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Three Missions of the Medieval University Centered on Social Reproduction and Transformation

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This article analyses three missions of the university in medieval Europe in which social reproduction and repression go hand in hand with social transformation and contestation. The first universities had to confront a diverse range of threats, fears and restrictions. In a context of insecurity and frequent physical, economic, legal and religious abuses, scholastic guilds mobilized and pressured the authorities (the pope, the Holy Roman Emperor and the monarchs) to obtain securities, relative autonomy and privileges (or rights). The condition *sine qua non* for the existence and development of universities was that they fulfil the mission of providing these benefits to any who sought to dedicate themselves to study. The guilds succeeded in obtaining these concessions from the authorities who, in return, attempted to control the universities and pressure them to take part in the fight against heresy and dissidence. This was realized through the missions of universities to identify and condemn heresies and exclude movements that challenged the established order. These institutional missions were contested by certain movements of students and teachers such as the Wycliffite and the Goliard movements, which anticipated the Protestant Reformation and Renaissance humanism respectively.

Medieval university | mission | repression | contestation | social mediation, reproduction, transformation, movements | Wycliffism | Goliards

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to analyse three missions that were assigned to the medieval university. The theoretical framework for the research is based on the theory of *social mediation* posited by Martín Serrano (1974, 1976, 1977, 2011; cf. Chasqui, 2011). A key component for social reproduction is that individuals and societies develop and make use of institutionalised systems of regulation to reduce dissonance. When these systems operate at a cognitive level, they can be analysed as mediating models or models of order, i.e., as models that introduce a worldview or a theory of society, which favour that mentalities and social action adjust to the state of society. According to Martín Serrano, the activity of social mediation imposes limits on what can be said or done, and the way of saying or doing it, by means of a system of order.

From this perspective, mediation is a system of rules and operations applied to any set of facts, or of objects belonging to heterogeneous levels of reality, for the purposes of introducing order. Thus, mediating institutions propose models for individuals and societies to interpret reality and act in accordance with a set of norms. These models and norms change over time. The starting point for the social mediation theory is that there is an interdependence between social change and changes to mediating institutions, and that

asynchronies and *cultural lags* leading to conflict occur often. In the case of universities, this means that there is a relationship of mutual influences between the social system and the university system that produces changes to both systems. An analysis of the mediating models helps clarify the role of social control or emancipation that the university plays in the processes of social reproduction and transformation.

Methodologically, the models promoted by universities can be studied through an analysis of their mission. In this article, I identify the missions assigned by different actors of the period studied, by means of a content analysis of public representations (papal bulls, official documents and other writings). They refer to what the university must and must not do according to a set of external and internal actors. The missions thus constitute representations of the university that legitimate it and orient it in order to pursue certain activities and objectives and not others. The model followed for the analysis is based on the etymology of the term "mission". The term is derived from the Latin *missionem* (nom. *missio*), meaning the "act of sending" or from *mittere*, "to send". The mission of the university is thus understood as that which the university is expected to *send* (or *not to send*), transmit, convey, promote, etc. to society. This involves an action that transcends the university system and affects other social systems or institutions. Thus, the mission always involves an external actor who is affected by the university. In this study, I present sources that show that:

-A University Actor carries out an Action with consequences for an External Actor

This model has been applied flexibly both to identify and select relevant information from the sources studied, and to determine the general missions. The University Actor may be institutional (the university, the faculty, etc.), human (professors, students, etc.) or metaphorical (knowledge, learning, etc.). The External Actor may have the same characteristics, and in many cases may only appear implicitly, for example in relation to society. The Action may be of any kind and may be carried out or not carried out (the university *does not* transmit X). This framework is applied to the general missions outlined in this article as follows: The mission of the university is 1. To provide security, autonomy and privileges to those who wish to obtain or transmit knowledge; 2. To identify and condemn heresies; and 3. To exclude movements that challenge the established order. The original sources that have been gathered respond to this framework. In some cases, texts have been transcribed that do not meet this order of exposition exactly. The categories of the analytical model apply equally to these texts, but they have been maintained in their original form in order to maintain

their full richness.

Moreover, it should be noted that connections between a university's missions and the existence of a broad culture of fear characteristic of medieval feudalism are quite evident. Students and masters had to face a wide range of fears. As regards the first mission, I aim to show that it was established as a reaction to their fear of abuse from authorities, violent confrontations, plague, as well as economic insecurity among others. The second and third missions result from the papacy's effort to control the university in order to pursue its own interests and objectives. The church hierarchy resorted to threat and established harsh penalties such as excommunication, imprisonment, and even death to impose a culture of fear upon society, which had the ultimate aim of suppressing ideas and social movements that questioned the official truth and the social order. The Catholic Church used its power to deploy fear in the university itself in an attempt to manufacture and sustain the broader social culture of fear. They forced the university to collaborate in the struggle against heresy and dissent, but although many university members were diligently persecuted, many also surmounted their fears of reprisal and pushed forward for transformation.

