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CHAPTER 1

The Imaginary of Treasure

In his *Etymologies*, which analyzed words in order to get at the meaning of things, Bis Isidore of Seville (601–36) considered the word *thesaurus* to be a hybrid, a mix of Greek Latin, signifying 'that which contains gold'. *Aurum*, or gold itself, took its name from *a* 'splendor'.[1] 'Treasure' was therefore that which brought together and held 'aura'. Beca it was first and foremost a container, its own appearance was not specific, nor, beyonc association with gold, was it determined by the objects of which it was made up. Treasure grounded in materiality, but from the outset it also evoked something else that went bey the material and so escaped it. It was not exactly an image, whether mental or material, e though it could be represented as a chest or as indeterminate quantities of objects or substar 'Treasure' suggested *splendor* and everything associated with it precisely by holding spler out of sight. Above all, *thesaurus* was a word that attributed a particular quality to obj making them disappear, so to speak, because it posed an expectation that extended beyond objects themselves.

Another ancient word, *ornamentum*, was often used during the Middle Ages to designate ensemble of artistic riches belonging to churches, and to assign them the function of rende present the sacred.[2] This term was probably more common in this context than *thesaurus* were *ministeria*, *apparata* or *res ecclesiae*, *res sacrae*. But the word 'treasure', whose close shifting relationship with churches evolved over a long period, lends itself particularly we historical study. Indeed, the word 'treasure' was above all an instrument of power, inher from antiquity, that the ecclesial institution could at first appropriate only by transform that instrument into a gesture of humility. This institution subsequently seized upon concept in earnest in order to demonstrate its own importance to Christian sovereigns. F that moment, the term never ceased to arouse debate, whether about the practical way which objects were administered in churches or about the wider economy of material symbolic exchanges within Christian society,[3] ultimately finding itself at the heart of polen surrounding the Reformation. In what follows, I will endeavor to understand why and how notion of 'treasure' came to inhabit the imaginary of Latin Christianity when it came to obj in churches, as well as to what extent this notion shaped specific practices and, ultimately, functioning of society as a whole.[4]

The 'Treasure' of the Church and the 'Treasures of Churches'

Spiritual Treasures and Christian Society (Late Antiquity)

Following his election in 374 to the head of the bishopric of Milan, capital of the Western Roman Empire since 286, Saint Ambrose, previously a senior official in the imperial administration, found himself responsible for the furnishings of a great church. It was in this capacity, and in dramatic political circumstances, that he took a position on the question of 'treasure' and churches in a way that was both emphatic and carefully thought out. On August 9, 378, a federation of Germanic tribes, settled in the Roman Empire, vanquished Valens's army at Adrianople (now Edirne in Turkey), in a battle that cost the emperor his life. This defeat, one of the worst military disasters inflicted on the Romans during the fourth century, resulted in the sacking of Illyria and Thrace and ultimately the sale of numerous captives. Bishop Ambrose, well versed in imposing his ecclesiastical authority on state matters, committed his community to a determined policy of using the church's possessions to buy back men, women, and children and return them to freedom, even going so far as to break up liturgical vessels. He was criticized for this decision, especially since the victorious enemies were not pagan but Christian—even if their Aryanism meant that they qualified as heretics. The bishop explained himself before the people, giving a sermon whose text he would integrate, ten years later, into a treatise on ethics composed around 388 and addressed to his clergy.[5] Among the precious objects given up to redeem prisoners from the Goths, Ambrose notably invoked the liturgical vessels whose loss had attracted particular criticism. He proceeded to develop an exposition on ecclesiastical possessions that was based upon a reflection on the Eucharist, in which chalices, among the vessels in question, were directly involved. The bishop affirmed that 'the Church has gold, not to store up, but to lay out, and to spend on those who need'. The sacrificial vessels, he explained, had been transformed by the blood of Christ, which they contained during the celebration of the Eucharist: 'the blood of Christ not only glows in cups of gold, but also by the office of redemption [it] has impressed on them the power of the divine operation'. From this transformation of gold during the Eucharistic sacrifice, Ambrose deduced that it was better to preserve the 'vessels' of the living—that is, their bodies—than vessels made of metal. For him, the real liturgical vessels were the 'mysteries', or sacraments, and these were best honored not by church plate but by the redemption of prisoners. This buying back of souls through the sacrifice of the vessels took its model from the sacrifice of Christ: 'That, indeed, is the true treasure of the Lord which effects what his blood effected'.[6] According to Ambrose, then, 'treasure' designated not the objects of Christian worship but the virtuous operation of dispensing that sublimated them into a different reality.

To reinforce his argument, the bishop of Milan called up the example of Saint Lawrence, borrowing from a tradition that was probably oral and of Roman origin.[7] In 258, just over a century before the events of 378, Pope Sixtus II and his deacon Lawrence had been arrested

for celebrating the Eucharist despite the anti-Christian edicts issued by the emperor Valerian. When Lawrence was asked to give up the 'treasures of the Church' in his care, he promised to produce them: the following day, he assembled the poor and presented them as 'the treasures of the Church'. Ambrose praised the 'unique and deep-seated vigor of his meaning', affirming that he deserved the crown of martyrdom. In a context of persecution, this first appropriation of the concept was thus a reaction: the authorities' designation of the community's goods as 'treasures' (they had probably been gathered together to serve as an emergency relief fund) prompted Lawrence to explain that for him the word referred to something else entirely.[8] This reminiscence of Lawrence's radical gesture first of all enabled Ambrose to legitimize the sale of liturgical instruments during the crisis of 378. In the later treatise in which he included his sermon, the reference to a figure from the early days of the Church, an example of intelligence and courage, provided a model for his readers, who were also clergymen. But in the late fourth century, several decades after Christianity had been legalized by the agreement at Milan in 313, the economic situation of the town's bishopric, one of the most important, had little in common with that of the group of Christians once pursued in Rome by imperial soldiers. Since the unprecedented donations made by the emperor Constantine following massive confiscations from pagan temples,[9] the great churches had effectively become sites where precious objects and materials were accumulated,[10] and where they were now used in the liturgy. Responsible for the stability of his bishopric, Ambrose needed to find an appropriate way of expressing the notion of treasure. What he designated as the 'true treasure of the Lord' was not gold, as it would have been for the pagans, nor the poor, as it had been for Lawrence, but an act of charity inspired by the devotion of Christ as echoed in the Eucharist. The bishop of Milan thus proposed a paradigm for managing ecclesiastical riches that was adapted to his office and to the project that he continued in his treatise. The fact that Ambrose named not only the prisoners from Thrace and Illyria but also—through his reference to Lawrence—the 'poor' (*pauperes*) as the beneficiaries of ecclesiastical wealth lends a wider application to his reflection. This social category, unknown in pre-Christian antiquity and introduced by bishops between the fourth and sixth centuries, referred to all those living in vulnerable conditions. It played a central role in the establishment of the Church as an institution, enabling it to present itself as a public body for the redistribution of wealth, one that benefited from the material support of the powerful and in return ensured, through acts of charity, the cohesion of society.[11] By qualifying charitable acts as the real 'treasure' of the Church, Ambrose used this notion and this institution to develop a veritable theory of Christian society.

