

Suffixal changes in Middle Portuguese

Mudanças sufixais no Português Médio

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24206/lh.v6i1.31282>

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ABSTRACT

The 2nd stage of Old Portuguese, also called Middle Portuguese, is a high period of major changes in the history of the Portuguese language. The changes in deverbal noun formation with the suffixes *-mento*, *-ção* and *-nça* have decisively contributed to the codification of innovative concepts and to the new configuration of the derivational patterns of Modern Portuguese. The motivations of the decline of some suffixes forming deadjectival and deverbal nouns are analysed in order to evaluate their conformity with the prototypical solutions of linguistic change. The solutions adopted by some deverbal nouns sharing the same base but containing different suffixes reveal different paths, in function of the suffixal resources involved and their ‘internal’ and ‘external’ circumstances. We claim that the unavailability – after the 15th and 16th centuries – of *-nça*, an archaic and non-learned form, in contrast with the prestigious configuration of the neoclassical *-ncia*, must be taken as a defining feature of the changes characterizing Middle Portuguese.

Keywords: Deverbal and deadjectival affixation. Derivational change. Affixal competition. Middle Portuguese.

RESUMO

A 2ª etapa do Português Antigo, também denominada ‘português médio’, é um período de grandes mudanças na história da língua portuguesa. As mudanças na formação de substantivos deverbais portadores dos sufixos *-mento*, *-ção* e *-nça* contribuíram decisivamente para a codificação de conceitos inovadores e para a nova configuração dos padrões derivacionais do português moderno. São analisadas as motivações do declínio de alguns sufixos formando substantivos deadjectivais e deverbais para avaliar a sua conformidade com as soluções prototípicas de mudança linguística. As soluções adotadas por alguns substantivos deverbais que compartilham a mesma base, mas que contêm diferentes sufixos, revelam diferentes percursos, em função dos recursos sufixais envolvidos, e das suas circunstâncias ‘internas’ e ‘externas’. Neste estudo sustentamos que a indisponibilidade – após os séculos XV e XVI – de *-nça*, uma forma arcaica e não erudita, em contraste com o prestígio da correspondente forma neoclássica *-ncia*, deve ser tomada como uma característica definidora das mudanças que caracterizam o português médio.

Palavras-chave: Afixação deverbal e deadjetival. Mudança derivacional. Competição afixal. Português médio.

Introduction

The 2nd stage of Old Portuguese, also called Middle Portuguese, is a high period of major changes in the history of the language. This is a period – from 1375 to 1475 – of “transition” (MICHAËLIS DE VASCONCELOS, 1930, p. 31) between Galician-Portuguese and Modern Portuguese. According to Castro (1993, p. 97), “the period between the reigns of King Fernando [1345-1383] and King Afonso V [1438-1481] was, from the linguistic point of view, that in which the Portuguese language has changed the fastest and most essentially”. Cardeira (2005, p. 286-287) states that in this critical period for the new face of Portuguese, a crucial trend reversal – between 1425 and 1475 – takes place. During this period, the chroniclers Fernão Lopes and Gil Eanes de Zurara, as well as the princes of the House of Aviz (João I, Duarte, Afonso V, João II, Manuel I and Pedro, Duke of Coimbra) played a major role in the modernisation of Portugal and its national idiom. The renewal of the Portuguese society, culture and language is inseparable from this generation (MATTOS E SILVA, 2002, p. 38).

Changes occurred within derivational morphology have had great impact on the lexicon.

We claim that the changes in the domain of deverbal noun formation with the suffixes *-mento*, *-ção* and *-nça* are crucial markers of such periodisation. As these suffixes profile the expression of situations, events and states, they are the most conducive to codify the new conceptual and speculative linguistic representations of this period of prolific conceptualization and they have decisively contributed to the new configuration of the lexical patterns of Modern Portuguese. The formation of some deadjectival stative nouns are also analysed because of their semantic network with the deverbal ones. Section 1. describes the defining features of Middle Portuguese. Sections 2 presents an overview of the representativeness of the suffixes *-mento*, *-ção* and *-nça* along the centuries. Section 3 describes the suffixes *-mento*, *-ção* and *-nça* in Medieval Portuguese. Section 4. analyses the motivations of the suffixal changes in the interior of deverbal and deadjectival noun patterns, and the resulting effects in the organisation of the nominalising framework. The last section contains the conclusions.

1. The Middle Portuguese: some defining features

As Galves (2006, p. 48) points out “In the periodization of the Portuguese language history [...] there are two turning points corresponding to the emergence of new grammars: the frontier between the 14th and 15th centuries and the beginning of the 18th century”.

Some of the important changes characterising Middle Portuguese (CASTRO, 2006; MAIA, 1997, 1994, 1995; MATTOS E SILVA, 1989, 1994, 2002, 2008) are listed below:

- (i) the syncope of intervocalic *-d-* in the morpheme of the 5th person of the verbs, and the subsequent diphthong resulting from the vowel sequence;
- (ii) the elimination of great part of the vowel sequences resulting from the syncope of intervocalic *-l-* and *-n-* (even though not all hiatuses were eliminated in the beginning of the 15th century);
- (iii) the nasal endings of nouns and verbs have merged into *-ão*;
- (iv) *-vel* develops into the configuration <vil> between 1440 and 1450 (CARDEIRA, 2005, p. 229);
- (v) the increasing reduction of the system of four sibilants into two predorsodental sibilants;
- (vi) the loss of gender biunovocicity (masculine and feminine) of nouns ending in *-or* and *-ês* (MAIA, 1994, p. 43);
- (vii) the replacement, within the system of possessives, of the unstressed form with the stressed ones.

The books of King Duarte – *Livro dos conselhos de El-Rei D. Duarte*, known as *livro da Cartuxa* (cf. DIAS, 1982), *Livro da Enseñança de bem cavalgar* and *Leal Conselheiro* (cf. PIEL, 1942), prepared between 1428 and 1438 – illustrate the innovative changes characterising this period. Oliveira Martins (1993, p. 135) summarises as follows their relevance:

O Leal Conselheiro, as one of the earliest works for the history of the Portuguese language, is also a considerable work for the parallel history of the secularisation of thought initiated in the 15th century. In the same way that *language*, as said in vernacular idiom, would serve beyond its familiar

uses, invading the sphere of science and arts: likewise, these superior thinking's products ceased to be the exclusive prerogative of the clergy, to whom Latin was one of the sources of their social advantages.

