



Eucharistic monstrance, c. 1400, with inscription on the nodus: *Communis eleimosyna me fecit*. Düsseldorf-Gerresheim, church of Saint Margaret

### The 'Treasury of Merit': Indulgences and Alms (Late Middle Ages)

While the institution of the 'treasury' was being questioned in some of the great churches, early thirteenth-century Scholastic theologians in Paris were formulating a general reflection on ecclesiastical resources, which likewise involved the image of 'treasure' as a common good.<sup>100</sup> The theory of the 'treasury of merit' thus appeared in the *Summa* of canon law completed by Henry of Segusio (c. 1194–1271) in 1253:

As the son of God poured out not just one drop but all of his blood for those who sinned, and as the martyrs also spilled their blood for the Faith and for the Church, and were punished for more than their sins, it turns out that in this outpouring all sins were punished; and this outpouring of blood is a treasure in the treasure chest of the Church, to which the Church holds the keys. This is why, when she wishes, she can open this chest and grant her treasure to whomever she wants, granting remissions and indulgences to the faithful. And so sin does not go unpunished, for punishment has been inflicted on the Son of God and his holy martyrs, as says Master Hugh the cardinal.<sup>101</sup>

Henry of Segusio attributes this theory to a certain 'Master Hugh the cardinal', identifiable as the Dominican theologian and canonist Hugh of Saint-Cher (1190–1263), who had indeed been a cardinal in Rome since 1244, with the basilica of Saint Sabina as his titular church.<sup>102</sup> But Henry might well have given the title held by Hugh at the time of the writing of the *Summa*; the moment when the latter began to speak of the treasury 'of merit', also known as the treasury 'of the Church' or 'of grace' (*thesaurus meritorum, ecclesiae, gratiarum*), should probably be placed earlier, in the 1230s, and situated in the university circles of Paris, where the two men were teaching at that time.<sup>103</sup> The innovation lay in the claim that, through their suffering, Christ and the martyrs had acquired a far greater store of merit than was necessary to efface their own sins before God, and that this surplus of 'grace' would not go to waste: collected by the Church, it was preserved in a chest from which the institution could draw without limit and as it wished, redistributing this grace to ordinary sinners in the form of indulgences.<sup>104</sup>

This image of the 'treasure of the Church' provided an intellectual solution to a problem raised by the profound transformations that since the eleventh century had affected the practices of penance and almsgiving as well as certain aspects of the cult of relics. During the seventh century, Latin Christianity had seen the establishment of a system of penance that was individual and tariff-based, in which believers confessed their errors to a priest, and were freed from their guilt and then given a fixed punishment—generally involving almsgiving, prayer, or days of fasting—as stipulated in a book called a 'penitential'. This principle, replacing the rite of public amnesty administered by the Roman emperor and subsequently by the bishops of late antiquity, was imported by missionaries from Ireland where, in the absence of a state-based system, social control was traditionally exercised through a cycle of accumulations and annulments of individual obligations.<sup>105</sup> But from the end of the eleventh century, the pope and certain bishops began to use their own authority to annul the penance that sinners were

supposed to do. In granting these 'indulgences', they affirmed their own position as well as that of the Church. For example, by promising participants in the First Crusade of 1095 a total remission of their sins—the first 'plenary indulgence'—Pope Urban II demonstrated in a spectacular way his role as the representative of Christ on earth. With this he rendered manifest the power entrusted by Christ to Saint Peter (Matthew 16:19) and to his successors, the popes, to either bring believers closer to the Kingdom of Heaven, to which the popes hold the keys, or to exclude them from it.<sup>106</sup> Above all, by intervening in the carefully calibrated system of fixed penances, the prelates readopted the attitude of emperors granting amnesties to their subjects.

If believers who benefited from indulgences were freed from their punishments, they were nevertheless required to express through a symbolic act their willingness to do penance. This was determined by a bishop or the pope in a 'letter of indulgence' that specified the situation and the conditions in which the indulgence could be granted. Via these recommendations, the prelates were able to exercise a decisive influence over many common devotional practices, both individual and collective (such as prayer or participation in the Mass), and to shape in a significant way the economic realities of the ecclesiastical institution.<sup>107</sup> Indeed, indulgences were generally though not exclusively granted following offerings of alms to specific and well-defined causes. One of the earliest and most significant of these was precisely the construction of churches: promises of indulgences were a highly effective way for bishops, even though they themselves were no longer directly responsible for the works, to swell the coffers of the fabrics. In practice, and independent of indulgences, the collection of alms was often linked to the veneration of relics or images within churches or, as attested from the 1060s in the north of France, during fundraising tours on which the clergy displayed relics to collect contributions for prospective works at their cathedral or abbey churches. This kind of fundraising was an extension of the tradition of processing with relics, which had become increasingly common during the tenth and eleventh centuries, serving to raise the profile of saints or to seek their intercession in conflicts over which feudal sovereigns no longer had effective jurisdiction<sup>108</sup>: the powers attributed to patron saints, physically present in their material remains, were now being used to provide occasional economic support. The canons of Laon Cathedral, which was damaged during an insurrection in the commune in 1112, set out the following summer for central France, and one year later for the south of England, to win the support of the local populations. They bought back valuable objects such as tapestries, church furnishings, spoons, cups, and silver and gold jewelry, resulting in the consecration of the repaired building in 1114.<sup>109</sup> In England, indulgences were granted from the 1120s or 1130s for the veneration of relics during translations, ostentations, or pilgrimages, and from the 1160s on fundraising relic tours: the association of a remittance of penance with the veneration of relics, which subsequently became common, quantified the spiritual profit one could hope to obtain, making collection efforts even more effective and transforming the practices of relic devotion.<sup>110</sup>

It was soon recognized that fundraising tours and indulgences, which combined the ancient practices of relic worship and penance with a new way of exercising ecclesiastical authority as well as with the increasing monetarization of the economy, posed the risk of placing spiritual and financial profit on the same level. The practice of such tours soon gave rise to abuses by false fundraisers presenting fake relics, as demonstrated very early on, between 1114 and 1120, in the denunciations by Guibert of Nogent in his *On the Saints and their Relics*.<sup>111</sup> The practice

of indulgences, quite flexible on account of being unbound to the display of material objects and thus applicable to a variety of enterprises, developed rapidly and apart from any kind of theoretical legitimization. The subject was not addressed in Gratian's *Decretal*, the famous compilation of ecclesiastical law that circulated from around 1140. Peter Abelard (1079–1142), followed by other Parisian masters, was concerned by this omission, in particular the fact that the granting of indulgences in exchange for alms, sometimes even at a fixed price, meant that salvation through alms might become directly dependent upon the cupidity of prelates.<sup>112</sup> In 1215, the bishops united at the Fourth Lateran Council endeavored to limit abuses through their *constitutio* number sixty-two. This text forbade taking ancient relics out of their shrines with the aim of making a financial profit (*ut antique reliquie amodo extra capsam nullatenus ostendantur nec exponantur uenales*).<sup>113</sup> It stipulated that newly discovered relics should be approved by the pope before being venerated, and required collectors of alms to hold official documents and to avoid any immoderation at taverns. Finally, it limited the remittance of penance that could be granted by a bishop to a maximum of forty days (or a year in the case of the consecration of a church)—a duration reckoned in days of fasting.<sup>114</sup> This was a compromise that, though it constrained collection practices and the granting of indulgences, also legitimized them. Above all, the council probably fueled the phenomenon of indulgences by stipulating that each individual should attend confession once a year: by mitigating the penance incurred, indulgences undoubtedly encouraged the application of the old tariff-based system on a much larger scale and to more ordinary types of sins.<sup>115</sup>

