

University “privileges” as a condition of the common good: reflection on D. Pedro’s university letters

“Privilégios” universitários como condição de bem comum: reflexões sobre cartas universitárias de D. Pedro¹

Los “privilégios” universitarios como condición del bien común: reflexiones sobre las cartas universitarias de D. Pedro

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Abstract: Our purpose is to reflect on the role of the ruler of the ruler in the organization and consolidation of the University, in the Portuguese kingdom, in the medieval autumn. We recover a set of political measures taken by the regent Infante D. Pedro (1392-1449) between the years 1441 to 1444 that aimed to protect the lives of men of knowledge and instituted privileges that ensured exclusive dedication to university activities. At the same time, the regent defined measures aimed at the general population so that they would recognize the importance of university men for society. We used as sources a set of eight Letters published in the *Chartularium Universitatis Portugalensis* that will be analyzed according to the principles formulated by Social History, especially from the concept of long duration of Braudel (1991). We also note, in terms of final considerations, that we believe it is fundamental that the actions of the Portuguese ruler were consciously inclined to defend the existence of the University and its actors. **Keywords:** igoovernment policy; medieval university; letters; infante D. Pedro; very common.

Resumo: Nosso propósito é refletir acerca do papel do governante na organização e consolidação da Universidade, no reino português, no outono medieval. Recuperamos um conjunto de medidas políticas tomadas pelo regente Infante D. Pedro (1392-1449) entre os anos de 1441 a 1444 que visavam proteger a vida dos homens de saber e instituiu privilégios que lhes asseguravam a dedicação exclusiva às atividades universitárias. Ao mesmo tempo, o regente definiu medidas dirigidas à população em geral para que reconhecessem a importância dos homens da universidade para a sociedade. Utilizamos como fontes um conjunto de oito Cartas publicadas no *Chartularium Universitatis Portugalensis* que serão analisadas segundo os princípios formulados pela

História Social, especialmente a partir do conceito de longa duração de Braudel (1991). Observamos ainda, em termos de considerações finais, que julgamos fundamental que as ações do governante português inclinaram-se conscientemente para defender a existência da Universidade e de seus atores. **Palavras-chave:** política governamental; universidade medieval; cartas; infante D. Pedro; bem comum.

Introduction

The aim of this text is to analyze a set of eight letters by D. Pedro, written between 1441 and 1444, the period in which he was regent of the Portuguese kingdom, which deal with issues concerning the University, especially about professors and students. Published in printed form in the *Chartularium Universitatis Portugalensis* [v. IV], organized by A. Moreira de Sá, the letters also compose other works and collections: as in the *Livro Verde de Coimbra*, *Chancelaria de D. Duarte*, *Chancelaria de D. Afonso V*, *Noticias chronologicas da Universidade de Coimbra*, among others.

These documents allow us to observe that the Infante had an accurate zeal in relation to the 'House of Knowledge', as he sought to protect and safeguard the interests of masters and students, in the same way as the Portuguese rulers who preceded him since the foundation of the University in Portugal, under the aegis of D. Dinis, between the years 1296 and 1298 (Farelo, 2013; Mattoso, 1997; Oliveira, 2018). In these Letters, D. Pedro emphasizes the need to protect and benefit people associated with the University.

It is important to note that the compilation of the Letters in the *Chartularium Universitatis Portugalensis* follows the model of those published in the *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, which gives us indications that there existed, between the European monarchies and ecclesiastical authorities, since the 13th century at least, a common writing model to order and guide people's lives in society and in institutions, especially the University.

In the Letters, we observe that the text of D. Pedro follows the same form presented by the letters of the University of Paris in the thirteenth century. Every Letter bears the year, the day, and the month; then there is a title that highlights the topic to be addressed in the document. Most of them also refer to people, either students or teachers. At the end of the Letter, the full date of the day, month, and year in which the document was written is always included, as well as the name of the clerk who recorded the ruler's order. The Letters are similar to current documents registered in a civil registry. They are, in fact, official documents.

In our view, what most calls attention to in this set of texts that we will analyze below is the fact that Infante D. Pedro not only edits documents that privileged⁴ the people of the University, but also their families. Furthermore, as noted in the last Letter, he requests that the inhabitants of the city of Coimbra, one of the sites of the University of the kingdom in the 15th century, watch over and allocate one of their tributes to the men of knowledge.

The Letters on stage

The first Letter we present dates from July 11, 1441, and the theme is: '*Carta do Infante D. Pedro, como regente, concedendo perdão a João Afonso, João Vasques e Gonçalo Afonso, escolares*'.

The content of the Letter is to define that three students from Lisbon should be pardoned of the accusation of having murdered an inhabitant in the vicinity of the city about 8 years before. D. Pedro orders that the judgments and all the authorities that can judge and condemn the students do not punish them. D. Pedro's arguments are justified in some respects. First, the students are important members of the city, so they must be free; secondly, the crime had taken place a long time ago and the deceased had no relatives; third, it is necessary to populate the spaces of the kingdom, therefore, students must be free to live anywhere.

And We, seeing what they sent us, saying and asking before that we give them some other release about it, We ordered edicts to be made in said city where said João Gonçalves was killed; edicts were made and no relatives of the dead man were found [...]. However, wanting to show grace and mercy, given the general forgiveness given to us in order to slow down the great depopulation in some places of our land, if said death was not treachery or treason, and it happened before January of [...], We consider We have made good if We forgive them [...]. But We command you not to arrest them, nor to have them arrested, nor to do to them, nor to consent to do evil or any other quarrel, as it is for the said reason, and let them live and dwell in any of our Lordships wherever they choose [...] (Pedro, 1970f, p. 316)⁵.