In fact, with regard to the syncope of intervocalic *-d-* in the morpheme of verb's 5th person (*e(d)es*), King Duarte makes use of syncopated verbal forms (*Verb Root +ees* rather than *Verb Root +edes*, the old one), in accordance with the most advanced standards of royal and written language, where syncopated forms clearly predominate over the non-syncopated ones (with intervocalic */d/*). The great leap (from 20% to 100%) in the syncope of *-d-* in the 5th person takes place between 1410 and 1438 (CARDEIRA, 2005, p. 180), as attested by the *Livro da Enseñança de bem cavalgar* of King Duarte. As Leite de Vasconcelos (1928) points out, in *Leal Conselheiro*, syncopated forms (*fazes* 'you [5th person] do') — those preferred by King Duarte — still coexist with the non-syncopated ones (*fazedede* 'you [5th person] do'), which the king uses when he transcribes older texts.

Another relevant change in this period is the replacement of participle morpheme *-udo* in the 2nd conjugation verbs by the configuration *-ido* (*perdudo* > *perdido* 'lost < *perder* 'to loose'). The two significant moments of this change are 1300-1330 and 1410-1438. The new configuration is represented in the book *Livro da Enseñança de bem cavalgar* (CARDEIRA, 2005, p. 216) of King Duarte.

One of the innovations documented in the *Livro dos conselhos de El-Rei D. Duarte* concerns the final convergence in *-ão* (cf. the evolution of nouns ending with *-TIONEM* > *çõ*, *çom* > *çam* > *çãõ*) of verbal and nominal nasalized sequences. According to Cardeira (2005, p. 163), in this book King Duarte uses 39.6% of non-etymological forms in the nouns ending in *-ONEM*, compared to 33.7% present in non-literary texts analysed by the author. The non-etymological forms of *-ão* increases in the second half of the 14th century and from 1400-1424 to 1475 it is accentuated, with great peaks in 1375 and 1450-1475 (CARDEIRA, 2005, p. 152).

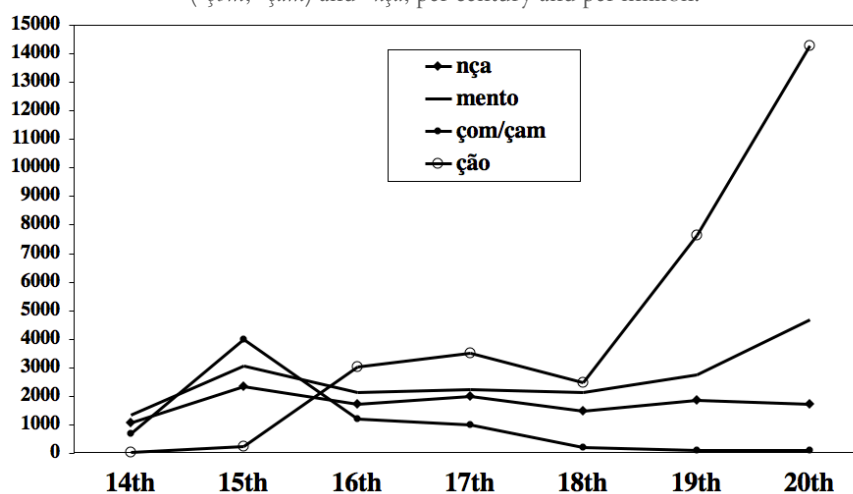
For all these reasons, literary Portuguese from the Aviz generation and the Portuguese language of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries are too far away from the Galician-Portuguese language, mirroring all the changes in the society where it was used and produced, such as the displacement of cultural, political and military decision-centers from the northern to the centern-south and the ongoing social changes, with the growing influence of the bourgeoisie and of the renewed upper class that emerged from the crisis of independence (1385).

2. The suffixes *-mento*, *-ção* and *-nça* along the centuries

The www.corpusdoportugues.org (available online: 2018/03/09), with its 45 million data extracted from several textual sources (1200-1900), provides an overview of the evolution in terms of representativeness of each derivational suffix under analysis.

For this purpose, a search for nouns – only in their singular form – containing the suffixes *-mento*, *-ção* (and the variants *-çom* and *-çam*) and *-nça* is carried out, in order to get a representation of the number of occurrences per million of every suffix in each century. The results of this search are shown in the graph below. The representativeness of a suffix will be measured not only quantitatively, but will also take in account its weight within the derivational system, in accordance with the semantic information it carries, the conceptual areas in which it works and the combinations it enters into. The election of the ‘rate of occurrences per million’ – instead of ‘global token of each suffix per century’ – provides a more objective and transversal indicator of the relative weight of the suffix in the whole database.

Graph 1 – Number of occurrences of nouns suffixed with *-mento*, *-ção* (*-çom*, *-çam*) and *-nça*, per century and per million.



Source: www.corpusdoportugues.org.

The data of this graph show that:

- (i) The temporal gap between the 15th and 16th centuries corresponds to a stage of deep changes in the patterns of representativeness of the suffixes *-mento*, *-ção* /*çom*, *çam* and *-nça*.

- (ii) In absolute terms, *-çãõ* is the most represented suffix over the centuries (especially after the 16th century, and with great contribution of the 20th century), followed by *-mento* and then by *-nça*.
- (iii) The low representativeness of the form *-çãõ* in the 14th and 15th centuries is related to the great extent of use the variants *-çom* and *-çam*. The decrease in the variants *-çom* and *-çam*, accomplished after the 16th century, is counterbalanced by the greater presence of *-çãõ* in the same period: the number of occurrences of *-çãõ* increased tenfold from the 15th century to the 16th. The abissal grow of occurrences in the 20th century is due to the fact that the suffix is mandatory with the very productive verbal suffixes *-iz-* (*idealização* 'idealization') and *-ific-* (*santificação* 'sanctification').
- (iv) The suffix *-mento* experiences a slight decrease of its representativeness from the 15th century, precisely when *-çãõ* becomes more powerful in the same derivational paradigm. In 1536, in the first grammar of Portuguese – *Gramática da Linguagem Portuguesa* – Fernão de Oliveira (2000, cap. XLII: 140) is sensitive to deverbal nouns suffixed by *-mento* that are considered as old and outdated.
- (v) *-nça* has always been a singular suffix, with its representativeness being more monotonic from the 16th century. In the 14th century its weigh was, from a numerical point of view, similar to the others. The 15th century represented its apogee, but it registers a rate of occurrence lower than that of *-çãõ* or *-mento*. After this golden period of the doctrinaire and eloquent prose of Aviz, a progressive decline occurs: from the 15th to the 16th century the suffix occurrences fell notably, both in absolute and relative terms, and it has become the least represented suffix of the three.

