PART II

IMAGO
The power of early medieval kings and the continuity of kingship came to be closely bound up with the very existence, repetitive use, and formulaic manipulation of texts and images, such as they were performed in royal chanceries. Formulae and repetitions may imply cultural gap and loss of meaning. The recurrent production of the king’s image and script, however, rendered tangible and visible the mark of a distinct authority, translating notions of transcendental hierarchy into organizing principles of earthly domination.1

Among early medieval ritual signs of dominance, the sealed diploma stood as an exclusive royal prerogative, offering a threefold expression and representation of sovereign power. It bore the text and image