The questions raised by the Infante allow us to infer that, as a ruler and as regent, he sought to deal with the 'things' of the University with a view to promoting harmony between students and the community and ensuring the free existence of the former. Conflicts between students and city dwellers were very common in the Middle Ages. However, as university people [students, masters, and professors] were 'privileged', their illicit acts were judged by their own peers. It was even usual that there were cells to punish offenders in the 'Casa' building. The University of Évora, although dating back to the period of D. Pedro, is an example of medieval construction which keeps the tradition of prison spaces for university students.

A relevant aspect to be considered in the Letter refers to the level of legal development of the kingdom. D. Pedro observes that the aggravation had occurred more than eight years ago and that the victim had no claimants or heirs, which allows us to consider that there would be a secular and legal systematization that ordered people's lives at a refined level.

Another point to be considered is connected with D. Pedro's understanding that the kingdom's territory needed to be populated and that the students would be 'good' settlers. From this idea we can infer two facts: first, the problem of the depopulation of the kingdom (already in the first half of the 15th century), when the migratory movement had not yet started like what would happen from the 16th century onwards, with the 'conquest' of new lands in America, which is known to accentuate this crisis; second, that it was not just a matter of populating, but of doing it with people capable of promoting the development of the kingdom through their knowledge. Therefore, the Letter reveals a political measure in which, by protecting university students, the ruler would promote the good of the State.

The second Letter that we analyze is the one of 1442 – JUNE 18 – *Carta do Infante D. Pedro para Luís Gonçalves desobrigando os Reitores, Lentes, Conselheiros e escolares da Universidade de Lisboa, do pagamento da peita que por aquele lhes fora lançada*. The opening theme of the Letter already announces the problem to be considered, freeing university people from paying a tax called *peita*⁶.

Luis Goncalves, friend. I, Infante Dom Pedro, regent and, with God's help, defender, by my Lord, the King, of his kingdoms and Lordship, send you my greetings. I let you know that the Deans, lecturers, advisers, and scholars of the University of the study of that city told me that you have given them a certain *peita* [tribute] that they [have] to lend to the king my Lord. And since I wanted said study to be increased and not diminished, I am pleased to have relieved them of such a burden. And yet you do not restrain yourself from constraining them. Written in Leiria, 18th of June. Martim Gonçalves wrote it in 1442. And on the back of the said letter was placed an envelope that reads that this is addressed to Luiz Gonçalves of the King's Council, my lord, and overseer of his Farm (Pedro, 1970b, p. 353)⁷.

The document shows that the university community asks D. Pedro to alleviate a tax that weighed on them since the *peita* was levied on all those who were not nobles. As the student community, for the most part, did not belong to this social order, this charge affected the lives of all [deans, professors, counselors, students], overloading them. The document reveals that the Infante's purpose was to stimulate the free development of the university. Therefore, he emphasizes that the 'study should be added and not diminished', that is, knowledge needs to be developed, thus requiring zeal and protection. As a result, he exempts university students from said tax. It is essential to note in this scenario that the University, in the Portuguese kingdom, did not have the tradition and relevance it had achieved in Paris, Bologna, Padova, or Oxford since it did not have a century and a half of existence.

Another aspect to be observed in this request is that it allows us to infer the social origin of the Portuguese university community, they certainly came from the Third Estate, or even from the plebs. As a result, they were subject to this tax.

The third letter is from 1443 – 6 FEBRUARY – *Carta do Infante D. Pedro esclarecendo dúvidas acerca do pagamento de pedido e meio por parte dos lentes e escolares do Estudo Geral de Lisboa*. The content of this Letter is, to say the least, curious, because the professors, lecturers, and students address the

government official asking for clarification on the payments that they should make and those that should be exempt. In the case in question, the doubts are raised by two university lecturers who ask about their rights and duties.

These are the doubts found in this request and mean that João Carneiro and Rodrigo Afonso are in charge of that they have a statement from the Regent and ask him to see them and determine at his understanding because of these [doubts] he is delayed from taking seat.

I, Infante Dom Pedro, regent and, with God's help, defender, by my Lord, the King, of his kingdoms and Lordship, make it known to you, João Carneiro and Rodrigo Afonso, that I have seen these doubts that you sent me written in this notebook and their determinations, I send you at the end of each Chapter.

.....
Sir, this is how he declared that scholars who were not lecturers or who did not lecture continuously should pay. And now the beadle and those who have charge of study are required to say which are those who thus lecture continually and are lecturers. And for them is given a list of all the students who do not stay [in] any and all consider them excused. And, according to some information about this, there may be some who have assets and are solicitors and others of another condition and are married, who thus [for this reason] cannot continually lecture because they have other jobs and live on their properties, which even now they are not constrained. And if there are any of these conditions, they are constrained, according to a statement, to pay.

Said scholars sent me to interpose about it. And I ordered them to reply that they should no longer list those who continually lecture. And you reveal those who thus give us a list that they do not pay, being sure that they continually teach. And if you find it otherwise, constrain them to pay.