According to Maia (1995, p. 27-28), the period from the second half of the 15th century and the beginning of the 16th century corresponds to the final stages of any process of change: that of selection, in which the alternating use of competing forms occurs, and that of mutation, where one of the forms rises to the category of constant.

The coexistence, in the same period, of differently suffixed nouns sharing the same root coerces the changes in the interior of the derivational domain. As graph 1 illustrates, these changes have been

triggered gradually. In the following sections we will observe how these changes manifest in some selected texts of this stage of the language history. We claim that the unavailability of *-nça* as a nominalising suffix, as well as the concomitant reconstruction of the system, defines the end of Middle Portuguese.

The knowledge about the behaviour of Latin cognate suffixes don't elucidate the motivations that can explain the path of each suffix in Old Portuguese. The observation of *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* carried out by Olcott (1898) reveals that the suffix *-TĪO* (*ADMIRATĪO*, *COMMEMORATĪO*) is the most documented (1450 derivatives) in all Latin periods and levels. *-NT-ĪA* must have prevailed in *Sermo Vulgaris*, with 343 derivatives (*ABUNDANTIA*, *ABSTINENTIA*, *OBSERVANTIA*). With regard to *-MENTUM*, with only 55 occurrences collected (e.g. *ADORNAMENTUM*, *INCREMENTUM*), many doubts about its productivity in Latin arise: as Olcott (1898, p. 123) asserts, "If there was any significant choice of suffix in the later period [6th and 7th cent.], all that can be said is that *men* tended to be used for concrete substantives, and *mentum* to become abstract; and this gradual differentiation unquestionably arose out of the earlier *sermo vulgaris*".

3. The suffixes *-mento*, *-ção* and *-nça* in Medieval Portuguese

Soledad (2004) studies a wide range of suffixes in diverse textual sources – supported by critical editions of great accuracy – of medieval Portuguese in its first and second stages¹. The occurrence rates for each suffix vary according to the types of texts where they occur in. Nevertheless, the numerical data reflect the relative weight of each suffix in the paradigm it belongs to. The data collected by the author are the following:

¹ The data collected by SOLEDAD 2004 are typologically diverse. The sources selected are:

- (i) poetic texts: end of 13th century – beginning of the 14th century: glossary of critical edition of *Cancioneiro da Ajuda* [CDA], (Carolina Michaëlis de Vasconcelos, 1990). *Cancioneiro da Ajuda*. Vol. I (*Glossário do Cancioneiro da Ajuda*). Revista Lusitana, vol. XXIII, 1920. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda; end of 12th century – 14th century, glossary of critical edition of [CEMD] *Cantigas de escárnio e de mal dizer* (M. Rodrigues Lapa, 1965. *Cantigas d'escarnho e de mal dizer*. Coimbra: Galaxia); 13th century, glossary of critical edition of [CSM] *Cantigas de Santa Maria* (Walter Mettmam, 1972. *Cantigas de Santa Maria*. Vol. IV (*glossário*). Coimbra: Universitatis Conimbrigensis)
- (ii) non literary prose: end of 13th century : glossary of critical edition of [FR] *Foro Real* (José de Azevedo Ferreira, 1987. *Foro Real*, vol. II (*glossário*). Lisboa: INIC).
- (iii) literary prose, translated: end of 14th century ([DSG] *Índice geral de palavras lexicais dos Diálogos de São Gregório*: Rosa Virgínia Mattos e Silva, 1971. *A mais antiga versão portuguesa dos quarto livros dos Diálogos de São Gregório*. Vol. IV (*índice geral das palavras lexicais*). Tese de Doutoramento. São Paulo: Universidade de São Paulo), and written in portuguese (Bertil Maler, 1964. [OE] 1380-1390 *Orto do Esposo*. Vol III (*glossário*). Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell).

Table 1 - Number of occurrences of nouns with the suffixes *-mento*, *-çã* and *-nça*.

Suffixes	Occurrences and % in the 1 st stage	Occurrences and % in the 2 nd stage	Occurrences and % of each suffix in relation to the whole <i>corpus</i> of the nouns containing these suffixes
<i>-mento</i>	79 [32.5%]	144 [41%]	223 [37.5%]
<i>-çã</i> ²	87 [35.8 %]	110 [31.4%]	197 [31.2%]
<i>-nça</i>	77 [31.7 %]	97 [27.6%]	174 [29.3%]
total	243 [100%]	351 [100%]	594 [100%]

Source: Soledad (2004).

In the first stage, the representativeness rate of each suffix is quite similar: *-çã* (and *-çom*) show a slightly higher occurrence. In the second stage the suffix *-mento* gains ground, moving away from *-çã* by about 10% (cf. Table 1). The suffix *-nça* is the least represented in both stages.

As the number of occurrences is indexed to a given textual corpus and varies with the typological nature of the sources³, we have opted here for an analysis of the occurrences by lemmas in the first and in the second stages, and also by work, in the second stage (cf. Table 2).

The results described in the following table show a slight prevalence of *-mento* over *-çã*, which is greater in the second stage than in the first. In both periods *-nça* has a more modest place.

Table 2 - Number of lemmas of nouns containing the suffixes *-mento*, *-çã* and *-nça* in Middle Portuguese.

Suffixes	1st stage <1440	2nd stage >1440	2nd stage ⁴			
			CD Pedro 1440-1450	CDP Menezes 1463	VFJ César 1466	VFD João II 1533
<i>mento</i>	70 (39.1%)	123 (47.1%)	24	36	29	34
<i>çã</i>	64 (35.8%)	80 (30.7%)	18	19	11	32
<i>nça</i>	45 (25.1%)	58 (22.2%)	16	17	12	13
total	179 (100%)	261 (100%)				

Source: Own elaboration on the basis of Soledad (2004).

² In SOLEDAD, 2004, the tables of *-çã* include the variants *-çã* and *-çom*.

³ The sources belong to several authors (Fernão Lopes, Gomes Eanes de Zurara, Garcia de Resende) and to diverse textual typology: VFJ César 1466 is a translation and the other are original Portuguese written texts; this diversity can determine differences in the representativeness of each suffix.

