



Acta Scientiarum. Education

ISSN: 2178-5198

ISSN: 2178-5201

Editora da Universidade Estadual de Maringá - EDUEM

Sousa, Cleusa Teixeira de

A relevância da escrita e a oficialização do uso da língua portuguesa  
na documentação régia de Portugal no tempo de D. Dinis (1279-1325)  
Acta Scientiarum. Education, vol. 44, e54713, 2022, January-December  
Editora da Universidade Estadual de Maringá - EDUEM

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4025/actascieduc.v44i1.54713>

Available in: <https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=303371539018>

- How to cite
- Complete issue
- More information about this article
- Journal's webpage in [redalyc.org](https://www.redalyc.org)

redalyc.org

Scientific Information System Redalyc

Network of Scientific Journals from Latin America and the Caribbean, Spain and  
Portugal

Project academic non-profit, developed under the open access initiative



# The relevance of writing and the officialization of the use of the Portuguese language in the royal documentation of Portugal in the period of D. Dinis (1279-1325)

Cleusa Teixeira de Sousa

Universidade de Coimbra, Rua Larga, Paço das Escolas, 3004-504, Coimbra, Portugal. E-mail: cleotsou@gmail.com

**ABSTRACT.** The objective of this article is to promote a reflection on the relevance of the officialization of the Portuguese language in the royal documentation of the administration of D. Dinis, as one of the main strategies to strengthen the power of the Portuguese crown in this period. It is considered that Friar Francisco Brandão, in Monarquia Lusitana, highlights the king's action of ordering the translation of several works in other languages in relation to Portuguese and the Dionysian interest in enriching the vulgar language and its use in Portugal. The monarch took over the kingdom in a difficult period for the Portuguese crown, as his father had failed to comply with some agreements with the ecclesiastical power, aiming at the benefit of the Portuguese crown and territoriality. It remained for him, therefore, to reestablish peace and animosity with the spiritual power and withdraw the kingdom from the papal interdict, inspiring reliability and security in the society of his time. The Dionysian administrative and diplomatic way led him to the creation of an identity that allowed the uniqueness among the Portuguese. Thus, the threads of relationships that tie and shape the governmental actions of D. Dinis, open paths for us to evidence the existence of a process of national identification, constituted through the institution of Portuguese as the official language of the records of the royal documentation, the delimitation of borders and the effective search for royal autonomy, in its political and economic dimensions.

**Keywords:** portuguese language; royal documentation; power; portuguese crown; D. Dinis.

## A relevância da escrita e a oficialização do uso da língua portuguesa na documentação régia de Portugal no tempo de D. Dinis (1279-1325)

**RESUMO.** O objetivo desse artigo é promover uma reflexão acerca da relevância da oficialização da língua portuguesa na documentação régia da administração de D. Dinis, como uma das principais estratégias de fortalecimento do poder da coroa lusitana nesse período. Considera-se que Frei Francisco Brandão, em Monarquia Lusitana, emite destaque à ação do rei de ordenar a tradução de diversas obras em outras línguas em relação ao português e ao interesse dionísio de enriquecer a língua vulgar e seu uso em Portugal. O monarca assumiu o reino num período difícil para a coroa portuguesa, pois seu genitor descumpriu alguns acordos com o poder eclesiástico, visando o benefício da coroa e da territorialidade lusitana. Restara-lhe, portanto, reestabelecer a paz e a animosidade com o poder espiritual e retirar o reino do interdito papal, inspirando confiabilidade e segurança à sociedade de seu tempo. O modo administrativo e diplomático dionísio o conduziu à criação de uma identidade que permitisse a unicidade entre os portugueses. Destarte, os fios das relações que se amarram e moldam as ações governamentais de D. Dinis, abrem caminhos para evidenciarmos a existência de um processo de identificação nacional, constituído por meio da instituição do português como língua oficial dos registros da documentação régia, a delimitação das fronteiras e a busca efetiva da autonomia régia, em suas dimensões política e econômica.

**Palavras-chave:** língua portuguesa; documentação régia; poder; coroa portuguesa; D. Dinis.

## La pertinencia de la escritura y la oficialización del uso del lengua portuguesa en la documentación régia de Portugal en tiempo de D. Dinis (1279-1325)

**RESUMEN.** El objetivo principal de este artículo es promover una reflexión sobre la relevancia de la oficialización de la lengua portuguesa en la documentación real de la administración de D. Dinis, como una de las principales estrategias para fortalecer el poder de la corona portuguesa en este período. Desde Frei Francisco Brandão en Monarchy Lusitana, destaca la acción del rey para ordenar la traducción de varias

obras en otros idiomas al portugués y el interés dionisino por enriquecer la lengua común y su uso en Portugal. Este monarca se hizo cargo del reino en un período conflictivo para la corona portuguesa, ya que su padre había incumplido algunos acuerdos con el poder eclesiástico en beneficio de la corona y la territorialidad lusitana. De esta manera, le quedaba restablecer la paz y la animosidad con poder espiritual y eliminar el reino del entredicho papal, así como inspirar confiabilidad y seguridad a la sociedad de su tiempo. El enfoque administrativo y diplomático dionisiaco lo llevó a la creación de una identidad que permitiría la singularidad entre los portugueses. Así, los hilos de las relaciones que vinculan y dan forma a las acciones gubernamentales de D. Dinis, nos abren caminos para evidenciar la existencia de un proceso de identificación nacional, constituido a través de la institución del portugués como idioma oficial de los registros de documentación real, delimitación. fronteras y búsqueda efectiva de la autonomía real en las esferas política y económica.

