**ABSTRACT:** Although in Contemporary Portuguese the use of the simple pluperfect is confined to written registers, the large number of attestations found in diachronic data seems to indicate that in earlier periods this verb form was commonly used. My main objective is to present a contribution for a more complete and coherent approach of the development of the Portuguese pluperfect, concentrating mainly on the change that led to the partial obsolescence of the simple form. Reviewing previous studies / comments on the functioning and evolution of the Portuguese pluperfect, and analyzing diachronic data retrieved in different types of textual sources (mainly from Old and Middle Portuguese), I aim at identifying the possible factors that determined the gradual disuse of the simple verb form, hypothesising that these were different but mutually conditioning factors.