⁴ The data of 2nd stage / Middle Portuguese are extracted from the first 100 pages of the following texts:

- (i) [CDP] forth *Decade* [1440-50] de XV *Crónica de D. Pedro*, de Fernão Lopes (edizione critica, com introduzione e glosario por Giuliano Macchi, 1966. Roma: Ateneo);
- (ii) [CDPM] 1463 *Crónica de D. Pedro de Menezes*, de Gomes Eanes de Zurara. Edição e estudo de M. Teresa Brocardo, 1997. Lisboa: FCG e JNICT;
- (iii) [VFJC] 1466 *Vida e feitos de Júlio César* (ed. Maria Helena Mira Mateus, 1971. Lisboa: FCG);
- (iv) [VFDJII] 1533 *Vida e feitos de D. João II*, de Garcia de Resende (ed. Evelina Verdelho, 1994. In: *Livro das obras de Garcia de Resende*. Lisboa: FCG).

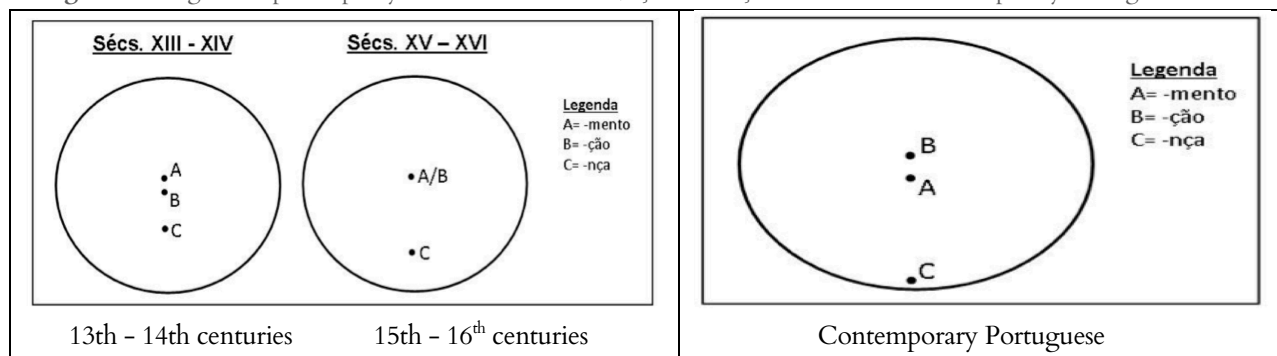
The suffix *-nça* is the least represented of the three suffixes, either in any of the works (12 to 17 lemmas) or in both temporal stages (a total of 58 lemmas in the second stage and 45 in the first).

The most represented suffix is *-mento* (123 lemmas in the second stage and 70 in the first), with its representativeness being increased from 39.1% in the first stage to 47.1% in the second stage. The suffix *-çã* experiences a decrease from the first stage (35.8%) to the second stage (30.7%). However, in VFD João II (1533), the representativeness of *-çã* (32 lemmas) is quite close to that of *-mento* (34 lemmas), moving significantly away from that of *-nça* (13 lemmas).

Cross-referencing the data extracted from www.corpusdoportugues.org with those of Soledad, the results obtained are coincident, namely regarding suffixal losses and gains from the first to the second stage of Portuguese. In both databases, and if we take into account those collected until the 16th century, the representativeness of the suffixes is identical: lemmas with *-mento* display a slight prevalence over *-çã* in the first stage (cf. Table 3) and the reverse situation occurs with *-çom/-çam/-çã* in terms of occurrences (cf. Table 2); *-nça* occupies allways the third place.

The number of lemmas with *-mento* increases from the first to the second stage, being widely represented in the 15th century. *Çom* and *çam* are almost non-existing variants in the second stage and from the 16th century the form *-çã* stabilizes its position on the outlined suffix scale. The representativeness of the suffix *-nça*, which had reached its apogee in the 15th century, would continue to decrease. Contrarily to the results by Soledade – showing that in both stages the presence of *-mento* is always slightly superior than that of *-çã* –, the data displayed by the www.corpusdoportugues.org evidence a numerical swift between *-mento* and *-çã* along the transition from the 15th to the 16th/17th centuries, with a clear prevalence of *-çã*. The 19th and 20th centuries are of great editorial and lexical expansion, and *-çã* becomes more productive than *-mento*.

A similar description of the degrees of prototypicality of the suffixes *-mento*, *-çã* and *-nça* in Old Portuguese is provided by Simões (2010) (cf. Fig. 1). As the following figure shows, the centrality of *-mento* in the first stage has been shared with *-çã* in the second stage. After this period *-çã* becomes the most central. The peripheric status of *-nça* increased more and more. In this figure topological centrality correponds to prototypical centrality.

Figure 1 - Degrees of prototypicality of the suffixes *-mento*, *-ção* and *-nça* in Old and in Contemporary Portuguese.

Source: Own elaboration on the basis of Simões (2010, p. 35, 37).

Among the materials gathered by Soledade (2004), are worthy of note deverbals nouns marked with † representing words that do not make part of Modern Portuguese language, such as:

- (1) †*contradizimento* (<*contradizer* ‘to contradict’), †*desfazimento* (<*desfazer* ‘to undo’), †*desnaturamento* ‘denaturation’, †*empeecimento* (<*empecer* ‘to prevent’), †*exalçamento* (<*exalçar/exaltar*; exaltation).

Other derived nouns with *-mento* were replaced with nouns sharing the same root and having another morphological structure (suffixed or not), such as (2):

- (2) †*começamento* (< *começar* ‘to begin’) with *começo*, †*fallamento* (< *falar* ‘to speak’) with *fala*, †*difendimento* (< *defender* ‘to defend’) with *defesa*, †*mudamento* (< *mudar* ‘to change’) with *mudança*, †*rrecompensamento* (< *recompensar* ‘to reward’) with *recompensa*, †*saymento* (< *sair* ‘to leave’) with *saída*.