But although indulgences were becoming a generalized practice, the principle behind them was yet to be justified. If they were granted in a way that disregarded the tariff system, how could the necessary balance between sins and penance be satisfied in the eyes of God? It was ultimately the next generation of Parisian canon-law scholars and theologians, in training at the time of the Lateran Council, who took up the question: in 1215, Henry of Segusio and Hugh of Saint-Cher were between twenty and twenty-five years old. Their theory of the 'treasury of merit', most likely developed in the 1230s, took recourse to the conception of treasure as a common good, combining the remittance of penance with the virtue of the martyrs—a link already implicit in collection practices that made the granting of indulgences conditional upon the veneration of the relics of the saints. This idea was reinforced and further developed by Scholastic theologians in the middle of the century.<sup>116</sup> In 1248 or 1249, the German Albertus Magnus (c. 1200–80), who had recently left Paris to found the Dominican school of theology at Cologne, extended the 'treasury of the church' to include the merits of non-martyred saints.<sup>117</sup> Between 1253 and 1255, Thomas Aquinas (1224/25–74), an Italian Dominican and former student of Albertus who was then teaching in Paris, compiled and clarified the work of his predecessors, thus impressing his authority upon subsequent theological discourse.<sup>118</sup> Albertus and Thomas both presented their arguments in commentaries on the *Book of Sentences*, a work of c. 1150–58 in which Peter Lombard had classified the unresolved questions posed by the scriptures, and their texts are thus a direct reflection of their theological teaching.<sup>119</sup> The Italian Giovanni da Fidanza, known as Bonaventure (1217–74)—who had arrived in Paris as a youth, became a Master of Theology in 1253, and was quickly appointed head of the Franciscan school—wrote a similar commentary, before leaving teaching to assume the direction of his order upon his election as Minister General in 1257. His text offered particularly refined expositions on the institutional

logic of indulgences and on their practical applications, notably in his explanation of why only the pope and the bishops were entitled to grant them<sup>120</sup>:

The distribution of the treasure of the Church is entrusted to bishops alone because the Church possesses this treasure through her marriage to Christ, her husband made Man. From this marriage were born sons and daughters, that is, perfect and imperfect human beings, for whose education Christ wishes to set aside this wealth. And because the Law states that he who 'takes in the wife of his brother to raise up the name of the deceased in his inheritance' must also take his place when it comes to the wealth destined for the education of his children, as we find in Ruth 4, only those who are married to the church have the right to distribute this treasure. These are the bishops, who are her spouses and who have the power to engender sons and daughters, that is, perfect and imperfect human beings, and they include the supreme pontiff, who is the spouse and the guardian of the whole Church. This is why bishops, at the head of a lineage, can grant indulgences; and first among them the supreme pontiff, who is tasked with distributing all the spiritual treasure because he is responsible for the entire Church and all her children. This is why we are all his children and he is the father of us all.<sup>121</sup>

Here, Bonaventure legitimizes the right of prelates to use the 'treasure' of Christ's suffering, by comparing it to a familial inheritance. 'Married' to Christ, the Church is said to have received upon his death this treasure, which became the *thesaurus ecclesiae*. Bishops, who are symbolically married to the Church at their consecration and thus take up the role of Christ,<sup>122</sup> are charged with administering this treasure for the benefit of his children, that is, the faithful, who are the orphans of Christ. The decision to consider the spiritual wealth of Christ as material wealth allows the theologian to support his argument using the levirate rule mentioned in the Old Testament, a pragmatic way of resolving issues of succession.<sup>123</sup> The treasure of merit therefore came to circulate according to the hierarchical logic of Christian spiritual kinship: merits made it possible for bishops to 'raise', within the church, through the granting of indulgences, the 'children' that they had 'the power to engender'. Indeed, the Christian's true social birth took place during the ritual of baptism, which erased the stain generated by the act of procreation, and through which one entered into the spiritual family.<sup>124</sup> Sinners throughout their lives, the faithful needed constant support if their souls were to be saved, and for Bonaventure this important responsibility justified the Church's monopoly over the 'treasury of merit'. The Scholastic theory of treasure was thus a response to the dual preoccupation of the new Dominican and Franciscan mendicant orders, to which its authors belonged: to provide a comprehensive pastoral ministry in which penitential practice played an important role, and to establish the authority of the Church.

In an earlier passage, Bonaventure wondered whether indulgences should only be distributed with a spiritual objective, or whether they could also be used to advance material undertakings. He defined a program for the application of 'merits' relative to the workings of ecclesiastical institutions:

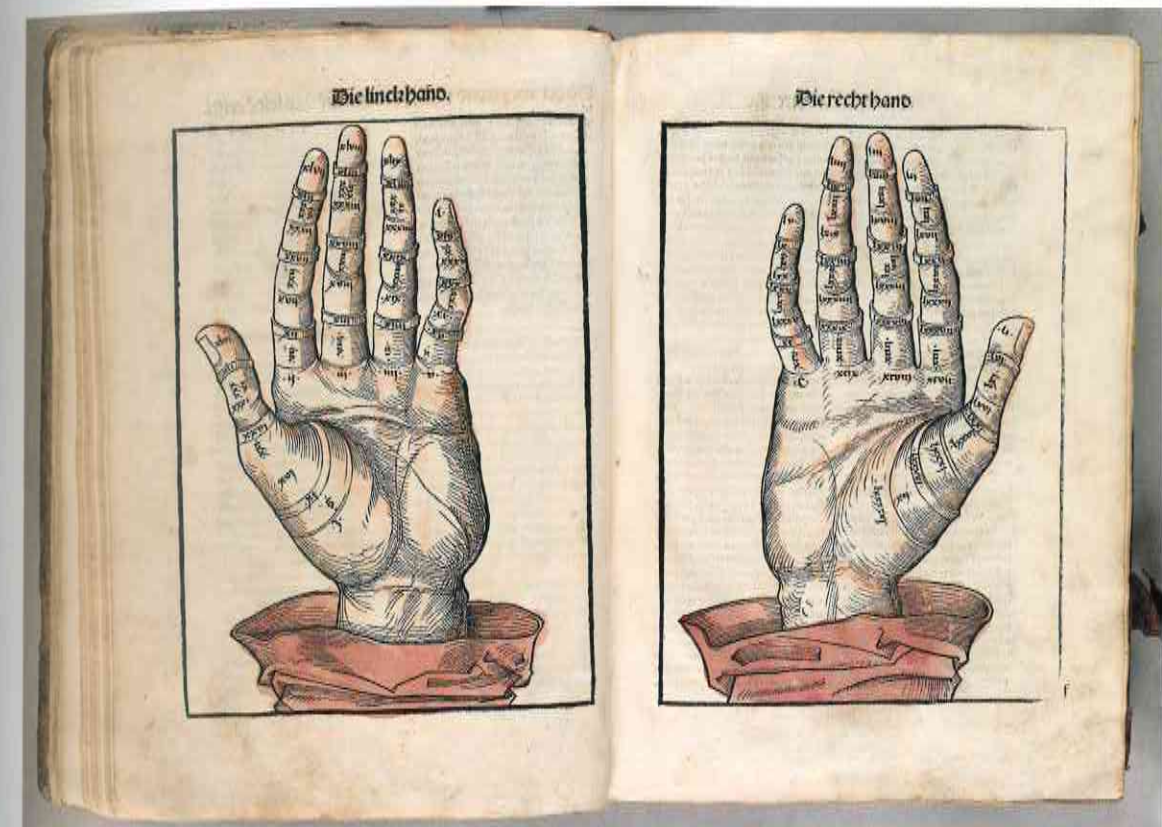
Should indulgences be granted for spiritual or material profit? [...] Conclusion: indulgences must above all be granted for external acts. Consider this in terms of when, in cities and other human communities, the treasure of the public good is distributed and communicated externally for two reasons—and understand that the same applies on the spiritual plane. On the one hand, the treasure is distributed for the glory of the prince, as in royal courts and as Ahasuerus did in the first book of Esther (Esther 1:4); on the other hand, it is distributed for the purpose or needs of the community, so that when the community is attacked, grants and offerings are given to soldiers so that they can go into battle. Thus the treasure of the Church should be distributed by those to whom it is entrusted for two reasons. First, for the glory and for the praises of the prince; and the praise and honor of God resides in his saints, who are honored by the construction of basilicas, the visitation of basilicas, and the commemoration of their virtues—all this is recommended by preachers and in sermons, and this is why it is right to grant indulgences for these services. Second, indulgences should be granted for the common purpose that is the defense of the Holy Land, the defense of the faith, the promotion of learning, and so on. And as these are external acts, indulgences should be granted for these acts in particular.<sup>125</sup>

By comparing the treasure of 'merits' to royal treasure, Bonaventure confirms the Church's right to use it as an effective and legitimate means of performing its functions. In this way, he validates the discourse according to which indulgences should encourage and guide devotional activities in practice, and explicitly points to their role in the construction of churches and the defense of the Holy Land. But his desire to foreground the spiritual benefits of indulgences meant that he remained silent on how exactly they could influence the material world: he speaks of 'merits' as if they alone would suffice for all the functions that he recommends, without ever invoking the alms that necessarily played a mediating role.