**Palabras-clave:** idioma portugués; documentación real; poder; corona portuguesa; D. Dinis.

Received on June 9, 2020.  
Accepted on December 15, 2020.

## Introduction

Son of D. Afonso III (1247-1279) and of the infanta Beatriz of Castile and Gusmão, queen of Portugal (1253-1303), D. Dinis was the grandson of Afonso X (1252-1284), the 'Sage', of Castile. He was acclaimed king at the age of 18 in Lisbon, after the death of his father, and administered the kingdom of Portugal for 46 years<sup>1</sup>.

Two disturbing questions must be considered in relation to this monarch: what is the social place of D. Dinis? What did you do for your kingdom? Faced with so many doubts, we are sure that historians and chroniclers made this monarch a competent king and a good administrator. Although the chronicler Rui de Pina (1729) and other scholars of letters and poetry, such as Fernández (2009), have highly regarded his achievements, we know that there is a certain exaggeration in the attempt to praise the monarch and the portuguese kingdom. About the writing of chronicles, it is not something new to say that this literary genre has the function of elaborating an outline, configuring good memories and pleasant achievements of peronas, ensuring that such figures are remembered in posterity. Works of this density, therefore, lack more detailed analyzes regarding their historicity and exaggerations.

However, we can emphasize that his diplomacy in dealing with political, social and religious issues allowed him to stand out among the other rulers of his kingdom. Among its main administrative activities, the initiation of the process that would later trigger a certain portuguese national identification stands out. The national identification<sup>2</sup> that José Mattoso (2001) highlights, is characterized by the uniqueness of its elements, such as the common use of the language, customs and habits of a people. This historian's attempt is to show that although it is still not possible to speak of the State, as we understand it today, at that moment, the formation of a centralized political organization had already begun.

According to sociologists, the reasons that lead individuals to believe in the existence of a 'national' communion, based on community actions, are numerous. Among them, the normal basis of this motivation stands out, that is, the 'language community'. The 'National State' and the 'State' became identical in concept, based on the homogeneity of the language. Alongside political associations, constituted on a 'national' basis in the linguistic sense, there is a considerable number of other political associations that include numerous language communities and that, innumerable times, prefer to select or choose a certain language for political life. It does not seem to us that it is enough – at least as far as the full meaning is concerned – to be the community identified only by the language, formed by members who use the same language. On the other hand, language differences also do not translate into obstacles to the development of the feeling of a community or group.

There are, therefore, varying degrees of qualitative homogeneity of belief in 'national' communion. The idea of a community of 'customs' and certain common goods of 'sensual culture' is conditioned by political remembrances. In this sense, there are the relics that are necessary for the stranger, in order to awaken the feeling of 'nation', such as: the flag, military and firefighters helmets with symbols of the homeland. Therefore, the feelings of community designated by the collectivity as 'national' are not homogeneous, but can be guaranteed from other sources, such as distinctions in social and economic structuring and in the structure of internal domination, influencing 'customs'. Thus, common political memories, religious affiliation and, finally, the language community can act as sources, as well as racially conditioned *habitus*. We

<sup>1</sup> This article is the result of research developed in the Master's Thesis defended at the Federal University of Goiás, at the Faculty of History, in 2012.

<sup>2</sup> The term nation comes from the Latin *natio*, which designates a people, or nation, characterized by a group of individuals born in the same place (Dicionário de Latin-Português, 2001, p. 441).

also find the relationship with political 'power' associated with the concept of 'nation', as would be the case of the analysis of the dionysian administration that we deal with in this study. The 'national' feeling, if anything similar, creates a kind of commotion in a group united by a community of language, confession, customs or destiny, linked to the idea of organizing a political unit of its own, which already exists or which it is still aspired to, and which becomes more specific the more emphasis is given to power (Weber, 2009).

It is relevant to mention that portuguese historiography demonstrates that there is an ongoing identification process, which is typical of Portugal, and that Mattoso (2001) divides into three operational phases: the first refers to some form of political expression that, in some moment in history, has manifested itself from the appropriation of power based on a certain degree of autonomy. This fact can be seen in the actions of D. Afonso III, D. Dinis and D. Afonso IV, who continued the process of seeking royal autonomy in Portugal, which was also initiated by the first king D. Afonso Henriques (1143- 1185). The second operation highlights the need to delimit the territory, even if these borders have changed over time. The third suggests that political autonomy and territorial composition are essential factors for the solidity and deepening of national identity (Mattoso, 2008). In 'The formation of nationality', Mattoso suggests that it would not be possible to find coherent traces of a Portuguese nationality prior to the foundation of the State. What may have actually occurred would have been the emergence of small autonomous political formations (Mattoso, 2001).