On the contrary, there are very few nouns ending in *-ção* that are not perpetuated until now, such as *cuydações* (< *cuydar* ‘to care’), *departições* (< *departir* ‘to divide, to separate’), *soplicaçom* (< *suplicar* ‘to beg’). This suffix is, in fact, the one recording fewer losses from Middle to Contemporary Portuguese. Nowadays we continue to use these nouns attested in Medieval Portuguese sources (cf. (3)), with different graphical configurations of the suffix (*-çam*, *-çom*, *-som* > *ção*):

- (3) *Comgregação* ‘congregation’, *Comparações* ‘comparisons’, *Confirmação* ‘confirmation’, *Comsollação* ‘comsolation’, *Contradiçam* ‘contradiction’, *Conversaçom* ‘conversation’, *Criaçom* ‘creation’, *Declaração* ‘declaration’, *Diffinçoões* ‘definitions’, *Doaçom* ‘donation’, *Execuçom* ‘execution’, *Imposiçam*

‘imposition’, *Invençom* ‘invention’, *Negoceações* ‘negociation’, *Rremdyção* ‘surrender’, *Rrepreensom* ‘reprimand’, *Reprementação* ‘representation’, *Traiçom* ‘betrayal’, *Trelladaçom* ‘tresladiation’, among many others.

In the case of *-mento*, the nouns marked with † represent about fifteen in a universe of 123 lemmas, that is, about 12.2%, including:

- (4) †*começamento* (<*começar* ‘to begin’), †*contradimento* (<*contradizer* ‘to contradict’), †*departimento* ‘departure’, †*desfazimento* (<*desfazer* ‘to undo’), †*desperçebimento* (<*desperceber* ‘to misunderstand’), †*difendimento* (<*defender* ‘to defend’), †*empeccimento* (<*empecer* ‘to prevent’), †*exalçamento* (<*exalçar/exaltar*; exaltation) †*fallamento* (< *falar* ‘to speak’), †*fornymemto* (<*fornir/fornecer* ‘to supply’), †*mudamento* (<*mudar* ‘to change’), †*rrecompensamento* (< *recompensar* ‘to reward’), †*saymento* (< *sair* ‘to leave’).

The nouns suffixed with *-nça* are those that at a large extent don’t make part of the modern lexicon, having been replaced by other nouns sharing the same root; the new derived nouns are:

- (5) a) Suffixed with *-ncia*:

avondança ‘abundance’ has been replaced with *abundancia*

comtenemças ‘containment’ has been replaced with *continência*

peendença ‘pending’ has been replaced with *pendência*

- b) Suffixed with *-mento*:

conhecenças ‘Knowledge’ has been replaced with *conhecimento*

prellomgamça ‘extension’ has been replaced with *prolongamento*

- c) Non suffixed:

Husança ‘use’ has been replaced with *uso*

mostrança ‘showing’ has been replaced with *mostra*

These seven words with *-nça* correspond to 10 occurrences in a universe of 58 occurrences suffixed with *-nça*, representing to about 17.2% of the losses of this suffix, the most eroded up to the present.

Despite the analysis of the path of some suffixed words with *-mento*, *-ção* and *-nça* over time (cf. 4.3), it is important to bear in mind the amount of competitive nominalising suffixes the language exhibits and the expectable pressure exerted on them for their reordering in a more optimized way.

4. Middle Portuguese: an overview of nominalising patterns of derivation

The derivational patterns of word formation are not immune to changes. We know that affixes gain and lose functional weight, that some are perceived as more fashionable/prestigious than others, that some suffixes and some derived nouns become unused and that both get features of expressiveness and/or subjectivity. Therefore, lexicon, as an encoder of the speakers' worldview and conceptualization, is both promotor and object of change.

In the period under review, the affixal nominalising patterns accounted for a significant upheaval, traduced by the reordering of some of their resources. This intraparadigmatic upheaval is co-related to the arrangement of the lexicon itself, which registers an enormous increase of new units with abstract meanings, in harmony with the philosophical and speculative content of the texts then produced.

The imperative of expanding the lexicon in order to satisfy the needs of codifying new concepts would result in an intense creation of Portuguese cultisms (MAIA, 1999, p. 89) that did enrich the inheritance from Greco-Latin origin of the Portuguese lexicon.

The emergence of lexical resources interferes with the previous ones, forcing their reorganisation and their updating, by favouring some of them and excluding others. The old competition between [+learned] and [-learned] structures has here a new occasion to act.

In order to observe how these changes take place, let us scrutinize data collected from *O Leal conselheiro* on the formation of eventive and/or stative nouns, since they are those which best illustrate the derivational trend reversal that defines Middle Portuguese.

4.1 Deadjectival and deverbal nouns

Some of the changes reported occur within the context of the following two patterns, whose domains partially intersect (cf. Table 3): that of deadjectival abstract nouns and that of deverbal eventive/stative nouns. As both paradigms have a large number of affixes, it is expectable that the language, in a period of accentuated reordering, would also discipline itself in this derivational scope.

Table 3 - Distribution of the eventive and/or stative meanings by deverbal and deadjectival nouns (symbol + presence; symbol - absence).

Meanings	Deverbal nouns	Deadjectival nouns
EVENTIVE	+	-
STATIVE	+	+

Source: Own elaboration.

The deverbal nominalising suffixes *-ção* and *-mento* form eventive and/or stative nouns and the deadjectival nominalisers *-idade*, *-eza*, *-ia*, *-ura* form quality nouns and /or stative nouns. The suffix *-nça*, as essentially deverbal, gives rise to stative and/or eventive nouns (RIO-TORTO, 2002, p. 457).

Let us take a look at the changes reported in *Leal Conselheiro* [1428-1438] under the suffixed nouns in *-eza* and *-nça*, two suffixes that share etymological forms containing short /ĩ/ (-ĪTĪA and -NTĪA, respectively).

Until then, the suffix *-eza* had a relative functional strength, making part of many nouns that still remain to the present day, such as *avareza* ‘avarice’, *firmeza* ‘firmness’, *fraqueza* ‘weakness’, *grandeza* ‘greatness’, *limpeza* ‘cleansing’, *riqueza* ‘wealth’, *tristeza* ‘sadness’. But this suffix, which combines essentially with morphologically simple bases (cf. *curteza* ‘shortness’, *crueza* ‘rawness’, *fineza* ‘finesse’, *pobreza* ‘poverty’, *rudeza* ‘rudeness’, among others) has lost power in relation to *-idade*, which becomes more available, as it has a huge range of combinatory possibilities, joining to differently suffixed bases (cf. RIO-TORTO; RODRIGUES, 2016), as in *-al* (*territorialidade* ‘territoriality’), *-ar* (*familiaridade* ‘familiarity’), *-ic-* (*periodicidade* ‘periodicity’), *-iv-* (*produtividade* ‘productivity’), *-os-* (*porosidade* ‘porosity’), *bil[vel]* (*adaptabilidade* ‘adaptability’).