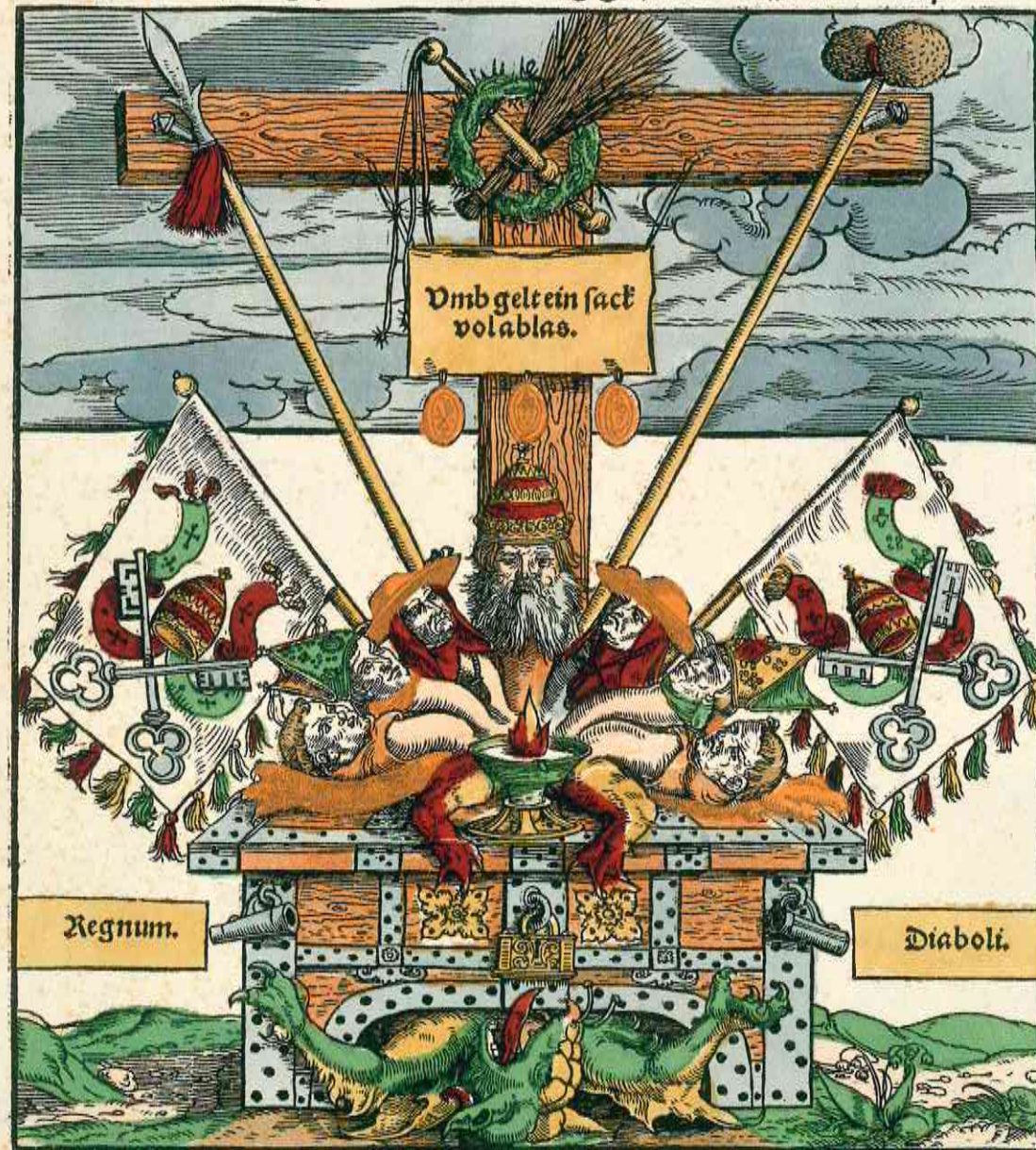
The 'treasury of merit' was thus the work of Scholastic theologians endeavoring to describe, through an ecclesiological model that justified the power of bishops, the complex reality of devotional exchanges. But their inability to legitimize unreservedly the material consequences of indulgences meant that this theory had its limits.<sup>126</sup> Indeed, while the practice on which it commented continued to intensify, the notion of the 'treasury of merit' did not spread into the everyday practices of the clergy and of worshippers in equal measure: the bishops, for example, almost never make reference to it in their letters of indulgence.<sup>127</sup> Nevertheless, in his commentary on the first Roman Jubilee—in 1300, an important event in the history of indulgences because it not only promised a total remittance of penance but also that this offer would be renewed every Jubilee year—Cardinal Jean Lemoine explained that even if all the Christians in the world were to make the pilgrimage to Rome, the ratio between the sum of indulgences granted and the immensity of the treasury of merit would remain very low, amounting to less than a drop of water in the ocean, or a grain of millet in relation to Mount Saint Bernard.<sup>128</sup> In the bull of 1343 that announced the Jubilee of 1350, Clement VI became the first pope to mention the theory of this treasury, affirming that it was infinite like Christ's grace,

and would increase even further if used wisely.<sup>129</sup> Naturally, this image of a treasury that was wide open and without limit was employed by those who preached the doctrine of indulgences, while other sermonists, more concerned with drawing believers away from all kinds of sin or with enjoining them to do penance, avoided promoting the remission of punishments. If they did refer to it, it was primarily to recall that it only dispensed with temporal penance, for any sin had first to be absolved through repentance and confession.<sup>130</sup> On the occasion of the Jubilee held in Rome in 1500, which once again offered a plenary indulgence, Johann Geiler von Kaysersberg, a preacher at Strasbourg Cathedral, explained the nature and appropriate usage of indulgences by comparing them to gloves. Like gloves made from offcuts of woolen cloth, he argued, indulgences would be taken from the surplus left by the treasury of the merits of the saints, which itself would remain intact. But, like a glove, an indulgence would only protect the weak: the penance performed by the ancients, though more difficult, remained superior. And just as a single hand cannot put a glove on itself, indulgences were only possible with the aid of the Church. Finally, though a glove protects, it also becomes worn with time, thus showing that believers should neither under- nor overestimate the efficacy of indulgences.<sup>131</sup> In another register, *The Treasure Chest*, a devotional book written by the Franciscan Stephan Fridolin and printed with numerous woodcuts at Nuremberg in 1491, encouraged, without once mentioning indulgences, its readers to benefit from the treasury of merit by immersing themselves in the narrative and the images of Christ's sufferings: in this case, individual prayer offered direct access to grace (figs. 8–9).<sup>132</sup>