To Provide Security, Autonomy and Privileges to Those Who Wish to Obtain or Transmit Knowledge

In this section, I present the social context within which the European university was born, noting the transformation of knowledge brought about by the recovery of classical learning. I describe some of the difficulties faced by people wishing to dedicate themselves to study or to teaching, which reflect the need they had to obtain recognition and protection. Drawing from a range of documents from the period, I discuss the behaviour of university corporations in the context of the struggle for power to win security, autonomy and rights (or privileges, according to the medieval context) that would help them to operate successfully. Also discussed are the concessions made by the chief ecclesiastical and secular authorities, specifically the emperor, the pope and the monarchies.

According to historians specialising in the topic, the institution of the university was born in Europe between the 12th and 13th century (Verger, 1992a, p.35). This period saw a series of changes in medieval society so significant that some historians speak of the Renaissance of the 12th century. Haskins (1927), the author who popularized this concept, describes this period in the following terms:

This century [...] was in many respects an age of fresh and vigorous life. The epoch of the Crusades, of the rise of towns, and of the earliest bureaucratic states of the West, it saw the

culmination of Romanesque art and the beginnings of Gothic; the emergence of the vernacular literatures; the revival of the Latin classics and of Latin poetry and Roman law; the recovery of Greek science, with its Arabic additions, and of much of Greek philosophy; and the origin of the first European universities. The twelfth century left its signature on higher education, on the scholastic philosophy, on European systems of law, on architecture and sculpture, on the liturgical drama, on Latin and vernacular poetry (p.vi).

The range of historical causes and circumstances that made the birth of the university possible have been discussed by many authors, such as Haskins (1927; 2002), Iyanga Pendi (2000), Jiménez Fraud (1971), Le Goff (1996), Rashdall (1987), Ridder Symoens, ed., (1992) and Tejerina, ed., (2010). Particularly relevant to this section is the link made between the expansion of knowledge and the development of the university as an institution. This period saw an intellectual resurgence characterised by the re-discovery and dissemination of Classical culture, originating in part from Italy, but especially via the multicultural Iberian Peninsula, where the extraordinary work carried out by the Toledo School of Translators is especially noteworthy (although not the only case) for making great works of Greek, Arabic and Hebrew philosophy and science available to the Latin world. This new interest in discovering ancient knowledge, as well as the social usefulness of that knowledge, provided part of the historical context that allowed for the foundation of the first universities.

The new intellectual demands and needs exceeded the capacity of the monastic and cathedral schools where teaching was imparted (Haskins, 1927, pp.371-372; Iyanga Pendi, 2000, p.33; Jiménez Fraud, 1971, p.42). To deal with the new situation, masters and students began to organise themselves into corporations or guilds (*universitatis*). They sought to achieve internal organisation and cohesion in order to protect their interests, regulate learning and ensure its continuity on an ongoing basis. The university thus emerged as a new institution specialising in knowledge. According to Le Goff (1996), together with universities emerged the figure of the *intellectual*. For this author, the term designates those whose trade is to think and teach their thought, i.e., the masters (p.21). In this way, a new social group emerged, made up of masters who earned their living from teaching knowledge, either through salaries or through privileges.

This new intellectual activity had a range of challenges to face. In the 12th and 13th centuries, there were very few universities in Europe, which in most cases meant that those seeking knowledge had to leave their homes and travel to foreign lands. Indeed, the first universities were founded in

Paris and Bologna in response to an influx of students from the four corners of Europe (Ridder-Symoens, 1992, p.282). The journeys made across Europe by students and masters in order to study were given the name of *peregrinatio academica* (academic pilgrimage) (Ridder-Symoens, 1992, p.280). These pilgrimages to and stays in foreign territory exposed students and professors to a wide range of problems and dangers from which they needed protection.

In the era of the medieval university, conflict and even violent confrontations between the local population and the university community ("town and gown") were common occurrences. These two groups had different social characteristics and were prone to disagreements. The average age, geographical origin, language, dress, advantages and privileges they possessed, the jurisdiction and authorities to which they were subject and the sources of their income were markedly different. It was thus hardly strange that altercations between students and locals should occur, and that scholars should be subjected to abuse by the local authorities and to paying excessive amounts for lodgings, taxes and food.

Some scholars with limited resources also had to deal with the problem of obtaining the necessary funds to survive, and some students were even reduced to begging. Such was the case of the *wandering scholars*, according to some of the poems and songs that tell of their adventures (Ogg, 1908, pp.354-355).