In the pastoral practice of the bishops of late antiquity, this kind of idea was notably expressed in sermons in which the word 'treasure' was used to collect alms from the faithful. These discourses took up and developed one of Christ's teachings to his disciples, most notably relayed in the Gospel of Saint Matthew, where he explains to those who have followed him to the mountain that they should not 'lay [...] up to yourselves treasures on earth: where the rust and moth consume, and where thieves break through and steal' but rather 'lay up [...] treasure in heaven', 'for where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also'. A little farther on, Matthew describes the advice given by Christ to a wealthy young man: 'If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven' (Matthew 6:19–21 and 19:21).[12] Augustine, for instance, who had arrived in Milan in 384 as a professor of rhetoric and was so impressed by the teachings of Ambrose that he was baptized by him in 387 before becoming bishop of Hippo in 396, gave a sermon at Carthage on Saint Cyprian's day in 412 or 413. In this sermon, he exhorted his listeners to rid themselves of their wealth, addressing each individual directly:

> You have come here to listen to this sermon, to acquire interior riches. Think about your exterior riches: have you brought them with you? [...] You believe that you have them at home, because you remember where you put them; but are you sure you have not lost them? How many people have returned to their homes and failed to find what they left there! Ah, some covetous people felt a clutch at their hearts when I said that! [...] some of you may perhaps say in your hearts, 'Stop it, bishop! Say something of good omen, and pray for us. [...] I trust in God to let me find what I left there safe and sound'. [...] So you want to play safe by trusting in Christ in order to lose nothing from your house. You will be much safer if you believe Christ, and put your money where he advised you to put it.[13]

To convey the sense of Christ's advice to 'lay up [...] treasures in heaven', Augustine went on to describe in a concrete way the practices of hoarding treasure on earth—hiding it or placing it with a banker—before proposing an alternative:

> If you wanted to keep your valuables safe here on earth you would look for a storage-place; perhaps you would not entrust them to your home because of your servants, so you would commit them to the banking quarter, for accidents are unlikely to happen there and a thief cannot easily break in, so everything is kept safe. Why do you plan to do this? Because you have no better place to keep them? What if I show you a better place? I will tell you of one: do not entrust your wealth to someone unsuitable. There is someone eminently suitable, leave it with him. He has vast storerooms from which no riches can be lost, and he himself is very great, richer than all the wealthy in the world.[14]

Augustine was able to base his exhortation on the arguments of the saint whom he was celebrating that very day: Bishop Cyprian of Carthage had himself written a theological treaty on *Works and Almsgiving*, before being martyred in the same persecutions of 258 that led to the death of the deacon Lawrence in Rome. But neither Cyprian nor Augustine addressed in a concrete way the organization of aid for the needy. The latter confined himself, in another sermon on almsgiving, to offering some practical advice on how to transfer wealth into the heavenly treasury: the poor would serve as the 'porters' (*laturarii*) who would convey riches from the earth to the heavens.[15] The main object of these bishops was the individual salvation of the faithful, and the 'treasure' of which they spoke was either a profane and blameworthy accumulation or a metaphor for the promise of salvation; the role of the ecclesiastical institution as an intermediary was not addressed. Cyprian, who was one of the first to theorize almsgiving, had nevertheless given

a noticeably new inflection to the gospels' discourse on treasure by introducing the notion of 'heavenly treasures' (*caelestes thesauri*), in reference to the scriptural injunction to 'lay up [...] treasure in heaven'.[16] Rendered more coherent in this way, the image would feed into a discourse that explicitly incited the faithful to make offerings to the ecclesiastical institution, whose consolidation was becoming a major concern. Augustine, for his part, had implied that the 'treasure' generated by the merit of such an offering would come back to the offeror,[17] and that the death of the martyrs was to 'the great profit of the heavenly treasure-chambers' (*magnis lucris thesaurorum caelestium*)—without specifying the exact destination.[18] Caesarius of Arles, archbishop of that town from 502 to 542 (a great reader of Augustine, a prolific preacher, and a founder of monasteries), took the next step in one of his sermons by applying the word 'poor' to the clergy and monks who, 'by praying, watching, and fasting, put aside spiritual treasures in heaven'. He went on to affirm the existence of a 'heavenly treasure', this time in the singular, that was nurtured by churchmen and to which the wealthy, by financing their actions and giving them alms, could become the 'co-heirs' (*coheredes*).[19]

Many commentators within Carolingian monastic circles would develop this idea that the clergy produced a collective spiritual treasure in which the rest of society would share at the moment of the Last Judgment. This made it possible to define an ideal of contemplative monastic life, with virtuous works nourishing this treasure and vices threatening it.[20] This distinction between spiritual and carnal activities was particularly stressed by Christian of Stavelot, who taught at the abbey of Stavelot-Malmedy. In his commentary on the Gospel of Saint Matthew, written around 864–65, he offered an interpretation of the comparison that Christ had made between the Kingdom of Heaven and a treasure hidden in a field, discovered, and then returned to its hiding place by its finder, who then hastens to sell all his possessions in order to buy the entire field (Matthew 13:44). Christ had meant this example to show that entering the Kingdom of Heaven was worth abandoning one's previous life. But Christian compared the Kingdom of Heaven to the Church of his own day (*presens ecclesia*), and the field to the divine scriptures, where the 'treasure' that is Christ could be found.[21] In this way, believers no longer had to await, as Caesarius of Arles had suggested, the Last Judgment in order to share in the spiritual treasure: they could seek it out here on earth, via the scriptures and the institution of the Church. The image of 'heavenly treasures', developed from one of Christ's teachings as described in the gospels, had now come to define the status and the function of the clergy and of the Church in society.

Material Treasures and Sovereignty (Carolingian Times)

Was this claim by the Carolingian monastic elite a reaction to the custom, increasingly prevalent at that time, of referring to the material riches held in churches as 'treasures'? It seems that the term had previously only been applied to the property of laypeople.[22] In Merovingian chronicles, the *thesauri* of sovereigns are regularly invoked with respect to power relations: whether the *thesauri* are passed on from generation to generation, shared in the form of gifts to allies, or captured by force.[23] From late antiquity the rich had used their property to gain access to heaven, first in the form of the sumptuous goods placed in their tombs (a practice that later faded out) and then increasingly of offerings to benefit their *memoria*,[24] but at that time objects belonging to churches were not described as 'treasures'. The change seems to have been initiated by the emperor Charlemagne (800–14), as illustrated by his decision, pronounced in March 806 at Nijmegen (now in the Netherlands), that 'every bishop, abbot, and abbess should pay close attention to the treasures of churches (*thesauri ecclesiastici*), so that none of the gemstones or vessels or any other treasure be lost through the dishonesty or the negligence of its guardian'. Indeed, the emperor had been told that 'merchants, Jews, and others prided themselves on being able to buy everything that they wanted'.[25] Intervening to ensure the preservation of precious objects in churches, Charlemagne referred to them as 'treasures'—in what was very likely a seminal moment for the notion of 'church treasure' in the sense still current today. It is true that the word had already been applied to ecclesiastical property, at the moment when the sovereign right of churches to dispose of a part of any 'treasure' found on their lands was recognized. This decision, made in Italy in 789 under circumstances that remain obscure,[26] formed part of a long tradition of legal arrangements attributing goods found by chance and thus without an identified owner: the notion of 'treasure' owes its first legal definition to this question, which had also been studied by the jurists of ancient Rome.[27] But it did not yet concern precious liturgical objects.