If the theory of the treasury of merit developed by theologians in the 1230s largely remained the domain of scholars throughout the Middle Ages, periodically evoked or adapted by different actors depending on their needs, at the beginning of the sixteenth century it could be found throughout the Holy Roman Empire at the heart of polemics pitting partisans of the Reformation against those who remained loyal to the pope. Printing, a new technology that had greatly benefited the mass practice of indulgences by facilitating the reproduction not only of announcements but also of the documents given to believers who received indulgences,<sup>133</sup> now served critics of the system.<sup>134</sup> A wood engraving published around 1530 as a single leaf thus directly addressed the theme of treasure (fig. 10).<sup>135</sup> It depicts a tau cross surrounded by the instruments of Christ's Passion: the whip and a bundle of birch rods are threaded through the crown of thorns, fixed at the join of the Cross, while the lance and the staff with the sponge stand propped against a nail at either end of the Cross's horizontal arm. The dark clouds looming in the sky evoke Christ's death. A letter of indulgence bedecked with three seals and suspended on the Cross in place of the Savior's body presents the terms of the contract: 'In return for money, a bag full of indulgences'. Though there is probably no direct link, the way the document is displayed echoes the *Charter of Christ*, a devotional text that circulated in England from the fourteenth century, presenting itself as a charter issued by Christ himself during his ordeal—with his skin as parchment, his blood as ink, and one of the nails used as a quill—and proclaiming the redemption of humankind.<sup>136</sup> The suffering of Christ is thus positioned as the origin of grace, while the woodcut is also a comment on its administration by the Church. The large chest placed beneath the Cross, reinforced with iron bands and bolted with three padlocks, is ruled over by a creature that the title designates as 'the papal beast with seven heads', with reference to the beast of Revelation that Saint John saw in his vision. The monster



## Das sibenhäbzig Pabstier Offenbarung Johannis Tesseloni. 2. Cap.



Schawet an das sibenhäbzig tier  
Ganz eben der gestalt vnd manier  
Wie Johannes gesehen hat  
Ein tier an des meres gestat  
Das hat sibenhäbzig hant  
Eben wie diß pabstier gelaube  
Die waren all gekreuzt bedewt  
Die blatten der geistlichen lewe  
Das thier das her auch zehen hoien  
Deüt der gasflig gwalt vñ rnuoren  
Das thier reiß Gottes lesterung

Bedeutet die versüßliche zung  
Das thier was ain pardel geleich  
Bedeutet des Pabst mordische reich  
Das auch hinreicht durch tiranney  
Alles was im ene gegen sey  
Auch so hat das thier peren süß  
Deüt das das Euangeli süß  
Ist von dem bapstium vnder treuten  
Verschert/verdeckt vñ zerfmetten  
Das thier her auch ains löwen mund  
Bedeutet des bapstium weiten schlund

Den doch gar nie erfüllen theuten  
Z ples/pallium noch ammaten  
Bann/opfer/peicht/stift zu Gottesdienst  
Land vnd leüt Rünigreich vent vñ zinst  
Das es alles hat in sich verschlunden  
Das thier entpfeng ain tödlich wunden  
Deüt das Doctor Martin hat geschriben  
Das bapstium tödlich wund geheben  
Wie dem orten des Herren mund  
Gott geb das es gar ge sä grund.  
Amen.

is made up of the head of a pope, crowned with the papal tiara and aligned with the vertical axis of the Cross. He is framed by a fan of other heads: two cardinals, two bishops, and two other clergymen, shown in hierarchical order. This cluster of heads has two pairs of clawed feet that rest on the lid of the chest, and all of these elements converge on a chalice that stands at the center of the lid. The shafts of two banners bearing the papal arms, together with those of the lance and the staff, also meet at this point: displayed as though they were trophies, the heads and the insignia of the ecclesiastical hierarchy are associated with the instruments of the Passion, in a visual representation of the control that the institution exercised over the story of Christ and over the Eucharistic ritual. This is reinforced by the arrangement of the keys on the banners in a way similar to that of the whip and birch rods (within the crown of thorns), all at right angles. Emerging from the space under the chest is a devil, the double of the 'papal beast', spreading its front feet and opening its mouth wide to reveal a tongue that recalls the flame burning in the chalice slightly higher up in the image. The association between the chest and the devil evokes representations of greed, suggesting what one should make of the papacy—as do the words *Regnum* and *Diaboli*, or 'Kingdom of the Devil', clearly visible on either side of the chest. On the lower part of the page, a text by the poet Hans Sachs (1494–1576) elaborates upon this message.

This image would have been all the more striking since its composition recalled the staging of the major campaigns of indulgences that had played a decisive role in triggering the crisis. Preaching across the Holy Roman Empire, France, and Northern Europe from 1488 to 1490, and then from 1501 to 1503 to promote an indulgence conceived to finance the Crusades, the legate Raymond Peraudi perfected a spectacular liturgy that lent new efficacy to the tradition of fundraising tours. In each church where the indulgence was to be offered to worshippers, a huge red cross was erected, along with banners bearing the papal arms (fig. 11).<sup>137</sup> Peraudi had begun his career as a preacher of indulgences for the cathedral of Saintes, in the west of France, where those who contributed to financing the reconstruction of the church were granted a plenary indulgence modeled on the one offered in Rome during the Jubilee of 1475—the possibility of transferring Roman indulgences in this way had been introduced by Pope Boniface IX in 1390. In the case at Saintes, it was likely Peraudi, also a theoretician, who systematized arrangements that had until then been exceptional, specifying that this indulgence would also apply to the dead in purgatory, and that worshippers would be given a bill of confession that would enable them to be discharged from the entirety of their penance as often as they wished and by the confessor of their choice. This new sort of indulgence was adopted for further major campaigns organized by Peraudi and by other preachers,<sup>138</sup> as was the liturgical configuration that he had put in place.

In 1503, while consecrating the chapel of the castle of Wittenberg in Saxony, Raymond Peraudi authorized the granting on certain feast days of an indulgence whose sum of a hundred days would be multiplied by the number of relics conserved in the chapel: some 500,000 days of indulgences were thus granted during a single ostentation in 1509. Such a figure had no real legal value, henceforth applying to punishments to be served in purgatory, according to a timescale that was considered to be different from earthly time.<sup>139</sup> This kind of pious calculation was nevertheless current in devotional practices,<sup>140</sup> as was the use of objects thought to promote the acquisition of divine grace.<sup>141</sup> An inventory of the relics at Wittenberg

**On Aplas von Rom**  
 kan man wol selig werden  
 durch anzaigung der göelichen  
 hailigen geschryfft.



Bayer. Staats-  
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dis heiligthūmbs



Sum. ij. Ein Silbern  
 Bilde sant Mathei Appestoli vñ  
 Ewangeliste  
 Ein Zahn vñd .xj. andere pteckel  
 seines heiligen gebeins  
 Summa. xij. pteckel

Sum. iij. Ein silbern  
 Bildt sant Mathie  
 Zehen pteckel seins heiligen gebeins  
 Summa. x. pteckel

illustrated by Lucas Cranach the Elder and printed on the occasion of this ostentation also contributed to the bringing together of public ritual and private devotion, offering believers the possibility to reflect back on the event through spectacular images (fig. 12).<sup>142</sup> In 1520, the total of the indulgences granted at Wittenberg increased to almost two million years, as the hundred days granted per relic was now a hundred years. But in the meantime one of the monks at Wittenberg, Martin Luther, also a theologian and preacher, had joined the critical tradition focusing on abuses linked to fundraising tours; in October 1517 he revived the debate over the legitimacy of indulgences by publishing his list of ninety-five 'theses', several of which addressed the Scholastic theory of the treasury of merit. He began by voicing regret that this treasure was often ignored: 'The treasures of the church, out of which the pope distributes indulgences, are not sufficiently discussed or known among the people of Christ'. He went on to consider the true nature of these treasures, neither worldly nor truly spiritual, affirming that 'the true treasure of the church is the most holy gospel of the glory and grace of God', before attacking the avarice of prelates.<sup>143</sup> His text spread rapidly, and this diffusion was encouraged by a local political conflict. The cardinal Albert of Brandenburg, based about eighty kilometers away at Halle, had established an ostentation of relics similar to that at Wittenberg. In 1516, he organized a campaign of indulgences whose revenues were to be shared between construction projects at the church of Saint Peter in Rome and the repayment of personal debts he had incurred to acquire from the Holy See several bishoprics as well as the archbishoprics of Mainz and Magdeburg. Yet, the assignment of the archbishopric of Magdeburg to a prince from the house of Hohenzollern clashed with the interests of the prince-electoral based at Wittenberg, Frederick the Wise of the house of Wettin, who thus objected to any fundraiser of his rival's that circulated in his own territory. While Frederick the Wise soon came to support Luther, Albert of Brandenburg denounced the latter to Rome. It was in this context that Pope Leo X condemned the Ninety-five Theses in a bull of 1520, shortly after confirming the theory of indulgences in a decree issued in November 1518.<sup>144</sup> It took the challenge posed by Luther's questioning, in a tense political situation, for the ecclesiastical institution to truly take possession of the theory of the treasury of merit developed almost three centuries earlier.