The context of conflict and of their initial legal and financial vulnerability constituted an obstacle that hindered students and masters from being able to come together and carry out their activity and social function; in other words, it endangered the existence of the universities. For this reason, the first mission that universities had to fulfil consisted in providing security, autonomy and privileges to the people who sought to dedicate themselves to study and the pursuit of knowledge. Moreover, these concessions not only affected students and masters, but any person associated with the services provided by universities.

What follows is an analysis of a series of documents issued between the years 1100 and 1500 that refer to this mission. The documents reflect a period of conflicts and power struggles from which universities were not isolated. In the chess match of power relations between papacy, empire, monarchies, communes and other local forces, universities were a key piece. Their strength lay in the fact that they constituted a source of wealth and prestige for the territory, as well as an elite consultative intellectual body and a qualified work force at the service of the ecclesiastical and secular powers. The authorities would be deprived of these benefits if students and masters believed that they were not treated fairly and decided to leave the university. The universities exploited this situation to pressure the powers

that be and obtain recognition and protection from them. As will be discussed below, notable among the securities and privileges obtained by university corporations was the right to strike as a defence mechanism in response to external abuses. The frictions between universities and the authorities had significant effects on university autonomy. On the one hand, the pressure applied by university corporations led to their winning rights that gave them greater autonomy. On the other hand, the concessions awarded by the established powers came at a cost, as in return the authorities sought to assume control of certain basic aspects of the universities. It was the pontificate who offered the greatest support to the university corporations in their struggle to obtain privileges and protection from local authorities. Asztalos (1992, p.412) notes that in return for this protection, the masters had to give up some of their academic freedoms. They could not dedicate themselves to their studies with complete intellectual independence, but had to take part in the *universal* struggle waged by the pope and the Church against heresy (see section 2).

With regard to relations between universities and the Holy Roman Empire, there are two key documents that refer to Italian universities in the 12th and 13th centuries. The first is the foundational charter of the University of Bologna, and the second is the charter of the University of Naples. At the time, Italy was engulfed in a bloody war between the Guelphs and Ghibellines. The conflict had originated in Germany in the early 12th century between two powerful families that were fighting for control of the Holy Roman Empire. The Guelphs supported the House of Bavaria, while the Ghibellines represented the House of Hohenstaufen. In the second half of the century, the battle moved to Italy. The emperor at that time, Frederick I of Hohenstaufen, also known as Barbarossa (lit. "red beard"), launched a campaign to impose imperial authority over the cities and communes of Italy and affirm his supremacy over the papacy. The two *universal* powers became engaged in a bloody conflict, which thus came to be known as *dominum mundi* (world dominion). The Ghibellines supported imperial domination over the cities of Italy. The Guelphs defended the unity of Church and State under the sovereignty of the pope. Broadly speaking, the first were supporters of the feudal hierarchy, while the second defended national and local autonomy.

In the context of this conflict, the charter of 1158 was issued, which today is considered the magna carta of the University of Bologna. During a visit to Italy by Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa, the students and masters of Bologna complained of the treatment they received in the commune and declared that foreign students were poorly protected. They beseeched the emperor to forbid the exercise of the right of reprisal against foreign students (the detention of persons or the confiscation of property to cover debts

accrued by their compatriots) and to guarantee them all freedom of movement so that they could live and study in safety (Nardi, 1992, p. 78). The emperor responded by promulgating the *Authentica Habita*, whose provisions would apply not only to Bologna but to all Lombard territory. The charter ensured freedom of movement for students from foreign lands, protected them from the abuses of moneylenders and placed them under the jurisdiction of the masters or of the bishop. It is worth noting that the emperor displayed a certain favouritism towards law students, as the document reflects the following idea (Ogg, 1908, pp.341-343):

-The places in which the studies are carried on should offer security and protection to scholars who travel for the sake of study, especially to professors of divine and sacred laws.

This concession did not keep the University of Bologna from ultimately aligning itself with the pontificate and the Guelphs (Peset, 2010, p. 47). Having lost control of the university, Emperor Frederick II Hohenstaufen founded the University of Naples in the Kingdom of Sicily and forbade his subjects to attend Bologna. In the official foundational document signed by the emperor himself, there is a clear emphasis on the protection the new university would provide so that scholars did not have to migrate to other territories (Spagnuolo, 1998):

-The University of Naples will offer protection and security to those who are starved for knowledge.

In the following excerpt, this objective is further explained:

[S]o that those who are starved for knowledge will find it in our own kingdom, and will not be forced, in their search for knowledge, to become pilgrims and to beg in foreign lands. [...] We will protect them from the dangers of brigands who would deprive them of their goods on the long roads. (Spagnuolo, 1998, para.1)

As Nardi (1992, p.87) points out, this decree echoed the *Authentica Habita* and followed some of its directives, but one difference is that the concession of protection was restricted exclusively to people attending the University of Naples, as it prohibited scholars from leaving the kingdom to teach or study and threatened to punish the parents of students who studied outside the kingdom if they didn't return by the Feast of Saint Michael (29 September). Frederick II did not appear to be concerned for the welfare of scholars in general. The ban on attending other universities suggests

that he wanted to give the University of Naples a monopoly on knowledge (Davis, 2006, p. 410). He sought to recover and retain students and masters born in the kingdom to ensure the success of a university, which he founded with the objective of placing it at the service of the empire he ruled.