This declaration be fulfilled

The above-mentioned ordination chapter be fulfilled

Made written in the city of Évora ... days of February, Paes Rodrigues made it in the year 1443 of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Pedro, 1970a, p. 365-366)⁸.

D. Pedro answers the two questions presented by the lecturers separately and, in both answers, he makes it clear that he considers the presence and role of these two university members in the public life of the kingdom to be very relevant. The novelty in this answer lies in the fact that, if they were dedicated only to reading and university activities, both would be exempt from the tax. However, if they have other activities, in addition to those performed as lecturers and teachers, they would have to pay taxes on these activities.

This message allows us to observe, once again, that men of knowledge, as classified by Verger (1999), in the book *Homens e Saberes*, have privileges for their functions. In fact, D. Pedro clarifies that university students must dedicate themselves exclusively to knowledge activities, and it is in this condition, as their studies are useful to the Kingdom, that they would be exempt from the taxes that other people from the Third Estate should pay. If we can consider it that way, D. Pedro would be decreeing the condition of exclusive dedication to intellectual work.

The fourth Letter that we present brings content that is very similar to the missives that deal with the most varied themes. It is about the need to transcribe again, through new issues, important documents of the kingdom that could be lost for several reasons. This is the Letter of 1442 – JUNE 23, whose title is: *Certidão de uma carta do Infante D. Pedro passada pelo bedel Afonso notário da Universidade de Lisboa*.

Year one thousand, four hundred and forty-two years of the Birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ, 23 days of the month of June in the city of Lisbon, within the college of study of said city. Before Pero Esteves, scholar in canons and lieutenant for Vasco Gil, curator of said study, in the presence of me, Brás Afonso, beadle and public clerk of said study by royal authority and witnesses that are written below, appeared Gomes Lourenço, lecturer of Decretais, at the prime time [first hour after sunrise] and showed a letter from the Infante Dom Pedro, regent and, with God's help, defender, by my King, of his kingdoms and Lordship, without any vice and suspicion, sound and sealed, with the seal of the said Lord as it seemed to all, whose content, word by word, follows:
(Transcribes the letter of Infante D. Pedro of June 18, 1442)

Of which letter thus shown before said Pero Esteves, lieutenant, said Gomes Lourenço, lecturer, on behalf of said university, said that he feared said letter would be lost by fire or water or by some other fortuitous event. And, however, *nomime quo supra* [that is, the above] asked said lieutenant, interposing his authority, to send me, said beadle, to translate said letter in this book of said university. And the said lieutenant, in view of the said letter and the request of the said Gomes Lourenço, ordered me, said Brás Afonso, beadle, to translate the said in the said book, the said lieutenant interposing his authority, ordered saying that I should copy it just like the original. Witnesses João Gomes de Abreu and Lopo da Silva and Martim Afonso, his preceptor, and Vasco Fernandes, born in Coimbra, all law students, and others and I, said Brás Afonso, beadle, public scribe of the said study that this instrument wrote and here I made my public signal (Pedro, 1970e, p. 354)⁹.

The document re-edits, so to speak, a decision taken by Infante D. Pedro, the previous year, which assured the ‘keeper’ of the University of Lisbon to continue to exercise his function, in the ‘Casa’, which is to watch over by students, masters, and lecturers. The rationale for transcribing the Letter that retains a person’s rights of office is because that decision has importance and cannot be forgotten or lost if the document is destroyed by fire, water, or any other means.

The content of the Letter is, in our view, not very expressive if we consider that it is just a copy of a previous document, in which the role of a University administrator is maintained. However, if we look at it from the point of view of the political and administrative organization of the Kingdom and, therefore, of the University, its content is significant as it reveals the ruler’s concern to protect the organization of the ‘Casa’.

In our view, insofar as there were no archives or deposits to keep the documents issued, their maintenance took place through copying them. For the preservation of a governmental measure, it is necessary that the decision was maintained or, in other words, that the memory of the decision was safeguarded.

The Letter evidences Infante D. Pedro's concern to preserve a decision taken previously, in the sense of creating a tradition of the decision so that it could be configured as law.

In terms of copying, a measure ordered by D. Pedro, it also reveals the maintenance of a medieval tradition of 'copying to save' that dates back to the origins of monasteries in the early Middle Ages, where important monasteries, such as the ones in Montecassino and Vivarium, had a *scriptorium* in which monks, called copyists, tried to copy documents and old books to preserve them. This copying practice remained present throughout the Western Medieval period, and the knowledge produced in antiquity and in the Middle Ages reached modernity because of it. Faced with the difficulty of preserving a document, as it has no place for such a purpose, the work of copying or transcribing implied the preservation of its content for the future, and, with that, memory is maintained and tradition is created. Thus, by transcribing an act of D. Pedro in relation to the University, its rights are preserved and consolidated in the present and in the future.

The fifth Letter that we expose deals with the appointment of an official of the kingdom who will also take care of activities concerning the University. It is the Letter of 1443 – 17 MAY, with the theme: *Carta do Infante D. Pedro, como regente, nomeando João Rodrigues porteiro perante o Conservador e sacador do Estado Geral de Lisboa.*

Dom Afonso, etc. all the judges and justices of our Kingdoms who are shown this letter, greetings. Know that We, wishing to show grace and mercy to João Rodrigues, a resident of this city of Lisbon, through Brás Afonso, beadle of the university for the study of that city of Lisbon, who asked us in his stead, make of him a porter before the curator of the university of the study of this said city of Lisbon, and we also make him the drawer of the things and debts of the said study as was Rui Vasques, whose office, which has ended, he had by our letter and we sent it to the said curator of the university of said study and to any others who will see and the knowledge of this belongs that let it serve and use the said office and have the benefits of it and make the executions by

the sentences sent and divided that the said university and study belong whose auctions shall make before a notary or notary that this takes place (Pedro, 1970c, p. 382)¹⁰.