The political practices developed by D. Dinis do not allow us to affirm that his intention was to create a nation-state, but it is possible to affirm that the action of this monarch was based on the affirmation and strengthening of the royal power, in the name of which he did not he avoided the practice of several actions that would guarantee him to develop the process in order to achieve the proposed objective. As for the creation of a national identity, what can be evidenced is the existence of a process of national identification, constituted through the institution of portuguese as the official language of the kingdom, the territorial delimitation and the effective search for royal autonomy, in the political dimensions and economic during his reign.

Since it is not possible to identify a feeling of nationality that permeated the entire society of the period, it was evident, however, that the constitution of an initial consciousness of the nation already existed for a minority linked to the local intelligentsia, primarily constituted by members of the chancellery condal and regal; later, this notion gained a place among the clerics of the monastery of Santa Cruz de Coimbra and would have spread in a large part of the portuguese collective, reaching the members of the court and administration officials who presented themselves as delegates of the king, spreading, in another between the clergy, the military orders and the *councils'* oligarchies (Mattoso, 2001).

In this sense, we will try to identify the political actions of D. Dinis that are possible to corroborate with this view: D. Dinis defined the borders of Portugal in relation to Alcanizes, established portuguese as the official language of the kingdom, freed the Military Orders from foreign influence, in national territory, and continued the affirmation and the portuguese royal organization, initiated in the reign of D. Afonso III. According to historian Oliveira Marques, "[...] it was therefore learned to read and write in latin, but nobody spoke latin in Portugal from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries, except for foreign ambassadors" (Marques, 1964, p. 187). Probably, in the ecclesiastical, monastic and secular spheres, the same process may have occurred. The author also highlights that, since D. Dinis, portuguese has been converted into an official language: schools, as well as private teachers, did not teach portuguese until the end of the Middle Ages, being only heard by the portuguese since childhood. Thus, among those who had guaranteed access to education, portuguese was spoken and written naturally, without having learned the language formally. Therefore, written language is considered to be close to spoken language (Marques, 1964).

According to Mattoso, its administrative policy fostered actions that contributed to the kingdom's economic growth, such as the creation of several councils and fairs. He created the post of corregidor<sup>3</sup>, whose objective was to improve the judicial system; through the organization of the notary; and for the formation of the body of royal scribes together with the *councils*. It established greater control over the elections of municipal magistrates, recruited a regular body of crossbowmen<sup>4</sup> assigned by the *councils*, controlled manorial rights and conferred the notion of royal justice to combat crimes in Portuguese territories (Mattoso, 2001). The administration of royal properties and legal reforms received special attention in his government in an attempt to maintain control over the royal apparatus.

<sup>3</sup> Corregidor, a kind of judge, responsible for judgments (Viterbo, 1865).

<sup>4</sup> The crossbowmen had several attributions: a soldier armed with the beast, and who fights with it. Ordinarily, they herbed arrows by smearing them with poisons. At the time of the reign of D. João I, there were many species of crossbowmen. Pole crossbowmen used crossbows, which had a pulley, chamber crossbowmen, horse crossbowmen, garrucha crossbowmen, diaper crossbowmen, sea crossbowmen, mountain crossbowmen, etc.

D. Dinis developed a specific agrarian policy for planting the land, making the fields arable and fertile, encouraging local societies to clear the land and sow the fields, expanding their settlements. This initiative favored the sixth portuguese king to receive the title of 'Lavrador' king. His interests, therefore, showed that, in fact, he was concerned with populating these lands to keep them safer and more productive. Américo Cortez Pinto, in 'Dionysus: Poet and King', points out that population growth and the increase in agricultural and mining production (stimulated by iron production) fostered trade, which spread from north to south of Portugal. During this period, fairs and markets were also developed where the products of the land were traded. In order to establish portuguese coastal society, D. Dinis provided for the expansion of activities related to fish farming, in order to favor the agricultural population that lived on the coast. Added to the entrepreneurial actions of this monarch were the promotion and improvement of naval construction. The wood removed from the pines and pine forests that were planted in Leiria and other nearby locations served as raw material for the construction of new vessels at that time. Maritime establishments were also created in portuguese ports, enabling ship traffic and export trade to neighboring kingdoms. His actions were an attempt to expand the kingdom's economic resources.

There were distractions, on his part, which consisted of dedicating himself to the arts and letters: the king wrote songs of love and friend, created satires and contributed to the construction of troubadour poetry, being also called 'the Troubadour King'. From his poetic constructions they named him 'Poet'. He also received the titles of Wise and Just King: wise in his regal performance and just in matters involving the mediation of conflicts. There are indications that D. Dinis may have been the first literate<sup>5</sup> portuguese king, for he was the first monarch, up to his time, to sign his full name. He received a privileged education and remained, for long periods, at the court of his grandfather, the Sage of Castile<sup>6</sup> Such teachings made him an educated<sup>7</sup> man in relation to letters and sciences, boosting the translation of countless literary works into portuguese, such as the treatises<sup>8</sup>, *Las Siete Partidas*<sup>9</sup>, of his grandfather Afonso X, from Castile. He also created the first portuguese university, based in Coimbra.