In France, violent conflicts led to student protests and the concession of protections and privileges. The first fracas between locals and university students took place in Paris in the year 1200 (Janin, 2004, p.73-5; Duncalf & Krey, 1912, p.139). After a tavern brawl, the provost (the highest judicial authority in the city) led an armed mob to the German students' hostel and killed several students. The masters turned to King Philip August to demand security and privileges. The monarch, fearing that the students might leave the city, condemned the provost and granted royal privileges offering security and protection to the students (Ogg, 1908, pp.343-345). Among other benefits, the document granted that students who were arrested were to be placed under secular rather than ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and it required the new provost and other municipal authorities to swear to respect the privileges it granted.

In spite of this concession of protection, the conflicts continued in Paris. Some riots during the Carnival of 1229 resulted in several student deaths and injuries. In response to these events, the university determined to suspend classes. The closure of the university lasted for two years, during which time there occurred the so-called "great dispersion". Many masters and students migrated to other universities, such as Oxford and Cambridge at the invitation of Henry III (Erskine, Sherman, Trent, Van Doren, Waller, & Ward, Eds., 1907-1921). That same year, the papacy founded the University of Toulouse with the aim of creating a "bulwark against heresy" (Rüegg, 1992b, p.16). To attract new students and masters, especially those who had deserted the University of Paris, the new university offered a range of securities. Most notable among these was that it would grant a plenary indulgence of all sins committed (Thorndyke, ed, 1975, pp.32-35):

-All studying at Toulouse, both masters and disciples, should obtain plenary indulgence of all their sins.

Thorndyke (1975, pp.35-36) notes that the students and masters who had travelled to different universities around Europe did not return to Paris until they obtained a series of papal bulls punishing the aggressors, demanding that the king apply the privilege established by Philip Augustus and allow a council made up of two masters and two Parisians to set the price of lodgings for students, and demanding that the Bishop of Paris and the Abbot of Saint-Germain-des-Prés respect the privileges of the university. The final bull that

brought an end to the dispersion was the *Parens scientiarum* issued by Gregory IX in the year 1231. This bull, which today is considered the magna carta of the University of Paris, effectively placed the university under papal protection. In addition to giving more power and autonomy to the masters to manage university life, a notable aspect of the bull is that it legalised the right of the university to suspend classes (right of *cessatio*) as a defence mechanism in the event of future conflicts (Halsall, 1996a; Munro, ed., 1897, pp.7-11; Thornydyke, ed., 1975, pp.35-9):

-The University of Paris provides safety to scholars, by means of the masters' and students' right to suspend the lectures.

The granting of this protection is stated in its original form in the following paragraph:

And if, perchance, the assessment of the lodgings is taken from you, or anything else is lacking, or an injury or outrageous damage, such as death or the mutilation of a limb, is inflicted on one of you; unless through a suitable admonition satisfaction is rendered within fifteen days, you may suspend your lectures until you have received full satisfaction. And if it happens that any one of you is unlawfully imprisoned [...], if you judge it expedient, suspend your lectures immediately. (Halsall, 1996a, para.5; Munro, ed., 1897, p.9; Thornydyke, ed., 1975, p.37)

It is clear that the legal capacity to cancel classes constituted what in modern terms would be considered the right to strike. The possibility or threat of suspending lectures conferred considerable bargaining power to win greater protection, autonomy, status and power. The University of Paris was not the only one to use this resource. Janin (2008, p.61) notes that the University of Bologna exercised this right at least thirteen times during the 13th and 14th centuries, for reasons as diverse as academic conflicts, social unrest, reactions to controversial papal policies and fear of the plague. The right of *cessatio* brought problematic consequences for the authorities who tried to control it. Compayré (2010, p.39) notes that Pope Alexander IV attempted to amend the legislation by means of a bull in 1255 that decreed that two thirds of the votes of each faculty were needed in order to exercise the right to suspend classes. The University of Paris protested vehemently, arguing that the right of *cessatio* was its principal defence, "the buckler of the university", and continued to make use of it. From the 15th century on, there began a process of progressive reduction of the power of the academic corporation. The monarchs in

particular sought to limit the autonomy of universities and restrict their right to suspend classes. In 1499, King Louis XII abolished this right at the University of Paris and, as Janin (2008) notes, "deprived the great university of its most powerful weapon and thus most of its independence from royal control" (p.2).