As early as the fourth century, the notion of the *thesaurus ecclesiae* was progressively used to determine and describe the practices surrounding the precious objects held by churches. In the Middle Ages, the term *ecclesia* referred to an institution that extended to society as a whole,<sup>145</sup> and the *thesaurus ecclesiae* eventually came to be understood, in the thirteenth century, as a 'common good' in the material as well as the spiritual sense. The seemingly opposed processes of accumulation and redistribution were considered together, with the redistribution of treasure deemed even more precious than its accumulation, which it ultimately legitimized. Incorporating semantically the *aura* of riches, to use Isidore of Seville's term, the notion of *thesaurus* prompted a reflection on the implications, both earthly and spiritual, of this wealth. It also made it possible to consider social exchanges—in particular gifts and offerings<sup>146</sup>—as a whole; in other words, not simply between humans but also involving Christ and the saints. The theoretical distinction between 'religion', 'economics', and 'politics' is a product of the eighteenth century, and did not yet apply in the Middle Ages. With this in mind, the concept of 'church treasure' enables modern scholars to describe medieval Christian society in its own

terms and based on its 'material culture'; that is, through the interplay between actions and representations involving objects.<sup>147</sup> In what follows I will consider some of the objects that could form part of this category of 'treasure', exploring their roles in relation to collective memory as well as their functions as marvels of nature.