A few years after the legislation drawn up at Nijmegen, the stakes of the imperial policy regarding the *thesaurus ecclesiasticus* emerged clearly in a text included by the scholar Einhard at the end of his *Life of Charlemagne*, composed in winter 828/29.[28] Einhard had been part of the emperor's inner circle until the latter's death in 814, and this *breviarium* claimed to set out the wishes expressed by Charlemagne himself in 811 concerning the distribution of his 'treasures'—while this may well have been the case, the text must also have suited Einhard's own interests. In it, the *thesauri* of the emperor are defined as 'the moveable goods ascertained to be [...] in his chamber (*in camera eius*), gold, silver, precious stones, and royal ornaments'. The text describes the distribution and imbues it with additional significance by emphasizing that it is for the most part already completed. Setting aside the contents of his chapel, the only items that were to remain in place, the sovereign divides his precious objects among his family, his inner circle, the poor, and the churches. He specifically mentions only four objects: all tables, made from precious metals, whose decoration and destination reflect his power. The first, with a depiction of Constantinople, is to go to the church of Saint Peter in Rome; another, with a depiction of Rome, to the cathedral in Ravenna. The third table, with a depiction of the universe, is, like the first two, made of silver but is far heavier and far more beautiful; together with the fourth, made of gold, it is to be distributed along with the final third of the imperial objects.[29] Apart from these tables, the emperor issues schematic and general principles for the majority of the remaining objects, according to a system of allotments that, in a way, revealed a particular conception of the empire. The largest share goes to the churches. The text further claims that, by the moment of its writing, two thirds of the objects have already been portioned out into twenty-one chests, on each of which is written the name of a metropolitan church, relayed in the following order: Rome and Ravenna, then Milan, Cividale, Grado, Cologne, Mainz, Salzburg, Trier, Sens, Besançon, Lyon, Rouen, Reims, Arles, Vienne, Moûtiers-en-Tarantaise, Embrun, Bordeaux, Tours, and Bourges. The emperor envisages that each of these metropolitan sees would keep a third of its share for its own church, passing on the other two thirds to its suffragan bishops. By incorporating all the great churches into his succession, Charlemagne sketches out a system for

an ecclesiastical government, whose territory overlapped with that of the empire, and places himself at its head, expressing this publicly through an official promise of prestigious gifts. The text furnished by Einhard suggests that for the final three years of his reign these twenty-one sealed chests (*repositoria*), which held the majority of the elderly emperor's moveable wealth, had been set aside somewhere in his palace at Aachen, surely an impressive sight for all those who stayed there. Charlemagne thus projects beyond his death what was already one of his major accomplishments: the establishment of a network of ecclesiastical institutions in the service of his imperial power. This is what is commemorated in the text transmitted by Einhard, whether authentic or not. The absence of the major monasteries, surprising considering the key role that they played for Charlemagne, can only be explained by this conception of the hierarchy of metropolitan sees and suffragan bishops as the infrastructure underpinning the empire, and stresses the importance that the emperor attached to the structuring force of this arrangement.[30] As an idea, the distribution of two thirds of the imperial wealth to the great churches of the empire marks a rupture from earlier practices: until then, the royal treasury had been above all the concern of powerful laypeople. The logic of this new attitude, which transformed precious royal objects into ecclesiastical goods, is apparent in a narrative that Charlemagne himself recounted, as attested in the *Deeds of the Bishops of Metz*, a chronicle—composed around 784 by the Italian Paul the Deacon, a Benedictine scholar in residence at Charlemagne's court—that links the history of the bishopric to that of the Carolingians. In this text we read that Saint Arnulf, bishop of Metz at the beginning of the seventh century (and presented here for the first time as an ancestor of the Carolingian dynasty), wished to give his property to the poor. After his eldest son refused to carry out his father's vow, the youngest son, Ansegisel, saw it through in an act of charity, earning him a blessing from Arnulf that extended to his offspring so 'that the kingship of the Franks was deservedly transferred to his line'. According to this story, the first of these kings to be descended from Arnulf and Ansegisel was Pepin, Charlemagne's father. This narrative demonstrates a conception of royalty that no longer based its legitimacy simply on the possession and transmission of worldly 'treasure' but also henceforth on the contribution of a share of this wealth to the poor and the churches. It was certainly in this sense that Charlemagne bequeathed, 'in the name of alms' (*eleimosinae nomine*), the majority of his *thesauri*.[31]

This convergence of royal 'treasure' and church objects was expressed in an even more radical and well-thought-out way in the final part of the *breviarium* at the end of the *Life of Charlemagne*, concerning the final third of the emperor's riches. After specifying that these goods would serve his daily needs until he either died or renounced secular life, the emperor proceeds to divide them into four quarters: the first was to be added to the twenty-one shares destined for the churches, the second was to be shared among his children and the children of his sons, the third was to go to the poor, and the final quarter, together with objects of lesser value, was to be given to the palace servants. The most evident precedent for such a division into quarters, defined by the councils of the late antique period and reaffirmed during the Carolingian era, was the system used to divide the income of a bishopric.[32] The share allocated to the metropolitan churches corresponded to that allocated to a bishopric's churches (including for their furnishings), while the share allocated to the emperor's heirs corresponded to that allocated to the bishop himself. The share for the imperial servants corresponded to that for the maintenance of the clergy, and in both cases the final part was given to the poor. By adopting this formula in dividing up his bequest, Charlemagne conceived of his possessions like those of a cathedral. Certain bishops had already laid the groundwork by leaving wills in which they distributed their own property following the model used for their institutions, but from this moment on the treasure of the emperor himself was itself conceived of according to such an episcopal, or, more broadly, ecclesial, model.