The first aspect to be considered of the document concerns the explanation that it is about the replacement of an employee who would be responsible for controlling the movement of people inside the 'Casa' and would also be the person who would be at the service or at the disposal of the Keeper of the University.

This question allows us to make considerations about the institutional organization of the University, as it is structured according to the model of institutions that already existed in society, however, with significant differences. At the University of Paris, as Le Goff (2003) well observed in the *Os intelectuais da Idade Média*, the 13th century was the century of Universities and craft guilds to point out that the university is organized with masters, professors, deans, administrators, just as corporations with their masters, apprentices, and journeymen. In the Portuguese kingdom, on the other hand, due to the prevalent monastic presence, we could infer that the University is structured based on the model that is strongest, that of the monastery. In the monastery, the figure of the chancellor monk and the administrator monk are central to the maintenance of the *ordo* and even the material survival of the monastery. Exactly why the two figures brought in this Letter need to be looked at from their relevance: the chancellor and the keeper.

First requiring the parties to pay each other and at the due times and places, according to custom and our ordinances, so that he does not err in his office without any other embargo that is placed on him, which João Rodrigues swore in our chancellery to the holy gospels that well and directly and as one should work and use the said office and keep the rights to all parties under the penalties given by us to those who do otherwise. Furthermore, we want and command that, inasmuch as said executions and endeavors are to be carried out, that he may bring his weapons... without them being taken from him or accounted for, unless he is found doing with them things which he should not do. And that in his work

there be all the same graces, favors, liberties, and honors that the students and officers of the said university have, and so we send to the retirees and to anyone else who will see that they enforce and keep this letter and make this letter enforced and kept in everything and for everything. This letter is to be fulfilled and kept without any other embargo placed on it in any way.

Given in the city of Lisbon, May, ... by authority of Infante D. Pedro, regent etc. Afonso Vasquez wrote this letter in the year of Our Lord (Pedro, 1970c, p. 383)¹¹.

These characters take care of more than the bureaucratic aspects of conservation at the University. According to Infante D. Pedro, they are responsible for ensuring that the ruler's ordinances are carried out in the house, they must control the use of weapons, and they are the ones who watch over the freedom and honor of the people of the University.

In this sense, the chancellor and the keeper would be key pieces in the conservation of university life. While the masters, professors and students deal with the things of knowledge, these two 'employees' would be responsible for the preservation of the building, the administration, and the security of the university people. In addition, they would be the mediators between the ruler's orders and their observance by the inhabitants of the house.

The sixth Letter does not directly address a topic related to the university, but indirectly presents an issue that highlights the care and respect of D. Pedro in relation to the people linked to the 'Casa'. This Letter of 1443 – MAY 30 – *Carta do Infante D. Pedro, como Regente, concendendo privilégios à viúva de Afonso Anes, bedel que foi dos escolares do Estudo Geral de Lisboa* carries the order of the Infante to ensure the privileges of a widow, wife of a beadle at the University.

Dom Afonso, etc. to all who see this letter, we make it known that, wanting to show grace and mercy to Graça Lourenço, a woman who belonged to Afonso Anes, a beadle who was one of the scholars of this city, through Diego Afonso, squire who served Infante Dom Pedro, my very dear and loving uncle and father, our

tutor and curator, ruler and defender, for us, of our Kingdoms and Lordship, who asked us in her stead, we consider it well, and we want and command that, while she is a widow, in her honor she shall have all the privileges, graces, favors, and freedoms that she would have if the said husband were alive. And, however, we order any Justices and our officers and persons that this letter is shown, that they comply with it and keep it as stated above without any other embargo or doubt being placed thereto. Let those who oppose this privilege of ours be certain that we will seriously find it strange, as we think they deserve it (Pedro, 1970g, p. 384)¹².

By conserving the privileges granted to the beadle to support his widow, D. Pedro shows that university people could safely dedicate themselves to their functions because their families would be protected even after death. In fact, it would be a form of pension guaranteed to the family for the services that the members of the university rendered to the kingdom. By observing this privilege to the widow, we infer that the Portuguese kingdom and, therefore, the University were institutionally structured. Not only teachers, students, and employees were under the protection of the State, as were their families. It is recorded, therefore, that the kingdom would be ordering itself toward what has configured the modern State, in other words, regimental rules were created to legislate life and institutions, without going through the right of lineage. In this scenario, men from the Third Estate would be climbing positions that made them essential for the organization of society and became key pieces for the ruler.

The seventh Letter that we bring shows, once again, the granting of privileges by Infante D. Pedro to a person from the University of Lisbon. It is a Letter of 1443 – SEPTEMBER 14, entitled *Carta do Infante D. Pedro, como Regente, concedendo privilégios a pedido de Gomes Lourenço, lente do Estudo Geral de Lisboa*.