Many of the nouns ending in *-eza* collected in *Leal Conselheiro* have been replaced (>) with nouns bearing other suffixes, such as:

- (6) *-ez* (3 out of 9):
- a) *escasesa* > *escaszez* ‘scarcity’;
 - b) *madureza* > *madurez* ‘maturity’;
 - c) *pequeneza* > *pequenez* ‘smallness’
- (7) *-ura* (1 out of 9):
- a) *blandeza* > *brandura* ‘softness’) and
- (8) *-idade* (4 out of 9), the most available suffix since then:
- a) *graveza* > *gravidade* ‘gravity’
 - b) *igualleza* > *igualdade* ‘equality’
 - c) *madureza* > *maturidade* ‘maturity’
 - d) *simpleza* > *simplicidade* ‘simplicity’

Almost all the nouns suffixed by *-idade* already mentioned remain in our contemporary lexicon. Among the nouns ending in *-idade* reported in *Leal Conselheiro* (*averssydade* ‘adversity’, *castidade* ‘chastity’, *contrariedade* ‘contrariness’, *enfirmydade* ‘illness’, *famylarydade* ‘familiarity’, *frieldade* ‘coldness’, *graciosidade* ‘graciosity’, *humildade* ‘humility’, *lealdade* ‘loyalty’, *occiosidade* ‘occiosity’, *purydade* ‘purity’), only *cujidade* (< *cujo* ‘whose’) has lacked continuity; *infielidade* ‘infidelity’ would be replaced with *infidelidade*, containing the learned root *fidel-*.

The decline of *-eza*, which is no longer available for new denominations, is in line with the dominant position of *-idade* within the pattern of dejectival nouns. An exception is given by the noun *levydade*, which has been replaced with *leveza*. The preference for *-ez* (*aridez* ‘aridity’, *fecundez* ‘fecundity’, *morbidez* ‘morbidity’) is in congruence with the language relatinisation, which contrasts with the popular and traditional nature of the nouns including *-eza* (*braveza* ‘braveness’, *certeza* ‘certainty’, *pobreza* ‘poverty’, *rudeza* ‘rudeness’).

Many nouns ending in *-ça* would no longer be used, being replaced with others that would gain the preference of later periods. In a relatinisation stage of the language, it is natural that some nouns ending in *-ça* (*avondança*, *concordança*) have been replaced with the neoclassical cognates in *-ncia* (*abundância*, *concordância*). Others were no longer used (*estremança* < *estremar* ‘to delimit land’s boundaries’) or have been replaced with post-verbal converted nouns (RIO-TORTO, 2019): *desesperança* (< *desesperar* ‘to despair’): *desespero*; *desgovernança* (< *desgovernar* ‘to mismanage’): *desgoverno*; *desvairança* (*desvairar* ‘to hallucinate’): *desvairo*; *mostrança* (< *mostrar* ‘to show’): *mostra* (coexisting with *mostramento*); *mudança* (< *mudar* ‘to change’): *muda* (coexisting with *mudamento*). The increasing

weight of *-idade* in the formation of stative deadjectival nouns is illustrated by the replacement of *desiguallança* with *desigualdade* and *igual(d)ança* with *igualdade*.

Since *-nça* is perceived as an archaic form, its correlate *-ncia* would succeed it through nouns existing nowadays, such as *alternância* ‘alternation’, *discordância* ‘disagreement’, *tráficança* ‘traffic’, *vivência* ‘experience’. The suffix *-nça* is then confined to stative (and old) nouns, such as *bonança* ‘calm’ ‘*maridança* (<*maridar* ‘to have/to live with an husband’), *semelhança* (<*semelhar* ‘to resemble’) and to nouns marked by meaning crystallisations (e.g. *crença(s)* ‘belief(s)’, *criança* ‘child’, *doença* ‘illness’, *lembrança(s)* ‘memory’, *poupança(s)* ‘savings(s)’). These circumstances shall have contributed for its decline and its residual weight in the derivational system.

In our opinion, in the period under analysis a more clear distribution is reached between the suffixes (i) that dominantly become ascribed to the formation of stative and deadjectival nouns, namely those ending in *-idade* and those (ii) that have mostly become associated with the pattern of deverbal noun’s formation: *-ção* and *-mento*. Deverbal nouns are predominantly (but not exclusively) eventive denotators, as they also encode states and/or results. The suffix *-nça* becomes obsolete (cf. *avondança*) and *-ncia* forms deverbal nouns that frequently (cf. *tolerância* ‘the act of tolerate [pt. *tolerar*]’ and ‘the fact of being *tolerante*’) allow an eventive and a stative reading (RIO-TORTO; ANASTÁCIO, 2004); because of its bivalent identity, the neoclassical *-ncia* (cf. *abundância*) has been incorporated by the new grammar organisation occurring in this period.

Nevertheless, is not excluded that, in the case of coexistence of nouns sharing the same root, the one bearing the suffix *-nça* has always ceased to be used, as the following examples illustrate: *mudança* is still in use nowadays, and *mudamento* fall out of use. The itinerary analysis of some derivatives sharing the same root and bearing *-nça*, *-mento* and *-ção* shows heterogeneous solutions (cf. 4.3.).

As the suffixes *-nça*, *-mento* and *-ção* are deverbal nominalising suffixes, their aspectual qualities are important to be analysed to clarify their importance and explain the changes reported.

4.2 Aspectual features of the suffixes

In accordance with the study carried out by Rodrigues (2008), the aspectual features of the suffixes *-ção*, *-mento* and *-nça* are well-differentiated in Contemporary Portuguese. The suffix *-ção* is characterised by an eventive and/or resultative aspectual meaning; the nouns (v.g. *helenização*, *parasitação*) can denote events, objects, qualities, states and they are marked by the [effecting] feature. The suffix *-mento* is an event nominaliser, so the derivatives (v.g. *empoderamento* ‘empowerment’) are marked by the [process] feature. Nouns with this suffix encode the event in its procedural course. In contrast, the suffix *-nça* is defined by the [constancy]/[state, capacity, characteristic, aptitud, intrinsic

quality] feature, and so many of its derived nouns have predominantly a stative *vs* eventive significance (61% against 16%). The tendency for nouns ending in *-nça* to denote the stative configuration of the event or the state itself is justified by the predominance of non-accusative (*avondança* (< *abundar* ‘to abound’), *nascença* ‘birth’, *perlongança* (< *prolongar* ‘to prolong’), *trigança* ‘hurry’) and inergative (*andança* ‘wandering’) bases, as evidenced by these derivatives since Medieval Portuguese.