The imperial treasure, enriched by the numerous spoils of victories over King Desiderius of Lombardy at Pavia in 774, over Duke Tassilo of Bavaria in 788, and over the Avars in 795 and 796,[33] was therefore consigned to the churches not only in a material sense, through large-scale donations, but also in an ideological sense through the use of a system devised for distributing episcopal wealth. This development echoes the expression 'ecclesiastical treasures', used in the decision pronounced at Nijmegen in 806, which emphasized the coherence between ecclesiastical and imperial riches. The emperor thus appropriated the concept of a Christianized and institutionalized wealth, enabling him to legitimize the Carolingian 'treasure'—the idea of which was necessary for the exercising of power, but was always open to criticism in relation to the ideal of poverty and fairness. Most importantly, this 'treasure' was removed from the vagaries of familial claims and of transmission from sovereign to sovereign: entrusting the *thesauri* to churches, lasting institutions that were protected by the emperor and that supported the imperial project, was a way of ensuring the continuity of power. The churches became the custodians *par excellence* of the Carolingian 'treasures', which continued to be used in the service of imperial power while also moving closer to the spiritual 'treasures' endorsed by the churches. The whole of the palace was subject to an analogous phenomenon: the expression *sacrum palatium*, documented for the first time in 794, had become current by the end of Charlemagne's reign.[34] A series of silver coins indicate that this paradigm linking empire and church touched, in an ideological way, the entirety of wealth in circulation. Issued between 800 and 814, most likely as alms for the Christians of North Africa and the Holy Land, these coins updated ancient models and based their authority on an image of Charlemagne in his role as emperor, pictured in profile, crowned with laurels, and identified as *KAROLVS IMP[ERATOR] AVG[VSTVS]* (fig. 3). The other face of the coin, which usually indicate the place of issue, shows the façade of a church in the classical style, with a cross contained inside and another capping its roof, the whole encircled by the legend *XPICTIANA RELIGIO* (fig. 4).[35] At the time, the word *religio* signified the 'bonds' (by association with *religare*, 'to bond') that the faithful maintained with God, and specifically monastic discipline.[36] Here, its meaning is extended to all members of the Christian faith. This *religio christiana* is conveyed through the church in the middle ground, an *ecclesia* that, in the Carolingian sense of the term, was synonymous with the Christian people (*populus christianus*) and with the empire.[37] As in the expression *thesaurus ecclesiae*, the imperial insignia and the Church serve as the two faces of a coin emblematic of Charlemagne's power and the stability of his empire.

The ecclesiastical possessions designated in this way as *thesauri* thus came to be understood in terms of power, and this lent them a new quality: the episcopal model for managing wealth was inevitably altered by its incorporation into a strategy of imperial succession, a strategy that moreover entailed the establishment of a new notion of 'church treasure'. Indeed, the decades that followed the death of Charlemagne in 814 saw the composition of multiple texts that bear witness to the spread of this notion. First of all, the arrangement giving the imperial 'treasures'

3–4 Silver coin of Charlemagne, between 800 and 814. Obverse and reverse. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, département des Monnaies, médailles et antiques to the churches appears to have worked. While no clear evidence remains of the carrying out of Charlemagne's donation of riches to the churches following his death, it is well attested that in the first years of his reign his successor Louis the Pious (814–40) committed himself to building lasting ties with the principal churches and monasteries, legally establishing the imperial church whose unity was laid out in Einhard's *breviarium*, published with his *Life of Charlemagne* a few years later, in the late 820s.[38] At the same time, the pronouncement concerning the *thesaurus ecclesiasticus* drawn up at Nijmegen in 806 circulated widely. Ansegisus, the abbot of Fontenelle in Normandy, who had worked at the court at Aachen under Charlemagne and then under Louis the Pious, reproduced it in a compilation of legislative acts or 'capitularies' that, completed in late 826 or early 827, played an important role in the Carolingian Reform.[39] The passage also reappeared in a compilation of canons assembled by the abbot Regino of Prüm around 906 for use by bishops visiting their dioceses.[40]

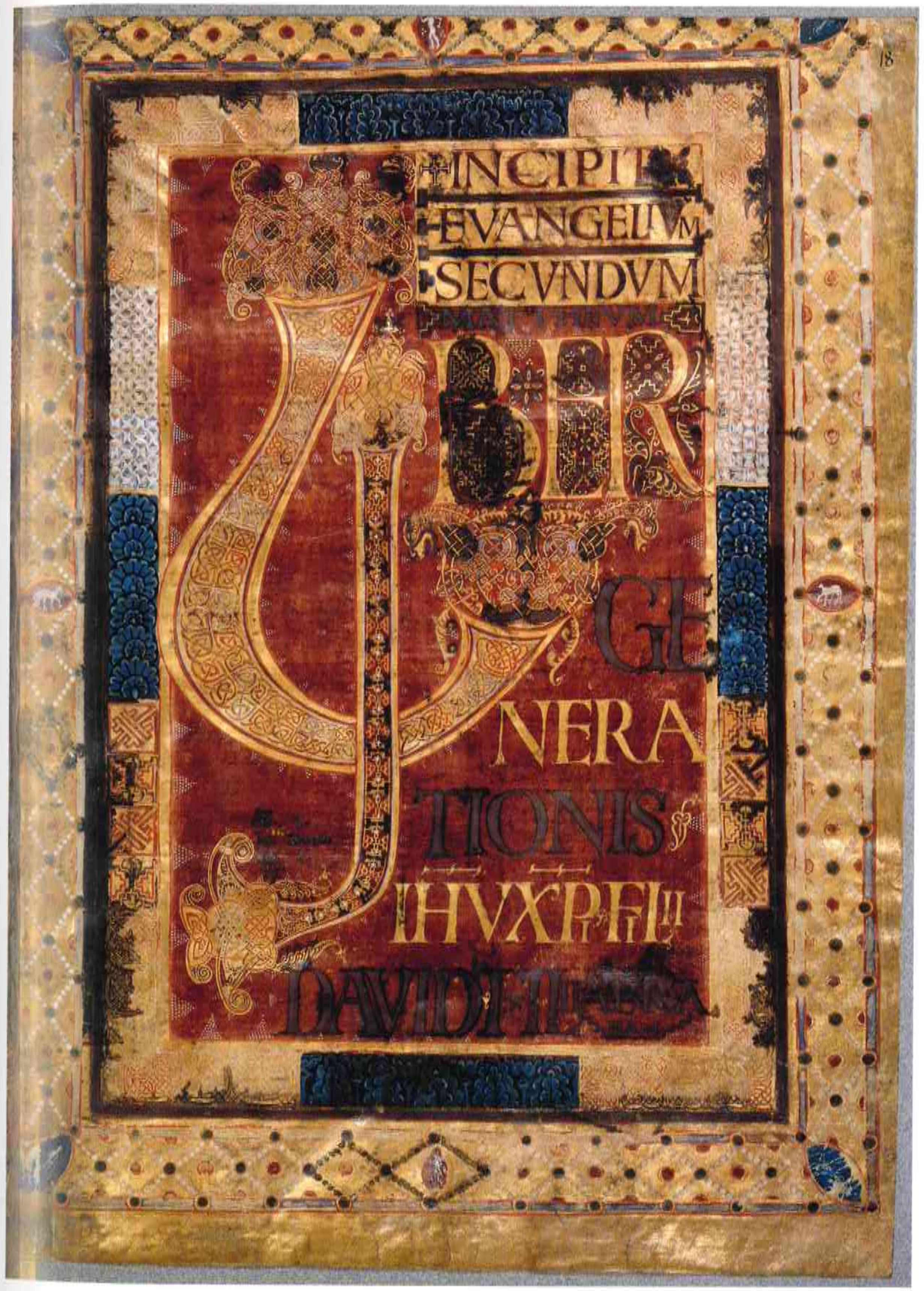
In fact, the progressive establishment of the notion of 'church treasure' over the course of the ninth century seems to have been the joint work of sovereigns and prelates. The bishops, to whom Charlemagne had addressed himself in 806, quickly appropriated this new label for precious ecclesiastical objects, using the expression 'church treasure' in the record of decisions made at their assemblies and adding information that was fully ecclesiastical in nature. For instance, in 813, one year before his death, the emperor gathered at Arles, Chalon-sur-Saône, Mainz, Reims, and Tours the bishops made responsible for deciding how the reforms would be carried out and for communicating their decisions to the palace: the Council of Tours authorized bishops to draw upon the *thesaurus ecclesiae* to satisfy the needs of the destitute and of the *familia* of their institutions.[41] The notion of a material ecclesiastical 'treasure' was thus reinforced according to the principle of charitable disposal that had previously been defended by Ambrose, but it was no longer necessary to foreground, as the bishop of Milan had done, the Church's ability to sublimate these riches. Calls for vigilance over 'church treasures' were soon accompanied by measures that were more strictly administrative. At Pavia in 832, Lothair I, son of Louis the Pious and king of the Lombards from 822 to 855, decided to send *missi* to inspect the 'church treasures' as well as the conduct of the canons and worshippers. In cases where losses were discovered, the dispatched officials were to establish the chronology and identify those responsible.[42] As king of *Francia media* and Holy Roman Emperor from 840 to 855, the same Lothair I called a meeting at Valence on January 8, 855, at which fourteen bishops from the ecclesiastical provinces of Lyon, Vienne, and Arles reiterated Charlemagne's injunction to take care of 'treasures' and specified that they meant this to include ecclesiastical furnishings: *thesaurus, sive ministerium vel ornamentum ecclesiarum*. They added that these procedures were necessary in order to pay homage to the donors who wished to honor the house of God and ensure the survival of the ecclesiastical *familia*.[43] In West Francia, the reforming archbishop Hincmar of Reims (845–82), counsellor and close associate of King Charles the Bald (843–77), seems to have taken an important step in the diffusion of the notion of 'church treasure'. In 853, the Council of Soissons brought together three archbishops and thirty-two bishops at the monastery of Saint-Médard in order to condemn members of the clergy who were at loggerheads with Hincmar over certain positions of his that conflicted with those of his predecessor. It was also an opportunity for Charles the Bald to send his *missi* to draw up general inventories of monastic possessions, explicitly requesting inventories of 'treasure', vestments, and books