From England came voices that pointed out the protection granted to the University of Paris in the mid-13th century. In this era, the English encyclopaedist Bartholomew wrote of the wonders of the University of Paris, stressing that (Schofield, 1906, p.12):

-[A]s the mother of wisdom, she welcomes guests from all parts of the world, supplies all their wants, and submits them all to her pacific rule.

According to the documentation consulted, the masters and students also obtained securities and privileges in the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon. The monarchs recognised the benefits of having good universities in their kingdom and assumed the obligation to protect scholars so that they wouldn't migrate to other territories.

Some examples of this can be found in the following documents: in the Charter of Confirmation of the University of Salamanca by King Ferdinand III in 1243 (Vidal and Díaz, 1869, p.15); in *Las Siete Partidas* by Alfonso X the Wise in the mid-13th century (López, Ed., 2008); in the Privilege of Sancho IV creating the *Studium Generale* in Alcalá de Henares in 1293 (Archivo Histórico Nacional, 1293); in the Designation of Lérida to erect the *Studium Generale* of Aragón (Villanueva, 1851, app.III, pp.196-198) and in the Charter of ordination and immunity issued by King Jaime II of Aragón (Villanueva, 1851, app.III, pp.200-207), both in the year 1300; in the Privilege of 1390 granted by King Juan I of Aragón to the masters in arts of the study of medicine in Barcelona so that they may enjoy the *gracías* (*gratiis*), favours (*favoribus*), honours (*honoribus*), prerogatives (*praerogativis*) franchises (*franquitasibus*) and immunities (*inmunitatibus*) already enjoyed by doctors (Bofarull and Mascaró, 1850 p.478-9); and in the foundational Charter of the *Studium Generale* of Barcelona under Alfonso the Magnanimous in 1451 (Hermans & Nelissen, eds., 1994, p.47). By way of example, two of these documents are quoted below. In *Las siete Partidas* (or Seven Divisions), Alfonso X issued the following ordinance (López, Ed., 2008, No. XXXI, p.698):

-Que los maestros y escolares y sus mensajeros y todas sus cosas sean seguros y atreguados, viniendo a los estudios o estando en ellos o yéndose para sus tierras.

[That masters and scholars and their messengers and all their belongings may be safe and secure, when coming to studies or while in them or when returning to their lands.]

In the other document, Jaime II chooses the city of Lérida to establish the university of the kingdom, setting forth the following (Villanueva, 1851, app. III, pp.196-198):

-Viris eisdem scientiarum quarumlibet honestarum apud nos alimenta condantur ut nec... fideles et súbditos pro investigandis scientiis nationes peregrinas expetere nec in alienis ipsos oporteat regionibus mendicare.

[That in our territory sustenance be granted to the men of any of these honest sciences, so that... my loyal subjects, to seek these sciences, need not travel to foreign nations or have to beg in such foreign territories.]

In a context of conflicts and struggles for power, scholastic corporations and external authorities gave birth to universities as official institutions specialised in higher learning. The period known as the *Renaissance of the 12th century* thus introduced an enduring institution which entailed a far-reaching social transformation.

To Identify and Condemn Heresies

It is well-known that during the Middle Ages, ideas that suggested deviations from official doctrine were labelled heretical and condemned. The documents analysed show that heresies arose within university walls, and that at the institutional level they were persecuted and banned both by the universities themselves and by the ecclesiastical authorities. As was discussed in the previous section, upon coming under pontifical protection, European universities were pressured to collaborate in the struggle of the papacy against heresy. As Rüegg (1992, p.14) notes, the different social actors tried to obtain support from university knowledge for their struggle for existence. Le Goff (1996) argues that university intellectuals fit into Gramsci's category of *organic intellectuals*:

In a society that was ideologically controlled very closely by the Church and increasingly governed politically by a double bureaucracy, secular and ecclesiastical [...], the intellectuals of the Middle Ages were above all 'organic' intellectuals, loyal servants of the Church and the State. (p. 12)

For the papacy, the ideological support of the university was essential to halting the spread of heretical movements. The struggle against heresy has various dimensions, which exceed the scope of this analysis. This article focuses specifically on the development and condemnation of the heretical doctrines of the master John Wycliffe at Oxford University. The case of Wycliffism is notable for the contradiction that occurred between the institutional mission assigned by the papacy to promote Christian orthodoxy and persecute heresy and the pro-Wycliffe position adopted by most of Oxford University's most prominent members.

