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Stefanie Gänger's *A Singular Remedy: Cinchona across the Atlantic World* is an interimperial account that combines historical methods and subjects of the historiographies of the Atlantic world, science, environment, and economy. By following a single commodity—cinchona, or Peruvian bark—and knowledge of its uses, Gänger encourages readers to see beyond seemingly nonporous imperial boundaries and economies. Moving beyond cinchona’s history as the raw material that eventually yielded quinine, the popular treatment for malaria, she instead focuses our attention on the ubiquity and adaptability of this commodity from the viceroyalties of Peru and New Granada. *A Singular Remedy* is a monograph that spans the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century while charting a geography from South America and Europe to the Middle East to China and Japan, and many of the ships in between. Despite this vast geographical coverage, Gänger's analysis of cinchona nimbly addresses the interimperial and everyday history of this important commodity.

Gänger employs various kinds of sources that were written in over a handful of languages. The languages of the medical literature, bureaucratic reports, recipe collections, almanacs, and other primary sources include Spanish, French, English, Portuguese, Latin, German, and Italian. Gänger also uses secondary sources from scholars of Japan, China, and Russia, as well as translators of Ottoman Turkish. Her sources certainly match the extensive scope of her project and help to prove her point that the history of cinchona cannot be isolated to one locale or even to one Atlantic empire. Throughout the monograph, Gänger presents images of cinchona’s physical and medicinal characteristics along with images of cinchona’s material culture—a rawhide storage bag, a drug jar, bottles for English water, and the bark itself. *A Singular Remedy* is a thoroughly researched monograph that should serve as an example of how to combine the sources and languages of different empires and different fields of history—economic, social, scientific, and environmental.
Dividing her monograph into five thematic chapters, Gänger begins with the origins of cinchona in South America—specifically in the Spanish viceroyalties of Peru and New Granada. This is the only chapter that is largely constrained to the Spanish empire as Gänger busts myths of how the Spanish acquired knowledge of cinchona’s anti-febrile abilities. Though the exact transfer of knowledge of cinchona from Indigenous peoples to the Spanish remains obscure, Gänger is successful in dispelling Iberian-centered stories that heroize Spanish figures. In chapter 2, she turns her attention toward a history of cinchona that resembles other histories of Atlantic commodities, such as sugar, rice, chocolate, tobacco, madeira wine, mahogany, pearls, plants, and enslaved people. What sets Gänger’s analysis apart is that it moves past the Atlantic basin to investigate cinchona’s uses and trade in the Middle East, Asia, Russia, and Northern Europe. Chapter 3 examines the uses of cinchona across space and time, in forms diverging from bottled compound wines and powdered bark. Gänger writes, “medical practitioners [across the globe] tinkered with the particulars of these formulae, adapting them to the religious beliefs, peculiar culinary lore or commercial possibilities of their place of abode” (p. 28). In these early chapters, Gänger accomplishes her goal of demonstrating how the history of science, in this case, can be dislodged from a singular locale, which is the primary method in the historiography of science for investigating the evolution of knowledge.

The most intriguing chapters are the final ones. The penultimate chapter, “Febrile Situations,” explores the “insalubrious” environments where cinchona was popular. Such places included low-lying marshlands, hot and humid places, cities, ships, and camps. Merchants, colonists, military personnel, and missionaries carried cinchona with them or used it in port cities around the Atlantic basin. This chapter also covers how people used cinchona across these environments. Deployed across European Atlantic empires, cinchona was in supply for curative and preventative usage. This chapter is reminiscent of such works as Convery Bolton Valencius’s *The Health of the Country: How American Settlers Understood Themselves and Their Land* (2002) and Linda Nash’s *Inescapable Ecologies: A History of Environment, Disease, and Knowledge* (2006), both of which discuss the nexus of environment, knowledge, and science.

Chapter 5, which ends the book, is even more like the monographs of Valencius and Nash, but it is also similar to some of the chapters in Jennifer Anderson’s *Mahogany: The Costs of Luxury in Early America* (2015). More transimperial than Anderson’s history of the popular wood from the West Indies in the British Atlantic, chapter 5 focuses on the environmental degradation and labor conditions that accompanied cinchona harvesting in the viceroyalties of Peru and New Granada. Similar to mahogany harvesting, acquiring cinchona involved traveling to new areas once cutters had exhausted one harvest area. Although the discourse of extinction was not present in cinchona’s environs, it does appear that laborers had to travel farther and farther to obtain the bark. Yet colonists were under the impression that there was so much untouched land that the resource was inexhaustible. Meanwhile, the bark cutters themselves were mostly Indigenous people who were coerced or under varying forms of corvée. Like their enslaved counterparts in the Caribbean and Belize, who harvested mahogany in hot and dense forests, Indigenous people risked their lives gathering cinchona, which grows mostly on rocky mountainsides or uneven terrain. Thus, Gänger skillfully reveals the relationships among environmental degradation, coerced labor, and the social history of Indigenous and colonial relations in Peru and New Granada.

Gänger’s writing style is concise even as the scope of her project is extensive. I did find myself wondering about the natural history of cinchona and its uses among the Indigenous inhabitants of
South America, before the advent of European colonization. Gänger, however, seems to have exhausted the sources available for such an investigation. Moreover, this is a valuable text for researchers, especially for graduate students who seek to understand the processes and veins of trade of the Atlantic world. For undergraduates who are curious about how to write a transnational history of science, Gänger provides an excellent example. Finally, environmental historians will also be satisfied with her discussion of environmental degradation and its relationship with the social and labor history of the Indigenous and colonial inhabitants of cinchona’s environs.

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