(*thesaurum ac vestimenta seu libros*) (figs. 5–6). The emperor also stipulated that each prelate should upon their nomination have a new inventory drawn up, and should keep it updated by mentioning any losses or acquisitions[44]: Charles the Bald, no doubt advised by Hincmar,[45] used the council to promulgate his capitulary, directly addressing the prelates and influencing their decisions through a process of close interaction. Almost thirty years later, in 881, the text established in 853 for the capitulary of Soissons was reused in exactly the same form by the bishops assembled at Fismes, between Reims and Soissons, for a council whose resolutions were once again recorded by the now elderly Hincmar of Reims.[46]

Indeed, a certain number of still-extant inventories show that activity monitoring the valuable moveable property of churches increased from the early ninth century, especially in the northern part of West Francia, where the Carolingian centers of power were located. In his account of his time as head of the abbey of Saint-Riquier, compiled between 800 and his death in 814, the lay abbot Angilbert, who had married one of Charlemagne's daughters, included an inventory of objects and extolled the multiplicity of these 'treasures'.[47] But for a long time thereafter the word itself remained absent from this kind of text: it must have conserved an evocative power that rendered it more common in emphatic rhetorical contexts than in the everyday vocabulary of administration. The so-called Astronomer, author of a *Life of Louis the Pious* written shortly after the latter's death in 840, indicated that when the king's rebellious son, Lothair I, laid siege to Chalon-sur-Saône in 834, he pillaged the 'treasures' of the churches, even though the town was supposed to be handed over to him peaceably.[48] As in the legal texts, the usage of the term in an account of looting emphasized a particular dimension of its meaning. The word was used in the same way during a council held in 859 at Savonnières, near Toul, where forty-two bishops—a large proportion of the episcopate of West Francia and Lotharingia—addressed a letter to a group of nobles who had been excommunicated for forging an alliance with the Britons, enemies of the empire, to rise up against Charles the Bald: among other abuses, the letter accused them of taking from the 'treasures' belonging to churches.[49] At the Council of Douzy in 871, where Hincmar of Reims triumphed over his nephew Hincmar, bishop of Laon, who opposed his power as an archbishop, the accused was likewise censured for having fled with the *thesaurus ecclesiasticus*.[50] This type of usage was recurrent.[51] As the term *thesaurus* now designated the liturgical furnishings of churches as a whole, the person responsible for them logically came to be dubbed a *thesaurarius*, or 'treasurer'. The term seems to appear precisely in this context: for instance, in a letter by Archbishop Hincmar of Reims explaining to the priests of the church at Laon the function of different ecclesiastical dignitaries, including the 'treasurer'.[52] It is also employed in a charter of Charles the Bald concerning the monastery of Saint-Médard at Soissons, drawn up between 866 and 870,[53] the text of which was reused in a charter addressed to the monastery by the bishops assembled at Douzy in 871.[54] This designation may have been used sporadically at first, then more frequently—an evolution that bore witness to an institutionalization of the notion of 'church treasure' that was supported by but also validated its rhetorical usage.