During the 14th century, the master John Wycliffe developed a heretical doctrine which his followers, the Lollards or Wycliffite movement, spread throughout England, especially at Oxford, and came into conflict with the supporters of orthodoxy. According to the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Conti, 2011), Wycliffe was a precursor to the Protestant Reformation, leading a movement of opposition to the Catholic Church and some of its dogmas and institutions. The philosopher and theologian asserted the supremacy of the king over the clergy and maintained his own interpretation of Biblical truth based on his own metaphysical model. He translated the Bible into English to make it accessible to the common people, attacked the abuses and wealth of the Church and opposed the doctrine of transubstantiation. His unorthodox theories threatened the Catholic Church's hegemony over the truth, and were therefore condemned. Notable among the condemnations were the banning of the 24 propositions by Archbishop Courtenay in 1382, the condemnation of Pope Gregory XI in that same year, the provincial synod ban in 1407 at Oxford and the condemnation of his writings and the order to burn his books at the Council of Constance (1414-1418). In order to illustrate the attempt to impose the mission to ban Wycliffe's doctrines upon Oxford University, the information provided in the papal condemnation and the synod ban is outlined below.

Pope Gregory XI didn't bother with niceties. In his condemnation, he ordered Wycliffe's imprisonment and warned Oxford University that it must enforce orthodoxy and ban his heretical doctrine (Halsall, 1998; Thatcher, ed., 1907, pp.378-382):

-The Chancellor and the University of Oxford ought to be warriors and champions of the orthodox faith.

-The University of Oxford has acted with contempt for the Roman Church.

-The University of Oxford has caused injury to the orthodox faith.

-John de Wycliffe, rector of the church of Lutterworth, in the diocese of Lincoln, Professor

of the Sacred Scriptures (would that he were not also Master of Errors) dogmatizes and publicly preaches heretical dogmas.

-Wycliffe's heretical dogmas strive to subvert the state of the whole church.

-Wycliffe's heretical dogmas strive to subvert secular polity.

-The University of Oxford must not permit to be asserted or proposed to any extent whatever, the opinions, conclusions, and propositions, which are in variance with good morals and faith.

According to Deanesly (1920, pp. 231-232), when this condemnation was issued, the chancellor of Oxford University and other authorities were already on Wycliffe's side. Except for the friar preachers, the whole university supported him. Consequently, the university, which by this point had become powerful and was imbued with anti-papal doctrines, believed that the condemned theories were orthodox but could lead to erroneous interpretations, and that therefore Wycliffe should explain them in London (Jusserand, 2007, p. 424). This benevolence towards the heretic aroused the indignation of certain orthodox scholars. The principal chronicler of the period, Thomas Walsingham, was critical of the supposed degeneration of Oxford University (Riley, ed., 1860, pp.344-346):

-Oxonienſe ſtudio generale quam gravi lapſu a ſapientię et ſcientię culmine decidisti!... Pudet recordationis tantę impudentię.

[-Oxford University, how far you have fallen from the height of wisdom and science! I am embarrassed to recall such impudence/shamelessness].

The condemnations aimed at keeping the university from permitting the spread of heretical doctrine continued. The sixth constitution of the provincial synod of Oxford in 1407 clearly stated the institutional mission as censors that the universities of Oxford and Cambridge should adopt to support the elimination of heresies (Robson, 1961, p.244):

-Because new ways are frequently more seductive than old, we will and command that no tract or treatise of master John Wyclif or anyone else, composed in his day or since or to be composed in the future, shall be henceforth read [...], unless it shall have been examined by the University of Oxford or Cambridge [...]; and having been examined, shall have been expressly approved unanimously by the same, and then by us and our successors. Should

anyone have read such tracts or treatises in the schools or have taught contrary to this procedure, let him be punished as a sower of schism and promoter of heresy.

These were not the only condemnations or criticisms levelled at Wycliffe's doctrine. The works of Deanesly (1920, pp.225-251) and Robson (1961) are useful for further study, as they provide detailed information bringing together a considerable number of primary sources regarding Wycliffe's ideas, their repression and the responses of Wycliffites. The bibliography consulted supports the conclusion that the adaptation process carried out by the external authorities was successful in silencing the movement at Oxford, although this did not prevent the establishment of some of the bases that would lead to the development of the Reformation during the Renaissance.

Excluding movements that challenge the established order

The Goliards constituted a contestation intellectual movement that sought to live freely, criticised the authorities and promoted the transgression of the established morality and traditions. The movement appeared in the 12th century and disappeared over the course of the 13th, over which time it was subjected to hostile treatment for obvious reasons. It was a genuinely anti-systemic student movement operating in the context of an institution controlled by the authorities and aimed at social reproduction. The novelty of this movement and the radical nature of its worldview warrant an analysis of its composition and ideas. A brief description of the movement is presented below, based on those provided by Janin (2008, pp.35-39), Martínez (1996) and especially Le Goff (1996, pp.39-47):

The Goliards were poor, wandering students with no fixed abode who went from university to university following the masters and teachings that interested them most. Although some of them ended up working for the authorities, generally the Goliards evaded the established structures and worked as minstrels or buffoons to earn their bed and board. Their songs and poems (collected in *Carmina Burana*) deal mainly with love, sex, luck, gambling, wine and life. Underlying these apparently lightweight themes is an alternative world view that aroused the indignation of traditionalists and led to their persecution and condemnation. The exaltation of a way of life revolving around earthly pleasures transgressed the moral order and traditions defended by the Catholic hierarchy. Their songs glorified the pleasures of the *vita activa* in an earthly paradise, in opposition to the *vita contemplativa* that seeks salvation in the next world, which, according to Le Goff, makes the Goliards precursors of Renaissance humanism.