- 1 Isidorus Episcopus Hispalensis, *Etymologiarum sive originum libri XX*, book 16, ch. 18, 1 and 6, ed. by Wallace Martin Lindsay, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon, 1911), II (no pagination); p. 329; trans. by Stephen A. Barney and others, *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). The Latin word *thesaurus* is in fact borrowed from the Greek *θησαυρός*, 'deposit or storeroom where one places supplies and precious objects', a term whose own origins are uncertain.
- 2 On this notion see in particular Jean-Claude Bonne, 'Les ornements de l'histoire (à propos de l'ivoire carolingien de saint Rémi)', *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 51, no. 1 (1996), pp. 37–70, as well as other essays by the same author.
- 3 On these notions, see Dominique Iogna-Prat, 'Préparer l'au-delà, gérer l'ici-bas. Les élites ecclésiastiques, la richesse et l'économie du christianisme au Moyen Âge (perspectives de travail)', in *Les élites et la richesse au haut Moyen Âge*, ed. by Jean-Pierre Devroey, Laurent Feller, and Régine Le Jan, 'Haut Moyen Âge', 10 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), pp. 59–70.
- 4 See also Lucas Burkart and others, eds., *Le trésor au Moyen Âge. Discours, pratiques et objets*, 'Micrologus Library', 32 (Florence: Sismel, 2010).
- 5 Ambrosius Mediolanensis, *De officiis*, ed. by Maurice Testard, *Les devoirs*, 2 vols (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1984–92). The prisoners are mentioned in book 2, ch. 70 (II, p. 40). The sermon seems to have been integrated as a whole at book 2, ch. 136–43 (II, pp. 70–74). For this reuse, see pp. 187–88, notes 3 and 9. Ed. and trans. by Philip Schaff and Henry Wallace in *Ambrose: Select Works and Letters*, 'Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers', second series, 10 (1896; repr. New York: Cosimo Classics, 2007), pp. xxiii–90 (pp. 63–64).
- 6 Ambrosius Mediolanensis, *De officiis*, book 2, ch. 137–39, ed. II, pp. 71–72; trans. p. 83. On the history of the category of 'sacred vessels' up to the thirteenth century, see Michel Lauwers, 'Des vases et des lieux. *Res ecclesie*, hiérarchie et spatialisation du sacré dans l'Occident médiéval', in *Le sacré dans tous ses états. Catégories du vocabulaire religieux et société de l'Antiquité à nos jours*, ed. by Manuel de Souza, Annick Peters-Custot, and François-Xavier Romanacce, 'Travaux du Centre de recherche en histoire de l'Université de Saint-Étienne', 10 (Saint-Étienne: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Étienne, 2013), pp. 259–79.
- 7 Cécile Lanéry, 'La controverse des martyrs Sixte et Laurent dans le *De officiis* d'Ambroise de Milan (*De officiis*, I, 41, 205–07)', *Vita Latina*, 175 (2006), pp. 58–68 (p. 60).
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- 10 Maria Mundell Mango and Susan A. Boyd, eds., *Ecclesiastical Silver Plate in Sixth-Century Byzantium* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1992); Jean-Pierre Caillet, *Les Trésors de sanctuaires, de l'Antiquité à l'époque romane*, 'Université de Paris X-Nanterre, Centre de recherches sur l'Antiquité tardive et le haut Moyen Âge', 7 (Paris: Picard, 1996).
- 11 Peter Brown, *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire* (Hanover / London: University Press of New England, 2002).
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- 14 Augustinus Hipponensis, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, ed. pp. 414–15; trans. II (2000), p. 183.
- 15 Augustinus Hipponensis, *Sermo 38*, ed. by Cyrille Lambot, *Sermones de Vetere Testamento (1–50)*, 'Sancti Augustini Opera', 11, 1, 'CCSL', 41 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1961), pp. 476–87 (p. 484); trans. and notes by Edmund Hill, *Sermons*, 11 vols 'The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century', Part 3, 1–11 (Hyde Park: New City Press, 1990–95), II (1990), pp. 208–16 (p. 214). On the theme of heavenly treasure and alms, see also sermons nos 38 and 86.
- 16 Cyprianus Carthagenensis, *De opere et eleemosynis*, p. 94, note 3 and pp. 18, 50, and 58; ed. and trans. by Roy J. Deferrari and others in *Treatises*, 'The Fathers of the Church', 36 (New York: Fathers of the Church, 1958), pp. 225–56 (pp. 233–34 and 248).
- 17 Augustinus Hipponensis, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, 36, 3 and 6, ed. I, p. 373; trans. II, no. 16 (2000), p. 134.
- 18 Augustinus Hipponensis, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, 78, 6, ed. II, p. 1102; trans. IV, no. 18 (2002), p. 131.
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- 22 Cristina La Rocca, 'Tesori terrestri, tesori celesti', in *Tesori. Forme di accumulazione della ricchezza nell'alto medioevo*, ed. by Sauro Gelichi and Cristina La Rocca (Rome: Viella, 2004), pp. 123–41 (p. 135), and, for an overview, Jean-Pierre Devroey, Laurent Feller, and Régine Le Jan, eds., *Les élites et la richesse au haut Moyen Âge*, 'Haut Moyen Âge', 10 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), where the history of the notion of treasure is not discussed.
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- 26 Ed. in *Capitularia regum francorum*, I, p. 216.
- 27 George Francis Hill, *Treasure Trove in Law and Practice from the Earliest Time to the Present Day* (1936; repr. London: Aalen, 1980), and, on German law, Ralf Fischer zu Cramburg, *Das Schatzregal. Der obrigkeitliche Anspruch auf das Eigentum an Schatzfunden in den deutschen Rechten*, 'Veröffentlichungen der Gesellschaft für Historische Hilfswissenschaften', 6 (Höhr-Grenzhausen: Numismatischer Verlag Gerd Martin Forneck, 2001), pp. 60–61.
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- 34 Mayke de Jong, 'Sacrum palatium et ecclesia. L'autorité religieuse royale sous les Carolingiens (790–840)', *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 58, no. 6 (2003), pp. 1243–70 (pp. 1243–44).
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- 38 Innes, 'Charlemagne's Will', pp. 839 and 852.
- 39 Ansegisus Fontanellensis, *Collectio capitularium Ansegisi*, ch. 117, ed. by Gerhard Schmitz, *Die Kapitulariensammlung des Ansegis*, MGH, Capit. N. S., 1 (Hanover: Hahn, 1996), p. 501. See also Gerhard Schmitz, '... pro utile firmiter tenenda sunt lege. Bemerkungen zur Brauchbarkeit und zum Gebrauch der Kapitulariensammlung des Ansegis', in *Mönchtum – Kirche – Herrschaft 750–1000*, ed. by Dieter R. Bauer and others (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1998), pp. 213–29.
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- 61 Further research is necessary on this point. On the notion of *res sacrae*, see Lauwers, 'Des vases et des lieux'. On the notion of treasure, although the word itself does not always appear in the texts discussed, see the work of Giacomo Todeschini, in particular 'Trésor admis et trésor interdit dans le discours économique des théologiens (XI<sup>e</sup>–XIII<sup>e</sup> siècles)', in *Le trésor au Moyen Âge. Discours, pratiques et objets*, pp. 33–50.
- 62 On these two twelfth-century texts, see Lucas Burkart 'Transfer und Transzendierung. Zum Wandel von Bedeutung in mittelalterlichen Schätzen', in *Le trésor au Moyen Âge. Discours, pratiques et objets*, pp. 69–87.
- 63 On avarice and its iconography, see, for instance, Jacqueline Leclercq-Marx, 'Le rapport au gain illicite dans la sculpture romane. Entre réalités socio-économiques, contacts de culture et réseaux métaphoriques', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 50 (2007), pp. 43–64.
- 64 Ed. in *Codex diplomaticus Rheno-Mosellanus. Urkundensammlung zur Geschichte der Rhein- und Mosellande, der Nahe- und Ahrgegend, und des Hundsrückens, des Weinfeldes und der Eifel*, 5 vols (Koblenz: Heriot, 1822–26), II, no. 117, pp. 212–14.
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- 66 *Urkundenbuch der Stadt Straßburg*, ed. by Wilhelm Wiegand, 4 vols (Strasbourg: Trübner, 1879–98), IV, 1, no. 4, pp. 3–4 and no. 16, pp. 10–11. These acts are known through copies preserved in a statute book of 1560.
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- 80 See, for example, Ralf-Maria Guntermann, *Turnbau und Totengedenken. Die Domfabrik zu Osnabrück im späten Mittelalter*, 'Das Bistum Osnabrück', 5 (Osnabrück: Dom-Buchhandlung, 2003), pp. 112–203 passim.
- 81 Ed. in Louis de Farcy, *Monographie de la cathédrale d'Angers*, 5 vols (Angers: Josselin / Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1901–10), III, *Le mobilier* (1901), p. 295.
- 82 Pycke, 'Le chanoine trésorier', pp. 79–80, with an edition of the text on p. 89.
- 83 Jacques Pycke, *Le chapitre cathédral Notre-Dame de Tournai du XI<sup>e</sup> à la fin du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Son organisation, sa vie, ses membres* (Louvain-la-Neuve: Collège Érasme / Brussels: Nauwelaerts, 1986), pp. 157–58.
- 84 Millet, *Les chanoines du chapitre cathédral de Laon*, pp. 42 and 47–48.
- 85 Vincent Tabbagh, *Diocèse de Rouen, Fasti ecclesiae gallicanae. Répertoire prosopographique des évêques, dignitaires et chanoines de France de 1200 à 1500*, 2 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), pp. 11–12.
- 86 Schröcker, *Die Kirchenpflegschaft*, pp. 70–71 and 92–94.
- 87 Jean Gaudemet, *Le gouvernement de l'Église à l'époque classique. Le gouvernement local*, 'Histoire du droit et des institutions de l'Église en Occident', 8, 2 (Paris: Cujas, 1979), p. 279.
- 88 Élodie Lecuppre-Desjardins and Anne-Laure Van Bruaene, eds., *De Bono Communi: The Discourse and Practice of the Common Good in the European City (13<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> c.)*, 'Studies in European Urban History 1100–1800', 22 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010). See also the notion of 'civic religion' described in Olivier Richard, ed., 'Religion civique XV<sup>e</sup>–XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle', special issue, *Histoire urbaine*, 27, no. 1 (2010).
- 89 See in particular Vincent Tabbagh, 'Trésors et trésoriers des paroisses de Rouen (1450–1530)', *Revue d'histoire de l'Église de France*, 77, no. 198 (1991), pp. 125–35.
- 90 See, for example, Schröcker, *Die Kirchenpflegschaft*, especially pp. 95–122 and 123–40; Arnd Reitemeier, *Pfarrkirchen in der Stadt des späten Mittelalters. Politik, Wirtschaft und Verwaltung*, 'Beihefte der Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte', 177 (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2005).
- 91 Schaich, *Mittelalterliche Sakristeien im deutschsprachigen Gebiet*.
- 92 Johann Michael Fritz, *Goldschmiedekunst der Gotik in Mitteleuropa* (Munich: Beck, 1982), no. 412, p. 243.
- 93 Fritz, *Goldschmiedekunst der Gotik*, p. 10; Johanna Fleischmann, 'Gotische Monstranz', in *Besser als Silber und Gold. Ausgewählte Stücke aus dem Gerresheimer Kirchenschatzes*, ed. by Beate Johlen-Budnik and Andrea von Hülsen-Esch (Essen: Klartext, 2013), pp. 44–45.
- 94 For different points of view, see Stephan Bursche, ed., *Das Lüneburger Ratssilber*, 'Bestandskatalog des Kunstgewerbemuseums', 16 (Berlin: Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz, 1990); Massimo Fornasari, *Il 'thesoro' della città. Il Monte di pietà e l'economia bolognese nei secoli XV e XVI* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1993); Valentin Groebner, *Gefährliche Geschenke. Ritual, Politik und die Sprache der Korruption in der Eidgenossenschaft im späten Mittelalter und am Beginn der Neuzeit*, 'Konflikte und Kultur – Historische Perspektiven', 4 (Konstanz: Universitäts-Verlag Konstanz, 2000).
- 95 On confraternities and the uses of these objects, see Catherine Vincent, *Les confréries médiévales dans le royaume de France, XIII<sup>e</sup>–XV<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1994).
- 96 See, for example, Catherine Arminjon and Francis Muel, 'Le trésor de Coëffort', in *Plaisirs et manières de table aux XIV<sup>e</sup> et XV<sup>e</sup> siècles*, exhibition catalogue, Musée des Augustins, Toulouse (Toulouse: Musée des Augustins, 1992), pp. 242–50; Sylvie Le Clech-Charton, 'Le trésor de l'hôpital de Tonnerre. Usages et significations (XIV<sup>e</sup>–XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle)', *Bulletin du Centre d'études médiévales d'Auxerre*, 14 (2010), pp. 129–45.
- 97 See, for example, Oliver Rackham, *Treasures of Silver at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
- 98 See primarily Peter Wiek, 'Das Strassburger Münster. Untersuchungen über die Mitwirkung des Stadtbürgertums am Bau der bischöflichen Kathedalkirchen im Spätmittelalter', *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins*, 167 (1959), pp. 40–113.
- 99 Patrick Boucheron, 'À qui appartient la cathédrale? La fabrique et la cité dans l'Italie médiévale' [2000]; repr. in *Les espaces sociaux de l'Italie urbaine. XI<sup>e</sup>–XV<sup>e</sup> siècles*, ed. by Patrick Boucheron and Olivier Mattéoni, 'Publications de la Sorbonne. Réimpressions', 8 (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2005), pp. 285–308 (p. 292). For a more recent and general perspective, see Katja Schröcker, Bruno Klein, and Stefan Bürger, eds., *Kirche als Baustelle. Grosse Sakralbauten des Mittelalters* (Cologne / Weimar / Vienna: Böhlau, 2013).
- 100 The use of the word 'treasure' in the titles of scholarly compilations from the mid-thirteenth century is also linked to this idea of making something available: see Brigitte Roux, *Mondes en miniatures. L'iconographie du 'Livre du Trésor' de Brunetto Latini*, 'Matériaux pour l'histoire', 8 (Geneva: Droz, 2009); Mariacarla Gadebusch-Bondio, 'Thesaurus Saniatis. Zur Tradition und Erfolg der Schatzmetapher in der Medizin', in *Le trésor au Moyen Âge. Discours, pratiques et objets*, pp. 103–28.
- 101 Henricus de Segusio, *Summa super titulis Decretalium*, V, tit. *De remissionibus*, § 6, ed. by Petrus Albinianus Trecius (Venice: Leonardus Wild for Thomas Tervisanus, 1480), quotation taken from Nikolaus Paulus, *Geschichte des Ablasses im Mittelalter vom Ursprunge bis zur Mitte des 14. Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols [1922]; repr. with an introduction and bibliography by Thomas Lentz (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2000), II, p. 152, note 49. No modern edition of this text exists. On the manuscript tradition, see Frank Soetermeer, 'Summa archiepiscopi alias Summa copiosa: Some Remarks on the Medieval Editions of the Summa Hostiensis', *Ius commune*, 26 (1999), pp. 1–25. On Henry of Segusio, see Kenneth Pennington, 'Henricus de Segusio (Hostiensis)', in Kenneth Pennington, *Popes, Canonists, and Texts 1150–1550*, 'Collected Studies Series', 412 (Aldershot: Variorum 1993), no. 16.
- 102 Louis-Jacques Bataillon, Gilbert Dahan, and Pierre-Marie Gy, eds., *Hugues de Saint-Cher († 1263). Bibliste et théologien*, 'Bibliothèque d'histoire culturelle du Moyen Âge', 1 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004).
- 103 The *Scriptum* drawn up by Hugh of Saint-Cher to accompany his teaching, most likely during the 1230s, has yet to be edited: see Alain Boureau, *L'empire du livre. Pour une histoire du savoir scolastique (1200–1380)* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2007), p. 33.
- 104 On indulgences, see Paulus, *Geschichte des Ablasses*. See also Luigi Pellegrini and Roberto Paciocco, eds., 'Misericorditer relaxamus. Le indulgenze fra teoria e prassi nel Duecento', special issue, *Studi Medievali e Moderni*, 3, no. 1 (1999); Robert N. Swanson, ed., *Promissory Notes on the Treasury of Merits: Indulgences in Late Medieval Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2006); Swanson, *Indulgences in Late Medieval England: Passports to Paradise?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Robert W. Shaffern, *The Penitents' Treasury: Indulgences in Latin Christendom, 1175–1375* (Scranton: University of Scranton Press, 2007).
- 105 Peter Brown, 'Vers la naissance du purgatoire. Amnistie et pénitence dans le christianisme occidental de l'Antiquité tardive au Haut Moyen Âge', *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 52, no. 6 (1997), pp. 1247–61 (p. 1255). See also Bernhard Poschmann, *Der Ablass im Licht der Bußgeschichte*, 'Theophaneia. Beiträge zur Religions- und Kirchengeschichte des Altertums', 4 (Bonn: Hahnstein, 1948).
- 106 Philipp Endmann, 'Die Entstehung des Ablasses für den Ersten Kreuzzug', *Concilium medii aevi*, 6 (2003), pp. 163–94 (p. 183).
- 107 For an overview of the different types of indulgences, see Paulus, *Geschichte des Ablasses*, passim.
- 108 On relic processions before the practice of fundraising tours emerged, see Edina Bozoky, 'Voyage de reliques et démonstration du pouvoir aux temps féodaux', in *Voyages et voyageurs au Moyen Âge*, ed. by Société des historiens médiévistes de l'enseignement supérieur (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1996), pp. 267–80. For an analysis of a judicial use of relics, see François Bougard, 'La relique au procès. Autour des Miracles de saint Colomban', in *Le règlement des conflits au Moyen Âge*, ed. by Société des historiens médiévistes de l'enseignement supérieur (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2001) pp. 35–66.
- 109 On Laon, see Reinhold Kaiser, 'Quêtes itinérantes avec reliques pour financer la construction des églises (XI<sup>e</sup>–XII<sup>e</sup> siècles)', *Le Moyen Âge. Revue d'histoire et de philologie*, 101 (1995), pp. 205–25 (p. 221). The most complete list of fundraising tours involving relics thus far compiled can be found in Pierre Héliot and Marie-Laure Chastang, 'Quêtes et voyages de reliques au profit des églises françaises au Moyen Âge', *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, 59 (1964), pp. 789–822 and 60 (1965), pp. 5–32. Pierre-André Sigal, 'Les voyages de reliques aux onzième et douzième siècles', in *Voyage, quête, pèlerinage dans la littérature et la civilisation médiévales*, ed. by Centre universitaire d'études et de recherches médiévales, 'Sénéfiance', 2 (Aix-en-Provence: CUERMA, 1976), pp. 75–104, is based on the same texts.
- 110 On the relations between relics and indulgences, see Nicholas Vincent, 'Some Pardoners' Tales: The Earliest English Indulgences', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 12 (2002), pp. 23–58 (pp. 38–40, 43, and 50–53); and especially Kühne, *Ostensis reliquiarum*.
- 111 Guibertus de Novigento, *De sanctis et eorum pigneribus*, ed. by Robert B. C. Huygens, 'CCCM', 127 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1996).
- 112 For reflections on indulgences that predate the theory of the 'treasury of merit', see Salvatore Vacca, 'Aut punit homo, aut Deus punit. Le indulgenze nella storia della penitenza e della teologia (secoli XII–XIII)', in 'Misericorditer relaxamus. Le indulgenze fra teoria e prassi nel Duecento', pp. 21–55 (pp. 35–36 on Abelard).
- 113 Contrary to the generally accepted reading, I believe