As can be seen in the charters and other royal documents from the time of his father D. Afonso III, the vulgar language was not present in the administrative habits of the portuguese kingdom until the early years of the 1280s, when Portugal it was under the government of D. Dinis. But even in the first years of his administration, it is clear that the royal documentation continued to be written in Latin, a trend that was reversed, above all, from 1284, the year in which D. Dinis' grandfather, D. Afonso X, the sage of Castile, passed away (Miranda, 2012).

D. Dinis' troubadour production is the most intense and one of the richest themes preserved in galician-portuguese. In addition to approximately four hundred marian songs by his grandfather, the vulgar language used in the courtly field was considered by D. Dinis as a worthy language for the elaboration of poetry, a relevant factor for the construction of the identifying mark of the king's court and also of his kingdom and lordship. (Osório, 1993).

Antônio Martins Gomes (2016) highlights that D. Dinis instituted portuguese as the official language of the kingdom, in the expectation that, through its oral and written practice, its use would become an instrument of political, religious and cultural strengthening, as well as an aggregating factor for the members of the portuguese community (Gomes, 2016).

Frei Brandão, in 'Monarquia Lusitana', emphasizes that D. Dinis contributed to "[...] enriching the portuguese language, and for this purpose, he had several books translated [...]" (Brandão, 2008, p. 7) that were found in other languages, thus introducing the use of the portuguese language, officially, in the kingdom. However, according to recent studies, such as those by Ana Maria Martins and José António Souto Cabo (2002); António Emiliano and Susana Pedro, the use of the portuguese language was already possible to a greater or lesser degree, and they were used even before the reign of D. Dinis, in modalities such as compact blocks in romance, emphasizing the idea that writing in portuguese was acceptable for at least a century before it was regulated and used in official writing (Castro, 2006).

This context, associated with the administrative actions of his 46 years of reign, demonstrate that D. Dinis sought to develop a governmental and legislative policy, under which his decisions were undertaken in order

<sup>5</sup> The language used in teaching was therefore Latin, although medieval texts handwritten in the vernacular were more used to be heard than actually read. Portuguese began to be written in the 13th century, without people studying it to write it. Most likely, D. Dinis already 'mastered' the Portuguese language, due to the education he had received, entrusted to the best masters, and which was also influenced by the teaching of French and the high culture of his grandfather, Afonso X, the Sage of Castile (Brandão, 2008).

<sup>6</sup> Aymérico was D. Dinis' master and, in satisfaction with what he learned from him, the monarch appointed him bishop of Coimbra, still in the first year of his reign (Brandão, 2008).

<sup>7</sup> The 17-year coexistence with the councilors and noble figures of arms of the 'exquisite and most cultured' court in Europe influenced D. Dinis, as he learned to admire the great nobles and intellectuals who surrounded him, among them the chancellor Estevão Anes (Pinto, 1982).

<sup>8</sup> D. Dinis had some works by Afonso X translated, which the author does not identify, as well as many scientific works that, however, are not named (Guincho, 2004).

<sup>9</sup> A monumental legal work by Afonso X, which systematized all the legal knowledge of the Castilian medieval period, relating canon, Roman and customary law.

to develop an organizing and controlling ideal of the royal apparatus. In this sense, the incorporation of the vulgar language to the official documentation of the kingdom, at that time, may have facilitated its ideal of governmental control in portuguese lands. It is important to highlight that, in this period, in Portugal, the monarchs shared the responsibilities of the royal power with their advisors and also maintained a certain dialogue with their subjects, although it was not always direct.

Raquel Kritsch points out that, in Portugal, it is possible to observe peaks of political centralization and of the movements that engendered such centrality (Kritsch, 2002). In this kingdom, monarchs usually relied on the support of intermediaries (representatives) to better develop the administration of the kingdom. It is possible, therefore, to perceive that this centralization pointed out by Raquel Kritsch, in the portuguese kingdom, occurred in a more diplomatic way.

D. Dinis inaugurated the possibility of royal appeal. The legislative work developed in his kingdom had as its horizon, mainly, the issues of procedural justice, in order to avoid judicial delays and abuse by judges and prosecutors. Without belittling D. Afonso III and D. Pedro I, historians such as Homem (Coelho, 1996) and Fernandes (2004), point out that D. Dinis and his successor, D. Afonso IV, stood out in relation to the elaboration and fulfillment of the legislation in Portugal.

In relation to his family, D. Dinis left something to be desired, as he mistreated his heir son, Infante Afonso (future D. Afonso IV), as he was not his favorite son. Living with his consort D. Isabel was not very peaceful either, as he is suspected of having committed many excesses, among which, the most absurd, is that the king gave the children of his adulteries to his wife so that she could raise them. (Pizarro, 2005). Due to the contempt towards his legitimate son Afonso, D. Dinis had serious problems during his reign. In this way, he even asked Pope John XXII to legitimize his bastard son, Afonso Sanches, considering that it would only be up to the supreme pontiff to release illegitimate children from the ties of bastardy. D. Dinis claimed that Afonso Sanches was much more prepared to assume the throne than his legitimate son. In order to avenge the preference that D. Dinis devoted to Afonso Sanches, Infante Afonso, son of queen Izabel, “[...] and his supporters, toured the North of the country practicing violence” (Brandão, 2008, p. 117).

