



Veronika Syslová, GEORGIUS JOSEPHUS CAMEL = JIŘÍ JOSEF KAMEL:
významný brněnský rodák / An Outstanding Brno Native/,
Národní památkový ústav, Brno 2006, 52 pp. Reviewed by Oldřich Kašpar.

The reviewed publication, very valuable and interesting, though of a relatively small size, was published by the regional branch of the National Monument Institute in Brno in the occasion of the death of Jiří Josef Kamel (1661–1706), a prominent botanist of the Czech Jesuit Province, who used to work in the overseas in 18th century. It also served as a representative catalogue of the exhibition of the same name at the beginning of the year 2006.

Kamel belongs to the group of apothecaries-doctors, but mainly – according to his later interests – botanists from the Czech Jesuit Province, who were famous by their activities not only in the area of their work (New Spain, Philippines), but also, retroactively, in the whole Europe. Besides Kamel, also Pavel Klein (Pablo Claín), born in Olomouc, author of an important pharmacologic handbook *Remedios faciles para diferentes enfermedades...* (Simple Remedies Against Various Diseases, Manila 1712), and Johann Steinhöffer (1664–1716), born in Jihlava, author of the book *Florilegio medicinal...* (Medical Florilegium), published in the same year in Mexico City.

The publication written and compiled by Veronika Syslová a Ondřej Pokorný is conceived as an interesting and attractive collage of printed and picture passages, containing a great deal of valuable information. The engaged reader can thus follow Kamel's life fates since his birth in Brno up to his premature death caused by amebiasis (mortal attack of liver by parasitic amoebas) at Phillippines, to read about his interests in botany (he had no professional botanic education), up to the systematic classification of plants and his correspondence the important contemporary scientists (especially Dutch doctor and botanist Villem Ten Rhyn (1647–1700) and English scientists Samuel Brown (?–1700?) and Edward Bulkey (1681–1714), member of the *Royal Society for the Improvement of Natural Knowledge*. An interesting chapter, richly accompanied by images, is formed by a historical discursion into monastery apothecaries from 17th and 18th centuries.

Especially the complete list of Kamel's publications is extremely valuable. However, the bibliography includes titles of very different quality and, unfortunately, some crucial works are missing here. Despite this fact, it can be generally stated that the reviewed

publication-catalogue not only fulfilled its primary purpose of an exhibition guide, but also in future it will be able to serve as a document bringing some new and interesting information concerning the life and work of J. J. Kamel, a remarkable personality of Czech Baroque culture.