In the later centuries of the Middle Ages, the words 'treasure' and 'treasurer' seem to have been used increasingly often in cathedral contexts, though this was not systematic. They remained rare in monastic rules, no doubt due to a continuing propensity to reject their profane—or at least secular—connotations in favor of the more common *custos* and *custodia*, which drew on

5 Evangeliary, first years of the 9th century ('court school of Charlemagne'). Donated 827 to the monastery of Saint-Médard at Soissons. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ms. Latin 8850, fol 17v: beginning of Gospel of Matthew



6 Evangeliary, first years of the 9th century ('court school of Charlemagne'). Donated 827 to the monastery of Saint-Médard at Soissons. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ms. Latin 8850, fol 18r: beginning of Gospel of Matthew

the idea of conservation, or *sacrarius* and *sacristia*, which emphasized the separation of the sacred from the profane.[55] Nevertheless, the notion of 'church treasure' in its material sense became current to the point that Jean Beleth employed it in his commentary on the liturgy, composed between 1160 and 1164, explaining that churches displayed their 'treasure' on important feast days to show that it was looked after with care, in observance of this solemn tradition, and in memory of the donors.[56] This passage was adopted with very similar language by William Durand of Mende between 1291 and 1295, in his *Rationale divinum officiorum*, probably the most widely diffused commentary on the liturgy during the late Middle Ages.[57] Finally, the word 'treasure' seems to have become linked to the construction of strongrooms or vaults to hold the most valuable objects. These vaults marked a shift from the various rooms linked to the choir, a tradition that went back to antiquity, and from the crypts developed during the Carolingian era to hold certain relics. They were also distinct from the 'sacristy' (*sacrarium*, *sacristia*) that held frequently used liturgical objects, from the armoires that were sometimes simply placed next to altars, and from the *libreria* or libraries, which emerged at the end of the thirteenth century.[58] The architectural characteristics of these vaults were generally simple and functional: designed to guard against the risk of theft or fire, with vaulted ceilings and small doors and windows, they were placed high up and near to the choir, often above the sacristy. But these enclosed rooms, easily identifiable from the exterior, could also play a symbolic role, suggesting the presence of riches that were all the more impressive because they were out of sight.[59] The use of the word *thesaurus* to describe a place of storage is very probably contemporary with these new forms, which seem to have spread from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries on.[60] Following the introduction of the notion of material ecclesiastical 'treasure' into legal and administrative vocabulary, as well as into chronicles, a specific kind of space developed to represent it within the churches themselves.

The expression 'church treasure' and its progressive taking up thus resulted from a gradual and twofold adaptation of the notion of treasure inherited from pre-Christian antiquity. First, a passage from the gospels was expanded and interpreted in order to lend an institutional dimension to the specifically Christian idea of 'spiritual treasures'. Second, secular power and churches were brought closer together as the material sense of 'treasure' came to encompass the riches held by the latter. At first glance, these two movements seem contradictory, the [illegible] denying materiality and the other underscoring it. But ultimately they were complementary and convergent. In both cases, the efficacy of the notion of 'church treasure' depended upon a shift in the use of the word, which now signified a reality distinct from that of worldly riches.

The Economy of the thesaurus ecclesiae

While the control exerted by ecclesiastical institutions over 'treasures', both spiritual [illegible] material, was already well established, between the eleventh and the thirteenth [illegible] European societies witnessed profound social transformations, driven by rapid urbani[illegible] and the development of exchanges using money. In this context, in which material po[illegible]

increasingly determined the conditions of collective life, the question of riches and of their good usage became central to discourses on the Church and its relation to society—at first in connection with the Gregorian Reform then especially within the new Franciscan Order, which promoted an ideal of voluntary poverty. It nevertheless seems that the specific notion of 'treasure' did not play a major role in these discussions, perhaps because it was explicitly linked to a rhetoric of power.[61] It was, however, used in relation to royal and ecclesiastical politics[62] and especially in pastoral contexts, with the new emphasis placed upon representations of the miser.[63] In the thirteenth century, these elements drove two important evolutions in discourses on ecclesiastical treasure, with implications for both the forms of power and the communal nature of the accumulated riches. The first concerned the administrative organization and management of the material wealth belonging to churches, and manifested itself in numerous conflicts at a local level, especially within cathedral communities, over the responsibilities of the 'treasurer'. The second emerged from a theoretical question posed by the practice of indulgences—including, among other elements, alms. This meant that the immaterial riches of the Church as an institution became the object of intense reflection by Scholastic theologians and later of a fierce polemic, closely linked to the question of material riches, in the context of the early sixteenth-century Reformation.

From the Treasurer to the Fabric: The 'Common Good' (High Middle Ages)

According to an act promulgated in November 1246 by Archbishop Conrad of Hochstadt, [illegible] *thesaurarius* of Cologne Cathedral was responsible for providing lighting (*luminaria*), [illegible]tributing candles at Candlemas, paying the *custodes* (or sacristans) and the bell ringers, and [illegible]ing care of the windows, whether figurally decorated or not. Recognizing that the treasury [illegible]ked the means to accomplish all this, the archbishop allocated to it a regular supplemental [illegible]unt, including the alms offered by the faithful at the church's high altar, dedicated to [illegible] Peter.[64] The aim of this was perhaps also to launch a major building project, namely the [illegible]truction of a new church that would replace the old Carolingian building: the first stone [illegible]laid less than two years later, on August 15, 1248. But a few months before this date, on April [illegible] treasurer Philip of Altena made another agreement with the chapter of the cathedral, in [illegible] he gave up the alms offered at this great altar outside of the context of Mass, for a term [illegible] years, in return for a stipend of thirty marks. The guardian of the *camera aurea*, where the [illegible]ere kept, likewise renounced offerings made on Sundays and feast days in exchange for [illegible]al stipend of three marks. Offerings left near the relics or at the altar were to be assigned [illegible] *noue fabrice maioris ecclesie*, 'to the work of the new fabric of the main church', and [illegible] by the *prouisores seu rectores noue fabrice*, the 'provisors or rectors of the new fabric'.[65] [illegible] reorganization of the economy of Cologne Cathedral between 1246 and 1248 is [illegible]istic of evolutions that took place from the end of the thirteenth century within many [illegible], affecting the very notion of 'church treasure'. In the organizational model of the [illegible]istian era, bishops had full financial responsibility, which had enabled, for example, [illegible] of Milan to react firmly after the disaster of Andrinople. The establishment of [illegible]' as institutions, linked to the evolutions of the Carolingian era, had marked a first [illegible] delegation of this episcopal power, identifying a body of wealth either composed the idea of conservation, or *sacrarius* and *sacristia*, which emphasized the separation of the sacred from the profane.[55] Nevertheless, the notion of 'church treasure' in its material sense became current to the point that Jean Beleth employed it in his commentary on the liturgy, composed between 1160 and 1164, explaining that churches displayed their 'treasure' on important feast days to show that it was looked after with care, in observance of this solemn tradition, and in memory of the donors.[56] This passage was adopted with very similar language by William Durand of Mende between 1291 and 1295, in his *Rationale divinum officiorum*, probably the most widely diffused commentary on the liturgy during the late Middle Ages.[57] Finally, the word 'treasure' seems to have become linked to the construction of strongrooms or vaults to hold the most valuable objects. These vaults marked a shift from the various rooms linked to the choir, a tradition that went back to antiquity, and from the crypts developed during the Carolingian era to hold certain relics. They were also distinct from the 'sacristy' (*sacrarium, sacristia*) that held frequently used liturgical objects, from the armoires that were sometimes simply placed next to altars, and from the *libreria* or libraries, which emerged at the end of the thirteenth century.[58] The architectural characteristics of these vaults were generally simple and functional: designed to guard against the risk of theft or fire, with vaulted ceilings and small doors and windows, they were placed high up and near to the choir, often above the sacristy. But these enclosed rooms, easily identifiable from the exterior, could also play a symbolic role, suggesting the presence of riches that were all the more impressive because they were out of sight.[59] The use of the word *thesaurus* to describe a place of storage is very probably contemporary with these new forms, which seem to have spread from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries on.[60] Following the introduction of the notion of material ecclesiastical 'treasure' into legal and administrative vocabulary, as well as into chronicles, a specific kind of space developed to represent it within the churches themselves.