In 1320, he invaded Leiria, which was later recovered by D. Dinis. In 1321, the Infante invaded again “Coimbra and Montemor-o-Velho, then headed for Gaia, Castelo da Feira, Porto and Guimarães” (Brandão, 2008, p. 117). This conflict was only appeased towards the end of the reign of D. Dinis, in 1322, through the intervention of queen Izabel, when D. Dinis expanded his son's lordships, ceding Coimbra and Montemor-o-Velho, and the castles of Gaia, Porto and Feira. But, in 1323, the infante resumed the fight, resuming the truce, in 1324, when the king was indisposed and left Lisbon for Santarém. During this period, queen Izabel sent for the Infante D. Afonso in Leiria, warning him of the seriousness of her father's state of health. Under the influence of his mother, the infant kissed<sup>10</sup> the hand of the king, in acknowledgment of his sovereignty. In december of the same year, without any improvement, the monarch reordered his will in Santarém, granting Infante Afonso the right of succession to the throne.

There is not much information about the physical constitution of D. Dinis. It is only known that he was approximately 1 meter and 65 centimeters in height. He died at the age of 63, made his first will at the age of 61, and throughout his reign he was active. Traveled a lot. He participated in wars even at an advanced age and, at 60, he still had the habit of hunting.

## **Translations, writing and their importance for the strengthening of royal power and for portuguese medieval document writing**

The thirteenth century was marked by the effervescence of ideas, with the performance of numerous intellectuals: thinkers who were subdivided into professions, scientists, wise men and teachers. Jacques Le Goff emphasizes that the intellectual, as well as the urban professional, owed his training to universities, which led them to the necessary knowledge so that, from the exercise of the profession, they had access to power (Le Goff, 2003). Jacques Verger corroborates Le Goff's thinking and adds that, at the end of the Middle Ages, 'men of knowledge' acted effectively, since they were endowed with important cultural values for the exercise of innumerable professions involved with power and, even, in the performance of scholarly activities (Verger, 1999).

In this sense, university education contributed greatly to the formation of intellectuals, also qualifying them for the political and social field. It can be seen, therefore, that, through university education, students

<sup>10</sup> According to Adeline Rucquoi, the act of kissing the hand (*besamano*) is the sign of recognition of the monarch's sovereignty. It is an ancient gesture of submission to this king. It belongs to the set of specific gestures of feudal society and was reserved only for the nobility (Rucquoi, 1992).

consolidated a broader view of the world, since teaching was based on Aristotle's natural philosophy, transmitted by the arabs, and also on the art of detailed analysis of texts. This practice, however, included several steps, from exposing the text to comments and discussions. In this sense, it is worth highlighting the importance of the creation of the *Studium Generale* promoted in Portugal, by D. Dinis, in 1290<sup>11</sup>.

The development of natural philosophy, intensified by the movement created by intellectuals in the great translations of ancient philosophers, from arabic into the vernacular, thus guaranteed new instruments for social analysis and for a new political approach. The social reality was altered, therefore, as a consequence of the emergence of new urban actors and the literate culture developed by the university (Kritsch, 2002).

During this period, kings, emperors and popes had authentic support teams, made up of theologians, philologists and jurists. The introduction of aristotelian works into the latin language, the dissemination and assimilation of those that refer, above all, to natural philosophy (physics and metaphysics) transformed intellectual life in the European West. These works contributed to the transformation of medieval political thought and made room for the emergence of a new foundation of power and, therefore, a new way of conceiving the relationship between spiritual and temporal powers.

In the Iberian Peninsula, the dissemination of these works also did not take long, but in order to refute them, or for readers to have greater access to them, it was necessary that they be translated – even contesting their culture, or restricting the active participation of jews and muslims in the daily life of the city and in the effective participation in public offices of the crown. The church needed your services to translate them. In Toledo, Spain, a large center for translators developed, formed by learned teams of christians, jews and arabs, who translated works related to medicine, astronomy, arithmetic, algebra, trigonometry or philosophy, from greek or arabic, to the latin.

The works in Greek did not present very representative quantities. Until the twelfth century, only a small number of scientific texts from antiquity were known in Europe, among which we cite, *Timaeus*, by Plato, some works of logic by Aristotle - *Logica Vetus* -, *De natura rerum*, by Lucretius, *Treatise on Architecture*, by Vitruvius, *Natural Questions*, by Seneca, *Natural History*, by Pliny, among others by authors of the 5th and 6th centuries (Gimpel, 1976).

Among the first works to be translated at the School of Toledo is the Canon of Medicine, by the persian sage Ibn Sina (980-1037), known in the west by the name of Avicenna. *The Canon of Avicenna*, written in arabic under the title *Al Qānun*, was one of the most influential works in medicine, translated into several languages, such as persian, latin, hebrew and catalan. The growing prestige of this school attracted poets, grammarians, philosophers, doctors and other scholars who contributed to making Toledo a major cultural center, providing europe with latin translations of works that would hardly have been preserved in the western tradition.