Dom Afonso, etc. To all who see this letter, We make it known that We, wishing to give grace and mercy to Pero Lourenço, a cooper, resident in the village of Leiria, through Gomes Lourenço, a lecturer in the study of the city of Lisbon, his brother, who asked us to do so for him, see fit and

wish and command that henceforth he receives all the privileges and honors and liberties and graces and favors that our horse crossbowmen of our Realms have. And, however, we order all the magistrates, judges and justice officials, and people who belong to this and this letter of ours is shown to comply and keep and make said Pero Lourenço comply and keep this privilege of ours by the way that it is contained in it, and let him enjoy all the liberties that our so-called horse crossbowmen enjoy without any other embargo or doubt placed onto him.

Given in the city of Coimbra XIIIJ in September by the authority of the Infante D. Pedro, tutor and curator of the said lord King, Diogo Alvarez [...] (Pedro, 1970h, p. 398)¹⁵.

This Letter is, in our view, quite enlightening as to the role that university men played in the Portuguese kingdom in the first half of the 15th century. By establishing for a university professor the same right that was granted to a knight, Infante D. Pedro equates him, in terms of rights, with a crossbowman on horseback¹⁴, that is, to a character belonging to the king's army. Incidentally, a right that had been preserved for centuries by kings prior to the Infante.

This social equalization is the demonstration that, for D. Pedro, the university was as important as his army, so it needed to be maintained and safeguarded. This decision elevates the person of the 'Casa' to the same level of relevance as essential characters in society, thus showing that the kingdom needed both the protection of its army and the knowledge of the men of letters.

An important fact should be noted here: since the 13th century, in regions such as Lombardy, France, men of knowledge were considered and protected by rulers, such as Louis IX, of France and Charles V, of Lombardy¹⁵. However, in Portugal, in addition to the university having been institutionalized from the reign of D. Dinis, between the years 1296 and 1298, the political and social ascension of the university people was consolidated in the late 14th century and early 15th century, giving rise to the need of editing measures aimed at protecting and privileging men of knowledge, such as this Letter from D. Pedro. In it, D. Pedro ordered everyone to respect the lecturer Gomez Lourenço and that he should not be taxed and that he should not be punished for his debts, like the mounted crossbowman.

The eighth Letter that we bring to our debate refers to the right that D. Pedro grants to the University of Coimbra to receive the product of the city's subsidies. The theme is: 1444 – JULY 4th – *Carta do Infante D. Pedro, como Regente, doando ao Estudo Geral de Coimbra, o produto dos resíduos da cidade e seu termo.*

This correspondence, like the others, expresses Infante D. Pedro's concern to ensure the conservation and protection of people linked to the University. According to him, the University is holy work, and the fact that he founded it in Coimbra, as the Letter shows, is a reason for great honor.

From this point of view, it is necessary to consider that honor is a cardinal virtue for medieval men.

Dom Afonso, etc. To all who see this letter, we make it known that We, conspiring with the Studies, now order to make the city of Coimbra a holy work of great honor and profitable for the land. Appropriate to said work all the governed of said city. However, we send to Pero Diaz, judge of the said rules in said city, and to any other person who is going to constrain the attorney of the said rules, one who knows about them, to demand them for said work. The money that is collected from this [mercy] the treasurer of said work will receive. And the stipend of his office lay on him in respect for all the coming of good revenue. In witness whereof, we have this letter made. Made in the city of Lisbon ... in July by the authority of Lord Infante Dom Pedro, etc. Rodrigo Eanes made it the year of Our Lord Jesus Christ of ... And I, Lopo Afonso, clerk of Purity, signed it (Pedro, 1970d, p. 419)¹⁶.

This document highlights the Infante's effort to make the city of Coimbra commit to the maintenance of the University. By decreeing that a part of the city's tax collection be destined for the 'Casa', the Infante makes a new move, if we can say so, in relation to this Institution.

It is no longer a question of the ruler withdrawing resources directly from the crown to allocate them to men of knowledge; it is necessary that the people of the city know that it is critical to protect and subsidize the University. He orders that all the money raised from the collection of waste be sent directly

to the treasurer of the University. He even orders that the judge responsible for this collection, even appoints him, see to it that his order is complied with by all.

In doing so, D. Pedro defines that the city must be responsible for the University, according to the ruler's order. In our view, this measure could be considered today as a public policy aimed at the 'Casa de conhecimento', as the ruler understands it to be fundamental for the kingdom, but its importance and preservation starts from local relations, in its *locus* of origin, the city.

Conclusion

The set of Letters that we bring in this text brings a series of political measures adopted by Infante D. Pedro that show that the University, in the Portuguese kingdom, in the first half of the 15th century, gained more and more strength and social importance. Each of the documents that we brought highlights this process because, for men of knowledge to constitute a free and developed segment in society, it was necessary for government powers to create a culture of preservation of these people and their families.

It is also necessary to observe that the Letters reveal that the men of the University came from a new social segment that was different, due to its economic and social conditions, from the nobility and from the men of the Church. By legitimizing these men as important to society, Infante D. Pedro granted them power and space that the people of the Third Estate had not yet received nor occupied.

In this sense, it is important to consider that since the moment when D. João I ascended to power and the Avis dynasty was enthroned, the appreciation of people linked to the bourgeoisie with the government, including the people of the University, is perceptible. Thus, the measures taken by Infante D. Pedro follow a political line that consolidated the University.