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From the Treasurer to the Fabric: The 'Common Good' (High Middle Ages)

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This reorganization of the economy of Cologne Cathedral between 1246 and 1248 is characteristic of evolutions that took place from the end of the thirteenth century within many churches, affecting the very notion of 'church treasure'. In the organizational model of the early Christian era, bishops had full financial responsibility, which had enabled, for example, Ambrose of Milan to react firmly after the disaster of Andrinople. The establishment of 'treasuries' as institutions, linked to the evolutions of the Carolingian era, had marked a first step in the delegation of this episcopal power, identifying a body of wealth either composed of the precious objects that belonged to the churches or specifically set aside for the churches' maintenance. But by the twelfth century another kind of organization had already developed, notably at cathedrals, with specific resources no longer assigned to dignitaries and their offices but rather to 'chapters'. Made up of canons whose collective influence over the bishops progressively strengthened, these chapters soon took on responsibility for numerous tasks, and benefited from an increasing financial autonomy. From this perspective, the contract established at Cologne in 1248 with a view to commencing building work constituted a transfer of power from the treasurer, who was still favored by the archbishop in 1246, to the chapter, via the new structure that constituted the 'fabric' of the cathedral.

Indeed, for the chapters of cathedrals or collegiate churches, the need or ambition to launch major works was often an occasion to curtail the rights of those in charge of the treasuries and to appropriate a portion of their revenue. In principle, the treasurers themselves were also canons, and therefore belonged to the chapters, but the superior rank of their dignitary office and the fact that they answered directly to the bishops meant that they were disinclined to submit to the collective will. In 1180, the prior and canons of the collegiate church of Saint Peter in Strasbourg thus seized upon a period when the office of the *custodia* was vacant to accuse the *custodes* of *negligentia* with respect to the roofs of the church and the cloister, and to allocate revenue for the necessary repairs and for the regular maintenance of the buildings and the *thesaurus*. They saw to it that the *custodia* was left only with enough to maintain the lamps, allotting another portion of its resources to be shared among themselves, and having these arrangements confirmed by Pope Alexander III. The next *custos*, however, objected to this, and refused to deliver to the chapter the sum designated for the *opus ecclesie*. This necessitated the drawing up of a new agreement, finalized in 1217 with the arbitration of the bishop: a stipend was granted to the *custos* as compensation, while the bishop insisted that the canons should put their share to honest use (*honestos usus*) rather than dividing it up among themselves.[66]

The link between a transfer of power of this kind and a construction project is a recurring one. In 1215, seven or eight years after the reconstruction of Reims Cathedral had begun, the responsibility for its buildings, furnishings, and lamps was transferred from the treasurer to the *ecclesia*, in other words, to the chapter.[67] That same year, the chapter of the cathedral at Châlons-en-Champagne moved against the treasurer, notably removing his responsibility for maintaining the windows and diverting those funds *ad opera facienda*, 'to carry out works'.[68] These mentions of resources assigned *ad opus* or *ad fabricam* were ambivalent: they primarily referred to the restoration or construction work that these funds were to finance, but also to the new administrative entities instated under the authority of the chapters to manage these activities. The 'works' or 'fabrics' of the churches thus might have been structures intended to disappear at the end of a construction project, their allocations returned to the treasurers. To the contrary, however, they were established permanently. At Cologne Cathedral, for instance, the provisional arrangement made in 1248 seems to have been extended several times, including for a four-year period starting in 1313. It was made definitive in 1325 by an agreement between the chapter and the *thesaurarius*, granting to the latter an annual stipend of a hundred marks, to be paid by the *fabrica*, in exchange for which he surrendered all claim to the alms offered at the high altar: three years after the consecration of the new choir, the first realization of the building campaign, a concerted effort was made to maintain the funding of the fabric.[69] Yet, that such a development

posed a theoretical problem did not escape thirteenth-century jurists: Once the works were finished, what should be done with the regular share that had been assigned for them?[70]

The institutions that emerged from the administrative shifts prompted by building projects at the great Gothic churches took on the name used to refer to the building projects themselves—*fabricae*—but quickly assumed far more varied functions. Where the treasurer opposed any transfer of responsibility or resources, or where he accepted them only on temporary terms, a decision soon had to be made, and this led to conflicts at numerous churches. In general, the resolution of these problems hastened the establishment of fabrics, through the allotment of specific revenues in their favor and above all through the drawing up of acts that legally ratified their existence.[71] This logical progression of events explains why fabrics were often institutionalized only once the works were well underway, or even after their completion. Their raison d'être was no longer limited to the supervision of the 'works', and the words *opus* and *fabrica* henceforth took on a much larger signification. The major motive for the takeover of building works by fabrics was the introduction of a new system for managing alms, by which they were no longer entrusted to an official appointed for life and solely responsible for their just use, but rather to representatives generally named by the chapter for a limited period, agents who were called to present their accounts on a regular basis. The ability, ensured by this new organization, to guarantee how funds would be spent was crucial to rousing the generosity of worshippers, since for designated projects donors could be made aware of how their offerings—in kind but especially in currency—would be used. In an agreement established in 1221, the *custodes* in charge of the reliquaries of Laon Cathedral thus accorded to the *magister operis* a shrine 'for the works' (*capsa operis*), to be used during preaching campaigns—the income it provided would support the undertaking of building projects.[72] Similarly, at Cologne Cathedral in 1325, the definitive allocation to the fabric of the alms from the high altar was justified by the fact that the fabric had obtained several letters of indulgence encouraging specific donations of alms to its cause.[73] At the cathedral of Halberstadt, a confraternity founded in the first third of the fourteenth century was specifically dedicated to gathering funds for the fabric.[74] Through this kind of administration, increasingly flexible and direct, urban churches adapted to the world of commerce—where money and accounting played an ever-greater role—availing themselves of tools with which to capture some of the new wealth of the mercantile bourgeoisie.