Under the rule of D. Afonso X (1252-1284), king of León and Castile, known as the Sage, he lived his heyday. In addition to the translations carried out in this period, a large number of books were produced, which have become one of the greatest treasures of the western world. A lover of letters and sciences, this monarch extended a protective hand to the jews<sup>12</sup> who had a wide culture and knowledge of languages, letters and various branches of human knowledge. In this case, they were summoned to help him in his work of translation and construction of knowledge: they made the *Astronomical Tablets* or *Afonsinas*, a remarkable monument for that time. The proposal was joined, in addition to other jews, by Yshac Ibn Sid<sup>13</sup> (Remedios, 1895).

Toledo became the center of studies. Synagogues were reopened. In the place used by the rabbis to explain and teach society the letter of the law, hebrew chairs were erected and jewish quarters were built. Philosophical works, such as those of Plato and Aristotle, and medical works, such as those of Avicenna and Euclid, were also disseminated due to the possibilities of studies that Alfonso X provided. At the time of this king, other books were written, namely, *Libro de las Leys (Siete Partidas)*, *Estoria de España*, the *Libro de los juegos*, or *Libro de Acedrex*.

The Montpellier School of Medicine also counted on the work of jews as university professors, in addition to translators. The oldest record of their activities dates from 1180, when count Guilherme VII, lord of

<sup>11</sup> Although the dionysian letter recognizes the University of Coimbra as Studium Generale, on March 1, 1290, the Papal Bull, by Nicholas IV, only confirms it on August 9, 1290 (Rodrigues, 2006).

<sup>12</sup> There are no accidents, no coincidences. It is known that D. Afonso X had hidden interests behind this action to protect the jews. He needed to guarantee them physical and moral integrity so that his project of cultural and scientific development could advance. It is known that despite sheltering and supporting them, the monarch did not omit the collection of heavy taxes. In 1256, he ordered all jews over the age of 15 to pay 30 pence to contribute to the crown's expenses. He forbade them to leave the interior of the jewish quarters (separate neighborhoods where jews lived) on Good Friday. At the same time, that they had christian servants, imposing on them to wear the same badge as those ordained by the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215.

<sup>13</sup> He relegated to us the following works that have been preserved in manuscript: '*Fabrica y traza del palacio de las horas*'; '*Fabrica y uso de las armellas*'; '*Fabrica y uso de las siete laminas para los siete planetas*'; '*ó de una sola que sirve para todas siete*'; '*Fabrica y uso del Astrolabio redondo*'; '*Fabrica y uso del Astrolabio llano*'; '*Fabrica y uso de La piedra de La sombra*'; '*ó Del reloj de esta piedra*'; '*Fabrica y uso de los relojes de água*'.

Montpellier, promoted cultural exchange by publishing an edict. Thus, the free license to teach and practice Medicine in the city was allowed, regardless of the religion and origin of the master. However, several jews happened to act in the teaching of this School of Medicine. During this period, the formation of a cultural community was propitiated with the participation of jews, such as Abrahim bar Hivva al Bargeloni, Abrahim Ezra de Tudela and Juda ben Saul. Initially, the masters and their students gathered around the Church of São Firmino. Only later was the course transferred to the Benedictine monastery, next to St. Pierre Cathedral. Its first statutes date from 1220 and had been decreed by Cardinal Conrad de Urach, as a legacy of Pope Honorius III (1216-1227), officially recognizing the existence of the school, which was under the protection of the bishop of Maguelone who, in fact, it should be recognized by its teachers and students (Santi, 1987 apud Fagundes, 2015).

In Portugal, legal studies and other areas of knowledge were in full swing as a result of the creation of the University of Coimbra. In this sense, Maria Helena da Cruz Coelho points out that, “[...] at a time when writing was *téchnê* dominated by a few and the power over writing belonged to the great, writing was the memory of deeds to remember” (Coelho, 1996, p. 166). In this way, Jorge Osório’s writings also deserve to be highlighted, in which he promotes the idea that medieval monarchs used documentary writings to strengthen and spread their power, “[...] the attention to the written language must be perceived as one of the traits of conception of the State increasingly identified with the political will of the king” (Osório, 1993, p. 32).

It is valid, therefore, to recall the foundation of the portuguese University, by D. Dinis. Its creation was dynamized by the active participation of members of the clergy, from 1290, considered the most literate men in the kingdom.

The strategies of creating 'general studies' regarding the idea that the individuality of the Kingdom did not depend only on weapons, but also on laws, which highlights the most powerful motive that guided this monarch [...] affirmation of royal power, oriented towards an increasingly stronger administration and directly dependent on it. D. Dinis did not leave a set of writings of a theoretical and programmatic nature, such as Afonso X, the Wise. However, it is noted that, in addition to the similarity of the problems he faced, the solutions found are marked by the doctrine of his maternal grandfather, manifesting themselves through other symptoms, on which researchers have only recently focused their attention. If it is true that we know little about the specialization of administrative functions relating to the times prior to D. Afonso IV, the truth is that, in the reign of D. Dinis, there are remarkable signs of changes that express the king's will to achieve a decreasing dependence on the nobility in the management of public affairs (Osório, 1993, p. 32, emphasis added).