Another aspect that we can infer from the Letters concerns the fact that D. Pedro sought support for the conservation of the University in the community,

so he defined that a specific tax should be destined for this 'Casa', that is, he adopted a measure based on the utility that this institution presented to the city.

Ultimately, we consider that the measures taken by Infante D. Pedro allow us to consider that this ruler, in protecting the interests of the University, did not defend a special segment to the detriment of the others, but saw in these men and in the institution the potential for good for the society as a whole. He followed, therefore, a political project that sought to consolidate a tradition in which the good of society was the guiding thread of his actions.

In our view, the way in which D. Pedro acted in relation to the university as regent of the kingdom shows that he sought to put into practice the advice he had written to his brother D. Duarte, around 1426, in *O Livro da Virtuosa Benfeitoria*, in which he defends the maxim that every action of the ruler must revert to the good of all. Thus, by creating privileges for men to know and a new social 'caste', he sought to benefit the whole of men, highlighting the importance of knowledge for that kingdom.

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Notas

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²Universidade Estadual de Maringá.

³Instituto Federal do Paraná.

⁴It is important to highlight that the concept of privilege, in this text, is linked to the condition of protecting the University and its characters, because without them none of them would survive in medieval society and its nadir. Therefore, although the word remains the same, in our time its meaning has been profoundly altered.

⁵"E Nos veendo o que nos asy dizer e pidir enuyarom ante que lhes sobre ello desemos outro alguu liuramento Mandamos fazer edictos em a dicta cidade honde o dicto Joham goncallvez fora morto Os quaes edictos foram factos e nom foram achados parentes nenhuus do dicto morto ssegundo dello fomos çerto per huu estormento que nos sobre ello foy enuyado Porem querendo lhes ffazer graça e merçee vista a perdoança Jeeral per nos facta por Reformar a gram despoboaçom dalguuns lugares de nossa terra Se a dicta morte nom ffoy aalleyue ou traiçom E se foy ante do Janeiro de iiij^e xxxbj Teemos por bem perdoamos lhe a nossa justiça a que nos elles por a dicta rrazom erom

theudos E Porem uos mandamos que os nom prendaes nem mandees prender nem lhe façaaes nem consentaaes fazer mal nem outro alguu desaguisado quanto he por a dicta Razom E os leixees vjuer e morar em todos nosos Senhorios honde elles quiserem e por bem teuerem [...]” (Pedro, 1970f, p. 316). Carta n°. 1241. *Chartularium Universitatis Portugalensis* [1441], v. IV.

⁶Ancient tribute paid by non-nobility (Peita, [2022]).

⁷“Lujs gonçallvez amiguo o Jfante dom Pedro regedor e com ajuda de deus deffensor por meu Senhor el rrej de sseus regnos e Senhorio uos envio mujto saudar faço uos saber que os Rectores leeemtes conselheiros e scollares da vniverssidade do studo dessa çidade me emviarom dezer que uos lhes lamçaaes çerta peita que a el rrej meu Senhor ajam de emprestar. E porquanto eu queria que o dito studo fosse acreçentado e nom mjmguado a mjm praz de tal carrego os auer por Releuados. E porem nom uos embargueeis de hos sobrello costranger.

Scripta em leiria xviiiº dias de Junho, martim gonçalvez a fez 1442. E em as costas da dita carta era posto huu sobrescripto que tal he a luis gonçallvez do conselho del rrei meu Senhor e veedor da sua fazemda” (Pedro, 1970b , p. 353) Carta n°. 1278, *Chartularium Universitatis Portugalensis*, [1442], v. IV.

⁸“Estas som as duujdas que som achadas Em este pidido e meeo de que Joham Carreiro E Rodrigo afomso teem cargo dello de que am dauer decaraçom do Senhor Regente E lhe pedem que as veja E o determjne Como for sua merçee porque por ello he Retardado de se acabar de tirar e se tomar acento.

Eu O Iffante dom pedro Regedor E Com a ajuda de deus defensor por meu senhor ElRey de seus Regnos e senhorio faço saber A uos Joham Carreiro E a Rodrigo afomso que vi Estas duujdas que me mandastes Em este Caderno scriptas E a determjnações dellas uos enujo ao pee de Cada huu Capitollo

.....

Item Senhor asy foy per ell declarado que os escolares que nom fossem lentes ou nom ouissem continuamente que pagasem // E ora o bedel e os que teem carego do estudo som Requeridos que digam quaaes som os que asy leem continuamente e som lentes E per elles he dado Roll de todollos escolares que nom fica nenhuu // E todos os poem por escussados E segundo algua enformaçom que se sobre elo pode auer dalguns que teem bees e som procuradores e outros doutra condiçom e som cassados que asy nom podem ouuir continuamente por terem outros trabalhos e uiuerem por seus bees e procuradorios os quaaes ataa ora nom som costrangidos porem a uossa merçee ueja esto E sy ouuer algus desta condiçom se se costrangeram segundo ha declaracom que paguem.

Os dictos escolares se me enuirom sobrello agrauar E eu lhe mandey Responder que elles nom dessem mais em Roll que os [que] continuamente lessem // E uos Releuaae os que nos asy deRem em Roll que nom paguem sendo çertos que continuamente leem. E se ho contrairo achardes costrangee os que paguem

Conprase a dicta declaraçom.

.....

Conpra se o capitollo da hordenaçom sobresto.