Yet, the consequences of these financial arrangements extended beyond the issue of building works, and affected other prerogatives that had long been held by treasurers. The most immediate concerned the fact that the revenues in question were often linked to particular altars or to the veneration of relics or images. At the collegiate church of Saint Mary at Erfurt, an act dated August 7, 1286 settled a dispute that pitted the chapter and the dean against the treasurer by allowing the canons and the fabric to display the image of the Virgin Mary and other images as they wished, inside or outside of the church, with the implicit goal of gathering alms[75]—a decision that limited the treasurer's authority over sacred objects. The system of stipends often used to compensate treasurers placed them in a position of dependence, while the regular and fixed nature of this income made it impossible for them to take on more than routine tasks. In fact, the creation of a fabric often provided an occasion to divest treasurers of a wide variety of functions. The treasurer at Tournai Cathedral, who had hoped that once the church was finished he would recover certain offerings assigned to the fabric, not only had his request rejected in 1218 and again in 1225 but also found himself relieved of a series of other responsibilities 'about which no controversy had yet been stirred up, but could have been' (*super quibus nulla fuerat controversia mota, sed moveri poterat*). The fabric was now the beneficiary of all offerings, and was tasked with the maintenance of the lighting and the restoration of the books, the linen and silk vestments, and the clappers and ropes of the bells. It was also responsible for paying the treasury staff, which included clerics and laymen.[76] At Reims Cathedral in 1221, when the choir was finished and work was beginning on the transept and the nave,[77] the treasurer's power to appoint the subtreasurer was removed and reassigned to the canons: the individual who performed most of the work related to the treasury, and provided the necessary equipment for the divine offices, now had to present annual accounts to the chapter.[78] From major construction works to the supervision of the daily liturgy, either directly or more often through the intermediary of the fabrics, the chapters of cathedrals and collegiate churches thus succeeded in affirming their own power by hollowing out the function of the treasuries.

Under these new conditions, with the fabrics becoming increasingly permanent, one might think that the institution of the 'treasury' was destined to disappear. Fabric accounts, which survive in good numbers from the fourteenth century and even more so from the fifteenth,[79] show the great variety of tasks they assumed, sometimes even encompassing purchases of liturgical vestments that could constitute the main expense in a whole year, surpassing even building work.[80] But the treasurers remained, their functions potentially limited to the honorary aspects of the post, a fact sometimes taken into account in the new dividing up of tasks. The treasurer at Angers Cathedral, who surrendered to the chapter the daily responsibility for bell ringing and lighting in 1215 (before the first mention of a fabric in 1218), thus maintained the 'dignity and power' (*dignitas et potestas*) to forbid the ringing of the bells and to snuff out the candles, as well as the charge of providing the Paschal candle.[81] At Tournai Cathedral, when Gautier de Wangiermés was named successor to the treasurer Gossuin, who had lost most of his revenues and responsibilities in 1225, he complained to Rome that he had been wronged *enormiter*, and in 1233 accepted a limited agreement granting him and his successors priority over certain minor but prestigious tasks, so that the 'treasurers should not be idle all day long (*non sint ociosi tota die*) and should not be deprived within the church of the honor they are due'. The masters of the fabric were moreover obliged to inform the treasurer about the appointment of *custodes*—though only if they could 'easily' find him in the church or the chapter house.[82] Indeed, treasurers were often high-ranking individuals who could hold multiple positions and thus be largely absent from their churches. Of the fourteen treasurers who succeeded one another at Tournai between the end of the eleventh century and the last years of the thirteenth, only one was not a member of the Flanders or Hainaut nobility: Gautier de Wangiermés was a scholar from Tournai appointed by the bishop following the crisis of 1225 in the hope of better controlling the post. The treasurer appointed in 1265 was only fifteen; he had already been chancellor of Flanders at twelve and was represented at Tournai by a *vices gerens thesaurarii*.[83] At Laon Cathedral, the treasurers likewise had the longstanding custom of designating an overseer, who directed seven clerical and lay *custodes* with the aid of advisors. As none of these individuals had anything to gain from actually investing in the maintenance of the buildings, the chapter disapproved of this rolling delegation and launched legal proceedings against several treasurers who honored neither their debts nor their responsibilities: the situation was only

resolved at the beginning of the fifteenth century.[84] In other places, conflicts involving treasurers seem to have remained latent over long periods of time: at Rouen Cathedral, for example, the treasury's revenues and responsibilities were only handed over to the fabric starting in 1470.[85]

The recurrent doubts cast on treasurers from the beginning of the thirteenth century in certain cathedrals and collegiate churches of central and northern France and the Holy Roman Empire, along with the profound economic transformations linked to the establishment of fabrics, show that a disjuncture had emerged between the institution of the 'treasury' and the aspirations of the period, the latter privileging a communitarian mode of management. Yet, if these conflicts are particularly revealing due to their recurring nature and the large sums involved, other institutions provide even clearer evidence of the new conception of church property. Indeed, it was in parish churches, whose development may have resulted from condemnations of proprietary churches,[86] that the first fabrics emerged in mid-twelfth-century Italy in connection with the establishment of the first communes[87]: what had previously been controlled by a single individual now in principle belonged to everyone, a materialization of the central notion of 'common good'.[88] Throughout Latin Christendom, the material administration of rural and urban parishes was entrusted to laymen, overseen at once by worshippers and by a higher authority, which was often a bishop but could also be an abbey, a local lord, or a town council. The masters of their fabrics drew a certain prestige from their work, and were even known as 'treasurers' in certain regions.[89] Above all, late medieval urban fabrics were powerful financial institutions: they had the stature of banks and could also fulfill this role, an activity that required their members to have particular skills. As their wealth was not strictly separated from that of their administrators, they could attract bourgeois individuals seeking capital.[90] The social importance of fabrics was also evident in the usage of church sacristies, which could assume community functions as meeting places or stores for archival collections, especially when communes did not possess specific buildings for such functions.[91] Certain objects were even presented as the result of collective efforts: a chalice made in 1314 for a church in the village of Sandesneben, near Lübeck, carries the inscription *Orate fratres pro omnibus, qui hunc calicem contulerunt*, 'Pray, brothers, for all those who contributed to this chalice',[92] while at the church of Saint Margaret in Düsseldorf-Gerresheim, a Eucharistic monstrance from around 1400 bears the words *cois eleia me fecit*, that is, *Communis eleimosyna me fecit*, 'I was made with common alms' (fig. 7).[93]

Beyond churches themselves, the lay associations that became increasingly numerous throughout the late Middle Ages also assembled precious objects: towns thus held 'treasuries' made up of the insignia and tableware used at shared banquets,[94] as did various confraternities,[95] from hospitals[96] to universities.[97] Some towns also took control of the material organization of cathedrals, as at Strasbourg, where the commune's council increased its influence over the chapter between 1250 and 1280,[98] or more generally in Italy, at Orvieto, Bologna, Perugia, Milan, or Siena. Cathedral possessions therefore found themselves fully integrated into the life of the city, especially when fabrics took on tasks beyond the construction and maintenance of churches themselves, serving the general interest with projects such as construction at the Port of Genoa from the 1270s, the maintenance of Bologna's hospitals in 1395, or the renewal of watercourses in Orvieto and Milan, which served to transport materials as well as to provide foodstuffs to the inhabitants.[99] In this way, the 'fabric' of the cathedral became the 'fabric' of the city.