at the highest point of Monte Cassino. It reached its peak under Desiderius (1058-85). In October 1071, Pope John II. Alexander reconsecrated the great church in front of a large crowd attended by most of Italy's bishops and nobility (Wickstrom, 1998, p. 31). The projects of Abbot Desiderius of Monte Cassino for his monastery constituted the most ambitious and effective example of this renewal. Desiderius summoned from Constantinople artists skilled in the art of mosaics and paving stones because the mastery of Byzantine masters in these arts had been known for centuries. In search of authentic remains of that age, Desiderius went to Rome and spent large sums of money on columns, pedestals, epistyles, and a large number of marbles of various colors. Completed in 1071, the basilica influenced the architecture and decoration of churches in southern Italy. Additionally, the Cassinese influence in Rome was also present in the large monastery church built between 1088 and 1109 by Abbot Hugh I, who visited Monte Cassino in 1083 (Robinson, 2004, p. 286-287). Desiderius' decision to rebuild the entire monastery was against his political interests with the government. The abbot of Monte Cassino not only commissioned works of art from Constantinople but also invited many artists to teach the monks the arts in which the Byzantines were masters (Bloch, 1946, p. 194). The expansion of Terra Sancti Benedicti under Desiderius gave rise to some claims. The collapse of princely authority north of Roccamonfina increased military expenditure. The financial problems experienced by Kluni, one of the important Benedictine monasteries of the period, during the period, were largely due to the overextension of resources to finance an ambitious construction program (Loud, 1985, p. 130).

Two inscriptions dedicated to Maurus are linked to an announcement in the first part of the '*Chronica Monasterii Casinensis*' written by Leo of Ostia (1046 – 1115), a monk of aristocratic origin. Great Abbot Desiderius (1058- 87) From 1086, Pope III. Under the rule of Victor and his successor Oderisius I. Leo reports that in 1065 Desiderius went to Amalfi. Admiring the bronze door of the cathedral made in Constantinople, he decided to buy a door for the monastery church from there. Dedicatory inscriptions reveal that Maurus, a member of one of Amalfi's leading families, paid for the gates. According to the dedication inscription of the gates of Amalfi, the gates at Monte Cassino were a gift from Maurus' son Pantaleo. In addition, Simeon's name was mentioned in another article. Of the present-day gates of Monte Cassino, none of the thirty-six panels above the two Maurus panels of 1066 could have formed part of the gates of Desiderius. Because even the first four listings the properties of Monte Cassino in the region surrounding the monastery called Terra S. Benedicti reflect the extent of this region, at least forty years after the date of the inscription dedicated to Maurus (Bloch, 1987, p. 89).

The contributions of the Monastery of Monte Cassino to architecture, murals, and minor arts continued uninterrupted from the tenth century (900-1050) to the twelfth century (1050-1150), in what has always been considered the Age of the Benedictines. In the reconstruction of Europe, the largest churches of Christendom were built, Monte Cassino (1070s), III. Kluni (1088-1130) built numerous smaller monasteries, as well as Vezelay and many other internationally famous buildings. Although the construction of many of these buildings strained the monastery budget, they were built anyway, tremendously accelerating the flow of wealth into the hands of craftsmen, craftsmen, material suppliers, and others in the building. Much of the best Romanesque art was produced by the Benedictines, and the most successful period covers the period roughly between 1050 and 1150 (Van Engen, 1986, p. 280). The Monastery Church of Monte Cassino (1075) was built as a copy of the church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. Like Cluny, another important Benedictine monastery of the period, they encouraged the pilgrimage to Jerusalem and supported the pilgrims (Upton, 2017, p. 45).

Conclusion

Monte Cassino Monastery, which played an important role in the creation of European culture and civilization, was built in the sixth century on the principles of St. Benedict's '*Peace, reading and manual labor*'. Monte Cassino Monastery is where medical and scientific studies are carried out; it was a place where well-known scientists retreated; it became one of the important actors influencing the cultural and scientific life of his age with his emphasis on architectural and artistic studies during the reign of Abbot Desiderius and his rich library in which the works of Eastern scientists were translated into Latin. Henceforth science and culture of the Muslim World transferred into the Christian West. In the field of art and architecture, the monasteries and basilicas built by master craftsmen, especially during the reign of Desiderius, are important examples of Romanesque art. It was an effective period in the spread of Eastern and Byzantine art to Western Europe. Although monastery life meant giving up on the world and staying away from crowds and financial worries, the Monastery of Monte Cassino could not keep itself away from the political and religious events of its age. They supported the reform movement in religious life that spread rapidly throughout Europe. They established close relations with the noble families who pioneered the rise of the cult of saints in Italy. He also had close connections with the Norman leaders who spread throughout Southern Italy and with Byzantium. Especially during the reign of Pope Gregory VII. They became one of the most leading actors in the expansion of the reforms introduced by Gregory. During the first Crusade, one of the most important phenomena of the Middle Ages, they not only gave mortgage loans to the Crusaders but also hosted those who went on the expedition in their monasteries. The Chronicle of Monte Cassino is important in historiography as it records the events in the period close to the First Crusade. He provided financial support, loans, accommodation and moral support to the Crusaders. In terms of its strategic location, as it was founded approximately 50 kilometers from Rome on the road connecting the south and north of Italy, the Monastery of Monte Cassino played a central role not only in the history of monasticism but also in the political, and and scientific and cultural life of the middle Middle Ages, contributing to the construction of today's Europe. He became one of its architects.

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