- that *uenales* refers to the practice of collections rather than to the sale of relics, since the latter would require secrecy rather than public display. The ban on showing relics 'out of their shrines', probably meaning removed from their usual containers in churches, has traditionally been linked to the creation of reliquaries whose contents were visible through transparent panels, but this is clearly not the subject of the text.
- 114 *Constitutiones Concilii quarti Lateranensis*, ch. 62, ed. by Antonius García y García, 'Monumenta Iuris Canonici, Series A. Corpus Glossatorum', 2 (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1981), pp. 101–03.
- 115 See Martin Ohst, *Pflichtbeichte. Untersuchungen zum Bußwesen im Hohen und Späten Mittelalter*, 'Beiträge zur Historischen Theologie', 89 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1995), pp. 103–17, where the author situates indulgences and their theoretical legitimization in the context of compulsory confession. Above all, see the commentary on ch. 62 in Vincent, 'Some Pardoners' Tales', pp. 50–55.
- 116 Their successive contributions are summarized in Paulus, *Geschichte des Ablasses*.
- 117 Albertus Magnus, *Commentarii in IV Sententiarum*, dist. 20, E, art. 16, ed. by Auguste Borgnet in *B. Alberti Magni opera omnia*, 38 vols (Paris: Vivès, 1894), XXV–XXX (1894), XXIX, p. 848.
- 118 Paulus, *Geschichte des Ablasses im Mittelalter*, II, p. 153.
- 119 On the foundational role of the *Book of Sentences* in Scholastic theology, see Boureau, *L'empire du livre*, pp. 24–36 and 95.
- 120 Bonaventure was by no means the first to address this question: see Shaffern, *The Penitents' Treasury*, p. 103.
- 121 Bonaventura, *Commentaria in IV Libros sententiarum*, dist. 20, pars 2, art. 2, 3, ed. in *Doctoris Seraphici S. Bonaventurae [...] Opera omnia*, 10 vols (Quarracchi: Collegio San Bonaventura, 1882–1902), I–IV (1882–89), IV, p. 534.
- 122 Originally a symbol of faith, the mystical marriage between a bishop and Christ was the subject of a full legal analogy by the late twelfth century: see Jean Gaudemet, 'Note sur le symbolisme médiéval. Le mariage de l'évêque', *L'Année canonique*, 22 (1978), pp. 71–80.
- 123 According to this rule, a widow must marry the brother of her deceased husband in order to ensure that his family line is perpetuated by an heir (Deuteronomy 25:5–10, especially 25:5; Matthew 22:24; Mark 12:19). Bonaventure extended it to cover the property linked to such a transmission with reference to the fourth section of the book of Ruth, which discusses a plot of land that the man closest to the late husband of the widowed Ruth must acquire with her in order to provide for her children: this land would remain connected to the woman, just as the treasure administered by the prelates would remain the property of the Church (Ruth 4, in particular 4:5).
- 124 Anita Guerreau-Jalabert, 'Spiritus et caritas. Le baptême dans la société médiévale', in *La parenté spirituelle*, ed. by Françoise Héritier-Augé and Élisabeth Copet-Rougier (Paris: Éditions des archives contemporaines, 1995), pp. 133–203.
- 125 Bonaventura, *Commentaria in IV Libros sententiarum*, dist. 20, pars 2, art. 1, 4, ed. IV, pp. 536–37.
- 126 Some unusual conceptions of this theory have been listed by Paulus, *Geschichte des Ablasses im Mittelalter*, II, pp. 154–58.
- 127 The reference to 'treasure' is rare in the collective letters of indulgence studied in Alexander Seibold, *Sammelindulgenzen. Ablassurkunden des Spätmittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit*, 'Archiv für Diplomatik, Schriftgeschichte, Siegel- und Wappenkunde', 8 (Cologne / Weimar / Vienna: Böhlau, 2001), see pp. 29 and 32.
- 128 Jean Lemoine, *De lubileo*, cited in Paulus, *Geschichte des Ablasses im Mittelalter*, II, p. 155.
- 129 Paulus, *Geschichte des Ablasses im Mittelalter*, II, pp. 155–56.
- 130 This observation logically holds for the books that laypeople used to prepare themselves for confession, and for other edifying books: see Nikolaus Paulus, *Geschichte des Ablasses am Ausgang des Mittelalters* [1923]; repr. with an introduction and bibliography by Thomas Lentz (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2000), pp. 100–29 (especially pp. 121–22 and 126). The sermons that have been preserved in writing sometimes set out the main principles of the theory of the treasury in the form of short treatises, though it is not at all certain that these were directly read aloud.
- 131 Paulus, *Geschichte des Ablasses am Ausgang des Mittelalters*, pp. 118–20.
- 132 Stephan Fridolin, *Der Schatzbehälter oder Schrein der waren reichthuemer des heils vund ewiger Seligkeit* (Nuremberg: Koberger, 1491).
- 133 Falk Eisermann, 'Der Ablass als Medienereignis. Kommunikationswandel durch Einblattdrucke im 15. Jahrhundert. Mit einer Auswahlbibliographie', in *Tradition and Innovation in an Era of Change / Tradition und Innovation im Übergang zur Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. by Rudolf Suntrup and Jan R. Veenstra, 'Medieval to Early Modern Culture / Kultureller Wandel vom Mittelalter zur Frühen Neuzeit', 1 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2001), pp. 99–128.
- 134 Berndt Hamm, 'Die Reformation als Medienereignis', *Jahrbuch für biblische Theologie*, 11 (1996), pp. 137–66.
- 135 Petra Kruse and others, *Kaiser Karl V. (1500–1558). Macht und Ohnmacht Europas*, exhibition catalogue, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn; Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (Bonn: Skira, 2000), no. 236, pp. 253–55.
- 136 Mary Caroline Spalding, *The Middle English Charters*