This quote shows how much D. Dinis was concerned with creating a bureaucratic and effective body in Portugal, capable of writing royal documents based on the laws and the structural organization of the kingdom. Regarding border security and territorial delimitation, we can observe their special attention in the quote below:

[...] one of the signs that the king seeks to be responsible for the integrity of the territory of his Kingdom, as the main guarantee of its security, is the attention he paid to the defense of the land border with Castile, through reconstruction and restoration works renovation of many fortifications. In the area of the maritime border, it is important not to forget the formation of an armada, with the help of an expert of genoese origin. There is, however, a detail that deserves to be highlighted: the attention given to aspects of the urbanization of the city of Lisbon, where 'fez ha rua nova' (Osório, 1993, p. 33, emphasis added).

In this context, it is observed that D. Dinis was both concerned with the writing of royal documentation and with portuguese border and military deeds. In this way, there is the creation of literary works of different natures, of a religious nature (Biographies of Santos), political (Chronicles, Chancellery) and military, marked by the power attributed to different authorships, whether they were marks of a monarch, a noble, a pope, or important ecclesiastics, extolled in chronicles or in literary biographies. The memories of their actions were kept and, with regard to acts performed by the royal or pontifical curia, they assumed the perennality of writing. While ecclesiastics of secular or regular origin took care of the writing of what they wanted to privilege in these deeds, the writing in the forums first highlighted individual acts, aimed at individuals and institutions.

The documents give access to intentional data related to the inquiry, the listing or even the description of something. “Essentially goods, income, rights, obligations” (Coelho, 1996, p. 166). During this period, as the royal power was consolidated, the monarch tried to orient himself as to his contingent of men. When needing them for war or land defense, it would be easier to strategize from this data. The Church, early on, demanded the breakdown of their real estate and income and the listing of the numerous ecclesiastical circumscriptions. Therefore, indirect sources of a military, fiscal and religious nature were elaborated, which point to

information about men and their distribution. As the centuries progressed, however, reading and writing became indispensable to the exercise of public and private, personal or collective administrative activities.

## Conclusion

In the government of D. Dinis, the political and administrative strategies adopted show us his perspicacity in the development of a political conception beyond his time, from a perception that served the interests of the Kingdom in the development of a certain political and social 'individuality', tendentially free from other power ties. This occurs, particularly, in relation to the creation of the *Studium Generale*, of the "[...] unity of the natio and its territory and the identity of the language" (Osório, 1993, p. 34), actions that clearly demonstrate the intentions of strengthening the local royal power compared to any other.

In the dionysian administration, it is noted that translations, as well as writing, had great relevance, but it was the privilege of a few. It was intended only for those who, for social reasons or religious status, were obliged to learn to read and write. In the portuguese medieval period, there are countless testimonies of the high value given to writing and the recognition of its results. The crown, monasteries and other institutions showed, from an early age, special attention to writing, so they did not hesitate to use it in an apocryphal way. In the royal Chancellery, forgery was feared, as were thefts from letters, as the legislation itself proves. Writing was seen, therefore, as a way of accumulating, perpetuating and justifying the knowledge that was formed in the Middle Ages as the main means of political, legislative, economic and religious management. Thus, there is no way to ignore the importance and function of writing in the records of the royal Chancellery's books, as a large part of the power and political force of the kings was concentrated in these. It is also important to highlight the political importance of the 'Inquiries' at the time of D. Afonso II, D. Afonso III and D. Dinis. These documentary sources show the value attributed to writing since the most remote times, to the detriment of orality.

Writing must be "[...] attributed to an imperious social ideal. Its qualities of memory, perpetuity and legitimacy give it a status of offensive or defensive power, characterized by a control and propaganda mechanism that was used to govern" (Santos, 2010, p. 279). It is up to the good ruler the task of coordinating, imposing order and increasing the development of the kingdom. The main center for the production of documents in the reign of D. Dinis was assigned to a government body, the royal Chancellery, whose tasks of documenting were the responsibility of chancellors, notaries, notaries and other professionals endowed with the ability to write.

There are books written on parchment and bound during the reign of D. Dinis: one is original and the other is a copy, the well-known *Libro de las Lezirias del Rei Dom Dinis*, composed of 74 public letters registered by Lourenço Eanes (1305-1315), notary public in Lisbon (Santos, 2010). It is also known that there are several minutes of the Cortes installed by this monarch. These letters contained records of the laws granted according to the daily problems of the cities in which the itinerant Courts were established. These laws dictated and recorded in minutes later came to compose the *Livro das Leis e Posturas* (1971) and the *Ordenações Afonsinas* (1984), legal documents of the portuguese kingdom, which therefore constitute the customary law of the medieval period.

## References

- Brandão, A. (2008). *Monarquia lusitana*. Lisboa, PT: Imprensa Nacional Casa da Moeda.
- Cabo, J. A. S. (2002). Fixação e evolução dos usos romances no séc. XIII: a documentação de Santa Maria de Alcobaça. In R. Lorenzo (Coord.), *Homenaxe a Fernando R. Tato Plazo* (p. 363-376). Santiago de Compostela, PT: Universidade de Santiago de Compostela.
- Castro, I. (2006). *Introdução à história do português* (2a ed., reimpr.). Lisboa, PT: Colibri.
- Coelho, M. H. C. (1996). Os homens ao longo do tempo e do espaço. In M. H. C. Coelho, & A. L. C. Homem (Coords.), *Portugal em definição de fronteiras (1096-1325): do Condado Portucalense à crise do Século XIV* (p. 165-383). Lisboa, PT: Editorial Presença.
- Dicionário de Latim-Português*. (2001). Porto, PT: Porto Editora.
- Fagundes, M. D. C. (2014). *Saber médico e poder: as relações entre Arnaldo de Vilanova e a coroa aragonesa (séculos XIII e XIV)* (Tese de Doutorado). Universidade Federal de Goiás, Goiânia.
- Fernandes, F. R. (2004). A recepção do Direito romano no Ocidente europeu medieval: Portugal, um caso de afirmação régia. *Revista História: Questões e Debates*, (41), 73-83.

