ABSTRACT:
“A palavra nómada. Contributos para o estudo do género epistolar” is a study that aims at discussing the epistolary genre, a field of research which has been overlooked by linguistic analysis in Portugal. The analysis of epistolary texts is rather complex, not least because of the confluence of different disciplines in the very nature of the text.

The versatility of the “modus epistolaris” - this nomadic expression of thinking, rebellious and resisting classification - invites a multiply focused approach. In my analysis, literary history, epistolary literature, rhetoric, and different approaches of linguistic analyses were used. The model of analysis IAED (Interactive Analysis of Epistolary Discourse), which was conceived in the course of my doctoral research, stresses this perspective, and intends to integrate and strengthen this kind of approach.

This work shows the relevance of epistolary texts of celebrated Portuguese writers, and undertakes, prospectively, the publication of their often forgotten and neglected epistles.

The goal of this research is to investigate the metamorphosis of verbal routines in epistolary texts, indicating either the abandonment of the classical and rigid structure of the epistle, or the immutability of some routines and the resulting volatility of others.

Rooted in the proof and defence of the hypothesis of a “renaissance” and “reconnaissance” of the epistolary genre, this research aims at contributing to the construction of a theory of the “modus epistolaris”.