Fecto scripto na Cidade de uora bj dias de feureiro paayz Rodrijuez o fez anno do nosso senhor Jhesu Christo de mjll iiij Riij

Joham daluaro gonçallvez Johanes dornelas

Conçertado com original per mjm aluaro uasquez scpriuam com Joham gonçalluez moço dos contos.

Aluarus”

(Pedro, 1970a, p. 365-366) Carta n.º. 1292. *Chartularium Universitatis Portugalensis* [1443], v. IV.

⁹“Ano do Nascimento de noso Senhor Jhesus Christo de mjl e iiij^e e quoremta dous annos xxiiij dias do mês de Junho em a cidade de lixboa demtro em o collegio do studo da dita çidade peramte pero steuez scollar em canones e logoteemte por uasco gil conseruador do dito studo em presemça de mjm bras afomso bedel e publico scripuam do dito studo per autoridade real e testemunhas que adiante som escriptas pareceo gomez lourenço leemte de degretaães a ora da prima e mostrou huua carta do Senhor Jfamte Dom pedro Regedor e com ajuda de deus defensor por el rej de sseus regnos e Senhorio sem alguu vitio e sospeiçam saã e ascellada do seelo do dito Senhor segumdo per ella parecia cujo theor de uerbo a uerbo se adiamte segue:

(Transcreve a carta do Infante D. Pedro de 18 de Junho de 1442)

Da qual carta asi mostrada peramte o dito pero steuez logoteemte o dito gomez lourenço leemte em nome da dita vniuerssidade dise que se temja de se a dita carta perder per fogo ou per agoa ou per outro alguu caso fortuito. E porem nomine quo supra pidija ao dito logoteemte que jnterpoemdo ssua autoridade mamdasse a mjm dito bedel que trasladasse a dita carta em este liuro da dita vniuerssidade E o dito logoteemte vista a dita carta e o pedir do dito gomez lourenço mandou a mjm dito bras afonso bedel que traslladasse a dita em o dito liuro jnterpoemdo o dito logoteemte ssua autoridade hordenaria dezemdo que fizesse fe asi como ho original. Testemunhas Joham gomez de abreu e lopo da silua e martim afomso seu aio e vaasco fernandez natural de cojnbra todos em derejto studantes E outros E eu dito bras afonso bedel scripuam publico do dito studo que este stormento screpuj e aqui meu publico sinal fiz que tal he” (Pedro, 1970e, p. 354) Carta n.º. 1279. *Chartularium Universitatis Portugalensis* [1442], v. IV.

¹⁰“Dom afomso etc. todollos juizes e justiças dos nossos Regnos a que esta carta foi mostrada saude sabede que nos querendo fazer graça e merçee a Joham Rodrigues morador Em esta çidade de lixboa pello de bras affomso bedel da uniuersidade do estudo dessa çidade de lixboa que nollo por ell pedio teemos por bem e damollo por porteyro perante ho conseruador da uniuersidade do estudo desta dicta çidade de lixboa e esso mesmo ho damos por sacador das cousas e diuedas do dicto estudo asy como ho era Ruy uasquez que o dicto ofiço tinha per nossa carta e se finou e porem mandamos ao dicto conseruador da huniuersidade do dicto estudo e a outros quaaesquer que ouuerem de ueer e o conhiçimento dello pertencer que o leixem serujr e hussar do dicto ofiço e auer as prooes dell e fazer as Enxuquações per as sentenças mandadas e diuedas que a dicta huniuersidade e estudo pertençam as quaaes Rematações fara perante tabeliam ou escpriuam que a ello aja lugar” (Pedro, 1970c, p. 382). Carta °. 1307. *Chartularium Universitatis Portugalensis* [1443], v. IV.

¹¹“Requerendo primeiramente as partes se querem pagar e aos tempos E lugares de uudos

segundo custume e nossas hordenações de guissa que nom Erre Em seu ofício sem outro nenhuu Enbargo que lhe sobreello seja posto o qual joham Rodriguez Jurou Em a nossa chancelaria aos santos auangelhos que bem e diretamente e como deue obre e huse do dicto ofício e guarde os direitos a todallas partes sob as penas por nos dadas aquelles que o contrario fizerem Outrosy queremos e mandamos que porquanto ha de fazer as dictas enxuqações e Rematações que possa trazer suas armas per hu quer que andar sem lhe seendo tomadas nem contadas sem Enbargo da nossa hordenaçam saluo sendo achado elle fazendo com ellas o que nom deue fazer e que eso mesmo aja todallas graças merçees e liberdades e honrras que os estudantes e ofíciaaes da dicta huniuersidade am e asy mandamos aos apouentadores E a outros quaaesquer que esto ouuerem de ueer que lhas compam e guardem e façom conprir e guardar en todo e per todo asi e pella guisa que se entende nos ditos estudantes e ofíciaaes e nos dictos priuilegios he conteudo porquanto nossa merçee he vontade he de se em elle entenderem e lhe ser esta carta Em todo conprida e guardad sem outro Enbargo que lhe sobre ello seja posto em nenhua maneira que seja hunde al nom façades.

Dada Em a çidade de lixboa xbij dias de mayo per autorjdade do senhor ifante dom pedro Regente etc^a afomso vasquez a fez ano de nosso Senhor de mjll iiij^e Riiij anos” (Pedro, 1970c, p. 383). Carta n^o. 1307. *Chartularium Universitatis Portugalensis* [1443], v. IV.