For Le Goff, another aspect in which they posit a break from traditional thought is the perspective they take on the concept of luck, as they reject notions of progress and that history has a meaning, and thus oppose the notion of perfect determination of the Divine Plan. Moreover, Goliard poetry contains recurring explicit criticisms of the church, its laws, its doctrine, its conduct and its accumulation of wealth, which reflects their activity as promoters of a secular culture in an urban context.

As a sample of the Goliard rejection of the Church and even of God, it is worth considering three ideas contained in their song titled *Credo*. In this song, a priest encourages a Goliard to make his last confession on his deathbed, and the Goliard responds with a parody of the Nicene Creed, affirming, among other things, the following (Janin, 2008, p. 38):

- The goliard never thinks of God.
- The goliard cares little for sin.
- The goliard does not want his resurrection.

The church was not the Goliards' only target. Their social criticism was aimed at all levels of medieval society, particularly the highest levels of power. According to Le Goff (1996, pp.39-47) the Goliards opposed an entire hierarchical social order. They rejected the high-born privilege of the noble, positing instead a new order based on merit. Above the weapons and heroic deeds of knights and warriors, they lauded battles of the spirit and jousts with logical arguments. They even expressed disdain for country life, as they were city men who loathed rural peasants.

As would be expected, the Goliards were a regular target of persecution and condemnation by the representatives of the established order, especially the church hierarchy. According to one 12th-century monk, the moral deviation of the Goliards was unacceptable (Haskins, 2002, p. 112):

- The wandering clerks do not learn morals.

At the institutional level, the Catholic hierarchy deliberated over the Goliards in several ecclesiastical councils and synods. Martínez (1996, p.459) provides a range of examples. The first of these is the Council of Trier in 1227, when parish priests were ordered to keep an eye on the *vagos scholares aut goliardos* (vagabond scholars or Goliards) to ensure they do not interrupt the mass with their canticles. Martínez also notes that at the Councils of Château Gonthier and of Rouen it was decided that the *clerici ribaudi, máxime qui dicuntur de familia Goliae, qui "goliardi" nuncupantur* (rebel clerics, especially those of the family of Golias, the so-called Goliards) should not receive the tonsure, the distinctive shaven head of clerics. In 1239 an

order was promulgated that their hair be closely cropped. According to the same author, the death-knell of the Goliards came with their condemnation at the Council of Cahors in 1289. The ban set forth the following (Wright, ed., 1841, p.xii):

- Item, praecipimus quod clerici non sint joculatores, goliardi, seu bufones.
[-No clerics should be jongleurs, goliards or buffoons.]

The Diocesan statutes of 1350 repeated this prohibition (Symes, 2007, p. 157):

- Clerics must not show themselves off as goliards or buffoons.

The Goliard university movement had a fleeting existence, disintegrating over the course of the 13th century. A sign of the aversion felt by the Catholic hierarchy to the Goliards is the fact that even after they had disappeared, they continued to be the target of condemnations. Their condemnation and prohibition by the church authorities to which the universities were subordinate meant that, at the institutional level, they were not to make room for the Goliards. According to Verger (1992b), "all medieval universities were in face obsessed by the struggle against the 'wandering', uncontrolled student, who went from one master to another" (p.157). The universities introduced two institutional filters in their admission requirements in order to identify these wandering scholars.

From the outset many universities required students to be assigned to a master and, especially from the 14th century, to live at the authorised student residences. For example, Oxford University, with the support of the monarch, established a requirement to live at one of the student residences in 1420, while the University of Vienna approved ordinances against outside students (*extra bursas stantes*) in 1410 and University of Paris against the so-called *Martinets* (another kind of free student who in many cases had no master) in 1452-7 (Janin, 2008, p.35; Schwinges, 1992a, p.219). On the other hand, from their foundation several universities required students to have a permanent master (Janin, 2008, p.35; Schwinges, 1992b, p.173). This requirement was already established in the statutes of the University of Paris in 1215 (Original in Latin in Denifle & Chatelain, eds., 1889, pp.78-80; English translation in Halsall, 1996b; Munro, 1897, pp.12-15; Thorndyke, 1975, pp.27-30; Spanish translation in Cerda, 2010, pp.7-8):

- Nullus sit scholaris Parisiuis qui certum magistrum non habeat:
 -[There is to be no student at Paris who does not have a regular master]

According to Schwinges (1992b, p.173), similar requirements were established at Montpellier (1220), Oxford (before 1231), Cambridge (after 1236) and universities in central Europe.