Assuming that the denotation and the suffix combination conditions of nouns ending in *-ção*, *-mento* and *-nça* have not changed since Middle Portuguese, the intrinsic and the combinatorial properties of the suffix, as well as the intransitive nature of the bases selected by *-nça* play a central role in the suffix decline. As we have already observed in relation to *-eza*, more restricted combinatorial conditions lead to representativeness decrease. The functional space of the suffix *-nça*, mainly associated with a very restricted class of verbs – the intransitive ones –, can also be filled by other derivational resources, and the obsolescence of *-nça* favours the preservation of the other deverbal nominalizing procedures. The shift between *-nça* and *-ncia* and the subsequent removal of *-nça* is motivated by diachronic and diaphasic features, namely the archaic and non-learned form of *-nça* in contrast with the prestigious configuration of the neoclassical *-ncia*. The removal of the marked form one is one of the most prototypical solutions of linguistic change (cf. HICKEY, 2003; NEWMAYER, 2003). As both suffixal forms remain unavailable for new noun formations, it must be admitted that the desiderato of the system optimisation and cohesion have been got.

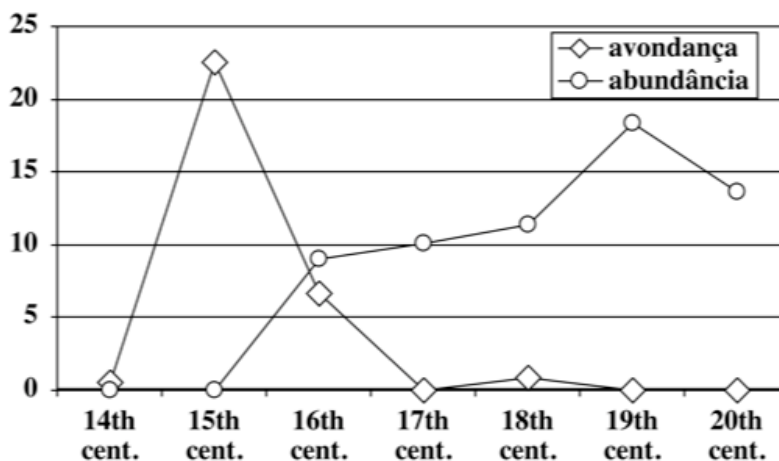
4.3 Itinerary of some pairs of nouns sharing the same root

The analysis of the suffix changes in specific nominal pairs sharing the same root may shed light on the possible reasons that motivate them. The changes may assume different ways: (i) removal of a suffixed form, which in the meantime has been replaced with another (ii) and /or coexistence with other forms of the same pattern of word-formation. When there is a coexistence in the lexicon of two suffixed nouns sharing the same root, these may be competing forms which, although equivalent, occur alternatively, as might have been the case of *mudança* and *mudamento* (< *mudar* ‘to change’), *mostrança* e *mostramento* (< *mostrar* ‘to show’), or may be semantically differentiated forms such as *radiância* and *radiação*.

Let us then take a close look at the movements of derived nouns sharing the same root and containing the suffixes *-nça*, *-ncia*, *-mento* and *-ção* as represented in the www.corpusdoportugues.org (accessed 08-03-2018). There are essentially four types of solutions.

(I) A solution of removal of [V-*nça*]_N and its replacement with [V-*ncia*]_N, after a short period of coexistence (cf. Graph 2): the removal of *-nça* occurs in *avondança* (dominant in the 15th century and removed after the 17th century); the coexistence with *abundância* (< *abundar* ‘to abound’) only takes place in the 16th century; after then the learned form replaced the old one.

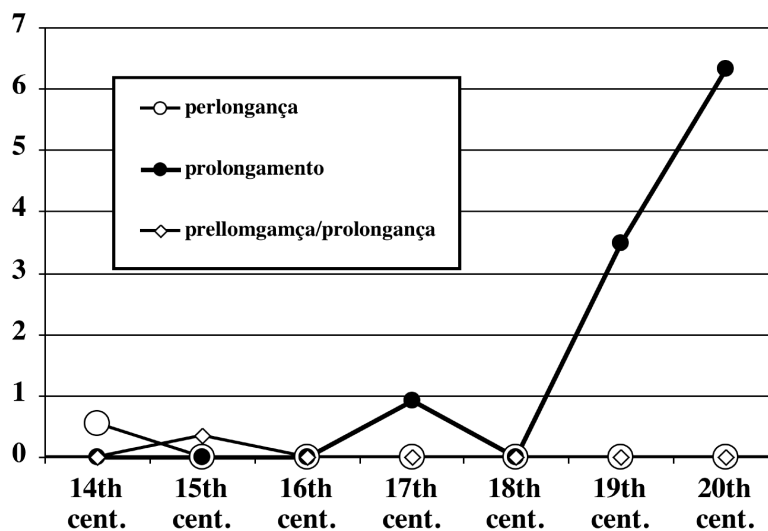
Graph 2 - *Avondança* and *abundância*.



Source: Own elaboration on the basis of www.corpusdoportugues.org.

(II) A solution of removal of [V-*nça*]_N and its replacement with [V-*mento*]_N (cf. Graph 3), with absolute assymetry over time. All the *-nça* derivatives whose base is the root of *prolongar* (‘to prolong’) have been removed – *perlongança* (one occurrence in the 14th century), *prellongamça* (CDPMenezes 1463) and *prolongança* (D. Pedro, *Benfeitoria*, 15th century) – and have been replaced with *prolongamento* (17th cent.), a noun sharing the same root (< *prolongar* ‘to prolong’) and also deverbal, but not previously attested.

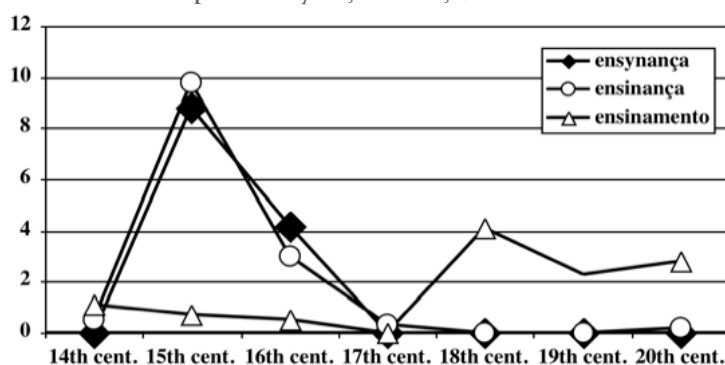
Graph 3 - *Prellongamça*, *prolongança* and *prolongamento*.