- of Christ*, 'Bryn Mawr College Monographs', 15 (Bryn Mawr: Bryn Mawr College, 1914), pp. XLII–LI.
- 137 Hans Volz, 'Die Liturgie bei der Ablassverkündigung', *Jahrbuch für Liturgik und Hymnologie*, 11 (1966), pp. 114–25; Francis Rapp, 'Un contemporain d'Alexandre VI Borgia, le cardinal Raymond Péraud (1435–1505)', *Comptes-rendus des séances de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*, 138, no. 3 (1994), pp. 665–77.
- 138 Bernd Moeller, 'Die letzten Ablasskampagnen. Der Widerspruch Luthers gegen den Ablass in seinem geschichtlichen Zusammenhang' [1989], repr. in Bernd Moeller, *Die Reformation und das Mittelalter. Kirchengeschichtliche Aufsätze* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), pp. 53–72 and 295–307 (pp. 59 and 68).
- 139 Purgatory, where punishments corresponding to minor sins that had not been absolved during a lifespan had to be carried out, was officially defined by the papal authorities in 1254 based on an idea from the twelfth century. It, like the indulgence, represented a gradual loosening of penitential practice. See Jacques Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, trans. by Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago / London: University of Chicago Press, 1984) [original version: *La naissance du Purgatoire*, 1981], pp. 283–84.
- 140 On tallying practices see Arnold Angenendt and others, 'Gezählte Frömmigkeit', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 29 (1995), pp. 1–71; on inventories of indulgences see in particular Nine Robijntje Miedema, *Rompilgerführer in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit. Die 'Indulgentiae ecclesiarum urbis Romae' (deutsch / niederländisch). Edition und Kommentar*, 'Frühe Neuzeit', 72 (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2003), especially pp. 377–97.
- 141 Among other works by the same author on the 'proximity of grace' and the media through which it was transmitted in the late Middle Ages, see Berndt Hamm, 'Die Nähe des Heiligen im ausgehenden Mittelalter. Ars moriendi, Totenmemoria, Gregorsmesse', in Berndt Hamm, Klaus Herbers, and Heidrun Stein-Kecks, eds., *Sakralität zwischen Antike und Neuzeit*, 'Beiträge zur Hagiographie', 6 (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2007), pp. 185–221. On the relation between images and indulgences, see Philippe Cordez, 'Reliquien und ihre Bilder. Zur Ablassvermittlung und Bildreproduktion im Spätmittelalter', in *Bild und Körper im Mittelalter*, ed. by Kristin Marek and others (Munich: Fink, 2006), pp. 273–86.
- 142 Livia Cárdenas, *Friedrich der Weise und das Wittenberger Heiltumsbuch. Mediale Repräsentation zwischen Mittelalter und Neuzeit* (Berlin: Lukas Verlag, 2002).
- 143 Theses 56–58, 62, and 65–66. Martin Luther, *Disputatio pro declaratione virtutis indulgentiarum* [1517], ed. in *Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, 127 vols (Weimar: Böhlau, 1883–2009), I, pp. 233–38 (p. 236); trans. by Timothy J. Wengert, *Martin Luther's Ninety-Five Theses. With Introduction, Commentary, and Study Guide* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2015), pp. 13–26 (pp. 21–22). See David Bagchi, 'Luther's Ninety-Five Theses and the Contemporary Criticism of Indulgences', in *Promissory Notes on the Treasury of Merits: Indulgences in Late Medieval Europe*, pp. 331–55. For a synthesis of the practice of indulgences in the context of the Reformation, Hartmut Kühne, 'Ablassfrömmigkeit und Ablasspraxis um 1500', in *Fundstücke Luther. Archäologen auf den Spuren des Reformators*, ed. by Harald Meller, exhibition catalogue, Landesmuseum für Vorgeschichte, Halle an der Saale (Stuttgart: Theiss, 2008), pp. 36–47.
- 144 Paulus, *Geschichte des Ablasses im Mittelalter*, II, p. 157.
- 145 Anita Guerreau-Jalabert, 'L'ecclésiologie médiévale, une institution totale', in *Les tendances actuelles de l'histoire du Moyen Âge en France et en Allemagne*, ed. by Jean-Claude Schmitt and Otto Gerhard Oexle (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2002), pp. 219–26.
- 146 On gifts in the Middle Ages, see Anita Guerreau-Jalabert, 'Caritas y don en la sociedad medieval occidental', *Hispania. Revista Española de Historia*, 60, no. 204 (2000), pp. 27–62; Gadi Algazi, Valentin Groebner, and Bernhard Jussen, eds., *Negotiating the Gift: Pre-Modern Figurations of Exchange* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2003); Wendy Davies and Paul Fourace, eds., *The Languages of Gift in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
- 147 For a reflection on practices, see Marie-Pierre Julien and Céline Rosselin, *La culture matérielle* (Paris: La Découverte, 2005).