The persecution of the Goliards demonstrates that universities implemented measures of social control of practices that challenged the privileged strata of society, especially the church hierarchy. Another illustrative case of such repression is the condemnation of the Feast of Fools, celebrated by the low clergy in the churches, by the Faculty of Theology of Paris, in accordance with the bans issued at ecclesiastical councils. According to the *Catholic Encyclopedia* (Thurston, 1909), the central idea of this feast was related to the *Saturnalia*, the pagan feast celebrated by slaves in ancient Rome, constituting a brief social revolution in which power, dignity and impunity passed into the hands of those holding subordinate positions in society. It was a burlesque and carnival festivity in which the low clergy parodied senior church officials to a degree considered blasphemous and scandalous, as evidenced by the Council of Basel, which finally banned the celebration in 1435 (Tanner, 1990). The council condemnation was publicly supported by the University of Paris in a document issued by the Faculty of Theology in which this information appears (Thorndyke, 1975, pp. 343-346):

- The humble faculty of sacred theology of the dear university of Paris sends honour and the respect due to Christian piety.
 -We abhor and detest the rite of a certain festivity which its celebrants call the Feast of Fools [...], in which priests and the clergy pollute themselves within and without, and foul the temple and churches of God.
 -We declare what we feel in this matter, to the end that prelates may the more zealously and boldly expel this pestiferous rite from their subordinates.
 -We beseech the celebrated fathers to listen and stretch every nerve in your power to dissipate and destroy this conglomeration of impiety.
 -We conclude with the injunction that the continuation or abolition of this pestiferous rite depends on you prelates.
 -We pray God the Father in his mercy, that he give you the spirit of strength against these diabolical ministers and all pestilent men.

Conclusions and Discussion

The mediating model assigned to the European medieval university was intimately tied to the social structures and conditions of the period. The process of institutionalisation of the first universities occurred in a context of insecurity and fear of abuses, in which the authorities responded to the complaints and protests of the academic guilds and conceded various types of securities and privileges to all who wished to dedicate themselves to the pursuit of knowledge. This was a way of ensuring the continued existence of the university. At the same time, it was a way for the authorities to try to control such a valuable intellectual resource for their own benefit. The emergence of universities meant a remarkable innovation that could have different uses and orientations. In a theocentric and stratified society in which the exercise of power and repression was distributed between the papacy, the Catholic Church, the Holy Roman Empire and the monarchies (as well as the larger cities), it is hardly surprising that these actors should seek to orient university missions and knowledge towards the reproduction of their own power and to fighting heresies and social movements that questioned the existing social order. Thus, the regulations imposed by the authorities were aimed at adapting the mission of the university so that the institution would act as a social mediator in accordance with their respective interests and needs. It is worth quoting Richard Shaull's foreword to Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2000) in order to contextualise the discussion within a broader conception of education and change:

There is no such thing as a neutral educational process. Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate the integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, or it becomes "the practice of freedom" — the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with their reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world. (p.34)

At the institutional level, the mission of the university was oriented toward social reproduction and compliance. Yet, certain movements pushed for social transformation and greater degrees of freedom. The spread of heretical movements and of other critical movements was a matter that affected the whole social system. However, it is notable that the three missions described here were preceded by the propagation of ideas and actions that originated within the walls of the universities themselves, leading to a reaction from the authorities, which granted concessions while also

establishing restrictions informed by a repressive agenda. Dissident university movements such as the Wycliffites and the Goliards show that, at important moments in history, masters and students transgressed the institutional missions. In so doing, they sowed the seeds that would lead to future academic and social transformations.

This article on higher education in the Middle Ages aims to contribute to an understanding of the university institution so that in the present day its members and society as a whole may be able to orient its mission towards objectives that promote human dignity. As Wallerstein (2012) has observed, universities “were supposed to play the role of one major locus (not of course the only one) of analysis of the realities of our world-system. It is such analyses that may make possible the successful navigation of the chaotic transition towards a new, and hopefully better, world order” (para.11). However, universities do not seem to be prepared to undertake this mission. As the author notes, “[a]t the moment, the turmoil within the universities seems no easier to resolve than the turmoil in the world-economy. And even less attention is being paid to it” (para.11). The challenges faced by the world-system and universities in the 21st century require well-reasoned scientific theories with a socio-historical vision that include ethics and solidarity as criteria of rationality; in other words, theories which, as Martín Serrano (2011, p.25) suggests, are related to just practice and thus contribute to the unfinished, endless, humanisation of society.

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