Source: Own elaboration on the basis of www.corpusdoportugues.org.

(III) A solution of removal of [V-*nça*]_N and its replacement with [V-*mento*]_N (cf. Graph 4): in the case of *ensinança* and *ensinamento* (< *ensinar* ‘to teach’), the decline of *ensinança* follows the tendency mentioned above, as the derivatives with *-nça* are perceived as more archaic and/or residual, as is evidenced with *ensinança* and (*h*)*usança* (< *usar* ‘to use’) in relation to *ensinamento*, *ensino* and *uso*, respectively. Such coexistence may give rise to a specialization in the meaning of each derived noun (*ensinamento* ‘lesson, doctrine’ and *ensino* ‘process and/or teaching outcome’) ⁵, thus maximizing the lexical resources.

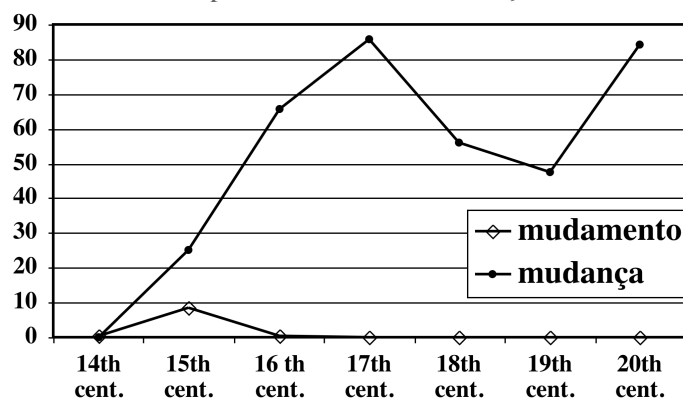
Graph 4 - *Ensynança/ensinança, ensinamento.*



Source: Own elaboration on the basis of www.corpusdoportugues.org.

(IV) A solution of removal of [V-*mento*]_N and its replacement with [V-*nça*]_N cf. Graph 5): over the period under review there is coexistence of some suffixed pairs sharing the same root, such as *mudamento* and *mudança* (< *mudar* ‘to change’); after this period, one of the derived nouns (*mudamento*) becomes extinct. The fact that the preserved noun carries *-nça* represents an unusual situation, but some deverbal nouns with *-mento* perceived as oldfashion fall out of use.

Graph 5 - *Mudamento and mudança.*



Source: Own elaboration on the basis of www.corpusdoportugues.org.

⁵ The nouns *ensinança* and *ensinamento* were used as equivalent in Middle Portuguese, although, depending on the context, their interpretation may be “lesson, process and/or teaching outcome, knowledge, experience, doctrine” (cf. RIO-TORTO, 2019).

The path of these differently suffixed nouns sharing the same root shows that, contrary to what we expect from economic and optimised systems, language coexists well during specific periods with co-occurring units – diversely suffixed and with the same root – that are not necessarily competitive or complementary to each other ⁶, being also almost equivalent (cf. *avondança* and *abundância*; *mudamento* and *mudança*).

The data above analysed show that during the transient period of Middle Portuguese changes of suffix preferences and/or prevalence between *-nça*, *-mento* and *-ção* have actually occurred. Irrespective of the motivations underlying the emergence of new deverbal derivatives with different suffixes other than those previously attested, in some cases the coexistence of derivatives sharing the same root (*governação*, *governança*) occurs during many centuries (cf. SIMÕES, 2010), and in others a form would have totally overlapped with the other (*perlongança* and *prolongamento*). In the first circumstance there will have been distinction and specialisation of the coexisting forms. In the second, the nouns sharing the same root were not complementary, but equivalent, and one of them has been removed.

Conclusions

The period of the language history known as late Middle Portuguese is a period of major derivational and lexical changes. In this second stage of Old Portuguese, some suffixes and some suffixed nouns sharing the same root decrease their occurrence, having been removed, because the language was progressively reordering itself, opting for more innovative, more prestigious and more balanced solutions.

Two derivational patterns are crucially involved in these changes: those of deadjectival nouns and deverbal nouns. In the first, the suffix *-eza* is replaced in many nouns with other suffixes, in particular *-ez*, *-ura* and above all *-idade* (cf. *igualleza* > *igualdade* ‘equality’). In the second, the suffix *-nça* is replaced with *-ncia*, *-mento*, *-ção* or, in some cases, the noun suffixed with *-nça* (*estremança*, *trigança*) vanishes from the available lexicon. Some nouns suffixed with *-mento* became obsolete and once discarded by the use (*começamento*, *fallamento*, *mudamento*, *saymento*), are outdated lexical units.

An effective reorganisation of the affixal system took place, as *-eza* and *-nça* became unavailable for the formation of deadjectival and deverbal nouns, respectively. Suffix shift and removal is related to (i) preferences avoiding archaicity and/or (ii) lack of prestige. But the lower degree of functionality and the more restricted combinatorial conditions generally correspond to a loss of availability and of

⁶ As Hamawand (2008) observes, in English this also occurs.

productivity. Since patterns tend to be optimised by limiting the number of suffixes to the most active and with a broader combinatorial spectrum, the competition between suffixes that could mutually exclude each other can only cease in order to an increased cohesion of the system.

Empirical data show that significant switches in the representativeness of some suffixes take place, especially in the second stage of Old Portuguese. At this stage the language incorporated an indelible change process, which definitely moves it away from Archaic Portuguese. The abandonment of older lexical and affixal units reflects the dynamics of emancipation and legitimation of both the Portuguese language and the society of those days.

Thus, the unavailability of *-nça* as a deverbal nominalising suffix must be added to the set of features listed under 2. as characteristic of the changes in Middle Portuguese. The morpho-lexical reversal supported by this suffixal change displays the emergence of a new derivational grammar that still remains today. A final aspect should be emphasized: in this case, the affixes were the instruments of change, with consequences in the organisation of derivational patterns and in the lexicon of deverbal nouns. As a language is not a digital-algorithmic device, some data contradict the major trends: for instance, the unavailability of the suffix *-nça* is not contradictory with (i) its survival with old ones (*mudança* vs. *mudamento*) and (ii) its current presence in a few nouns (*governança*) that still coexist with other derived ones, differently suffixed (*governança*) and/or differently constructed (*governo*), but sharing the same root.

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