

PROPOSAL

TITLE

Rediscovering Portuguese scientific literature from the Renaissance to the Age of Enlightenment – an interdisciplinary approach.

KEYWORDS

Portuguese scientific literature of Latin expression; interdisciplinary approach; João de Loureiro; *Flora Cochinchinensis*.

ABSTRACT

João de Loureiro, a Portuguese Jesuit settled for more than four decades in Southeast Asia, dedicated most of his efforts to botanical and pharmacognostical investigation. In the aftermath of his oriental mission, he would see his masterpiece, *Flora Cochinchinensis*, published, in 1790, sponsored by the Portuguese Academy.

Despite being responsible for noteworthy and internationally acknowledged scientific development — he described and introduced 185 new *genera* and almost 1300 Eastern species and their therapeutic applications to European science —, João de Loureiro now belongs to a vast gallery of *quasi* forgotten authors and his *Flora Cochinchinensis* is practically one more silenced *opus* among the Portuguese scientific literature of Latin expression.

Twenty first century science is counting on interdisciplinary approaches: philologists must work on this myriad of texts waiting for translation in the interest of the History of Science and even of new critical inquiry in the fields of the Natural and Exact Sciences. Although obviously insufficient, given the extent and depth of the *corpora*, extraordinary projects have already fructified, and the Languages, Literatures and Cultures Research Centre is highly committed to this endeavour.