¹²“Dom affomso etc. A quantos esta carta virem fazemos saber que Nos querendo fazer graça e merçee a graça lourenço molher que foy daffomso annes bedel que foe dos escollares desta çidade pollo de diego afomso escudeiro criado do Jffante dom Pedro meu muyto prezado armado tyo E padre nosso titor E curador Regedor E defensor por Nos de nossos Regnos e Senhorio que nollo por ella pedyo Teemos por bem E queremos E mandamos que enquanto esteuer viuuva em ssua honrra aja todollos priuilegeos graças e merçees e liberdades que aueria sse o dicto marido fosse viuo E Porem mandamos a quaaesquer Justiças E nossos ofíciaaes e pessoas a que esta carta for mostrada que lha conpram E guardem como susso dicto he ssem Outro alguu Enbargo nem duueda que a ello ponhaes Ca sejam çertos os que contra este nosso priuilegeo forem que lho Estranharemos grauemente ssegundo acharmos que o merçeer. Dada em a çidade de lixboa xxx dias de mayo per autoridade do Senhor Regente etc^a steuam vaasquez a fez ano de nosso Senhor Jhesu christo de mjl iiij^e e Riiij annos” (Pedro, 1970g, p. 384) Carta n^o. 1309. *Chartularium Uniersitatis Portugalensis* [1443], v. IV.

¹³“Dom affomso etc. A quantos esta carta virem fazemos saber que Nos querendo fazer graça e merçee a graça lourenço molher que foy daffomso annes bedel que foe dos escollares desta çidade pollo de diego afomso escudeiro criado do Jffante dom Pedro meu muyto prezado armado tyo E padre nosso titor E curador Regedor E defensor por Nos de nossos Regnos e Senhorio que nollo por ella pedyo Teemos por bem E queremos E mandamos que enquanto esteuer viuuva em ssua honrra aja todollos priuilegeos graças e merçees e liberdades que aueria sse o dicto marido fosse viuo E Porem mandamos a quaaesquer Justiças E nossos ofíciaaes e pessoas a que esta carta for mostrada que lha conpram E guardem como susso dicto he ssem Outro alguu Enbargo nem duueda que a ello ponhaes Ca sejam çertos os que contra este nosso priuilegeo forem que lho Estranharemos grauemente ssegundo acharmos que o merçeer. Dada em a çidade de lixboa xxx dias de mayo per autoridade do Senhor Regente etc^a steuam vaasquez a fez ano de nosso Senhor Jhesu christo de mjl iiij^e e Riiij annos” (Pedro, 1970h, p. 398). Carta n^o. 1309. *Chartularium Uniuersitatis Portugalensis* [1443], v. IV.

¹⁴“[...] Afonso IV reiterated the privilege granted by his predecessor to the knights of

Santarém, which exempted them from having their weapons and mounted mounts pawned, adding that this exemption extended to their clothing and bedding. Sometimes this privilege covered other goods, above all those that ensured the subsistence of the knights and that guaranteed them the maintenance of a stable economic level that allowed the maintenance of horses and weapons. In this sense, D. Dinis would have exempted the residents of Alcoutim from being pawned on their horses, crossbows, weapons and clothes, but also on their plow oxen. The Crown, one of the main victims of the debts incurred by many of these knights, hesitated between receiving what it was entitled to and guaranteeing effective military service. Therefore, D. Pedro I sought to clarify the matter once and for all, determining, in 1361, in the courts of Elvas, that those who had weapons and horses for the king's service would not be pawned on these goods [...]" (Martins, 2014, p. 129).

¹⁵It is necessary to consider that throughout the 13th century, in France and in Lombardy, measures taken by kings and popes were promoting the development of the University and establishing laws that ensured the protection of men of knowledge. One of the notable examples is the **Letter 443, (1272)**. *Carlos I, rei de Sicília, convida doutores e alunos de Paris para que venham Nápolis, onde instaurou o estudo geral por motivo de ensino e aprendizagem* (Carlos I, 1964, p. 501).

¹⁶"Dom afomso etc. A quantos esta carta virem ffazemos saber que consirando Nos como os Estudos que ora mandamos fazer em a çidade de cojnbra he obra ssanta E de grande honra E proueito pera terra Nosa merçee he apropiarmos aa dicta obra todolos rregidoos da dicta çidade e seu termo des o tempo que se acabou a merçee que deles tjnhamos ffecta a dicta çidade E porem mandamos a pero diaz juiz dos dictos rreguydoos em a dicta çidade E a outro quallquer que ao djante for que costrangam o procurador dos dictos rreguydoos que ssayba delles parte E os demande per a dicta obra E os djnheiros que se desta rrecadarem rreçaba o thesoureiro da dicta obra. E o Estpriuam do seu ofiçio ponhaos sobre ell em rreçepa pero todo o vijr a boa rrecadaçom E em testemunho desto mandamos fazer esta carta. Fecta em a cjdade de lixboa iiiij dias de Julho per autoridade do Senhor jfante dom pedro etc. Rodrigo eanes a fez ano de noso Senhor Jhesu christo de mjll E Riijº E eu lopo afomso Estpriuam da puridade a fiz estpreuer" (Pedro, 1970d, p. 419) Carta nº. 1349. *Chartularium Universitatis Portugalensis* [1443], v. IV.