- Fernández, J. C. (2009). Um rei sábio. In J. C. Fernandez, P. A. Loução, Dinis: *O rei civilizador* (p. 31-35). Lisboa, PT: Ésquilo.
- Gimpel, J. (1976). *A revolução industrial da Idade Média*. Lisboa, PT: Publicações Europa-América.
- Gomes, A. M. (2016). A dinamização político-religiosa da língua portuguesa na Idade Média. *História e Cultura*, 5(2), 255-274. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18223/hiscult.v5i2.1731>
- Guincho, M. A. (2004). História literária e traduções: novos passos de um projecto-ler, escrever, reescrever: O lugar das traduções medievais na historiografia literária. *IV Congresso Internacional da Associação Portuguesa de Literatura Comparada*. Universidade de Évora, PT.
- Kritsch, R. (2002). *Soberania: construção de um conceito*. São Paulo, SP: Imprensa Oficial.
- Le Goff, Jacques. (2003). *Os intelectuais na idade Média*. Rio de Janeiro, RJ: José Olympo.
- Livro das leis e posturas*. (1971). Lisboa, PT: Universidade de Lisboa.
- Marques, A. H. O. (1964). *A sociedade medieval portuguesa: aspectos de vida quotidiana*. Lisboa, PT: Sá da Costa.
- Mattoso, J. (2001). A formação da nacionalidade. In J. Mattoso (Ed.), *História de Portugal* (2a ed., p. 7-17). São Paulo, SP: Edusc.
- Mattoso, J. (2008). *Identidade nacional*. Lisboa, PT: Gradiva.
- Miranda, J. C. R. (2012). O galego-português e os seus detentores ao longo do século XIII. *e-Spania*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/e-spania.21084>
- Ordenações Afonsinas*. (1984). Lisboa, PT: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian.
- Osório, J. A. (1993). D. Dinis: o rei, a língua e o reino. *Máthesis*, (2), 17-36. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34632/mathesis.1993.3694>
- Pina, R. (1729). *Chronica do muito alto e muito esclarecido principe Dom Diniz, sexto rey de Portugal*. Lisboa, PT: Officina Ferreyriana.
- Pinto, A. C. (1982). *Diónisos: poeta e rei*. Lisboa, PT: Instituto de Cultura e Língua Portuguesa.
- Pizarro, J. A. S. M. (2005). *D. Dinis*. Lisboa, PT: Círculo de Leitores.
- Remedios, J. M. (1895). *Os judeus em Portugal*. Coimbra, PT: F. França Amado.
- Rodrigues, M. A. (2006). Notas sobre a Universidade de Coimbra desde as origens (1290) até a fixação definitiva em Coimbra (1537). *Estudos em Homenagem ao Professor Doutor José Marques*, 3, 111-128.
- Rucquoi, A. (1992). De los Reyes que no son taumaturgos: los fundamentos de la realeza en España. *Estudios de Historia y Sociedad*, XIII(51), 55-100.
- Santos, M. J. A. (2010). D. Dinis: o lavrador. In M. Mendonça (Coord.), *História dos Reis de Portugal. Da fundação à perda da Independência*. Lisboa, PT: QuidNovi.
- Verger, J. (1999). *Homens e saber na Idade Média*. Bauru, SP: Edusc.
- Viterbo, J. S. R. (1865). *Elucidário das palavras, termos e frases que em Portugal antigamente se usaram e que hoje regularmente se ignoram: obra indispensavel para entender sem erro os documentos mais raros e preciosos que entre nós se conservam* (Vol. 2). Porto, PT: A. J. Fernandes Lopes.
- Weber, M. (2009). *Economia e sociedade: fundamentos da sociologia compreensiva* (Vol. 2). Brasília, DF: UNB.

#### INFORMATION ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Cleusa Teixeira de Sousa:** Doctor in History by the Postgraduate Program in History of the Federal University of Goiás. Professor of History at SEE-Go. Cleusa is a member of Sapientia: Laboratory for Studies in Middle and Modern Age at UFG; researcher at the Center for History, Society and Culture – CHSC-Fluc. Visiting researcher at the University of Coimbra, where she carried out an internship with a Capes sandwich doctorate scholarship under the guidance of Professor Saul António Gomes.

E-mail: [cleotsou@gmail.com](mailto:cleotsou@gmail.com)

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7252-9438>

**NOTE:** The author was responsible for the design, analysis and interpretation of the data; writing and critical review of the content of the manuscript and also approval of the final version to be published.