



America, a *treasure* to exploit

dedicated himself during his journeys through the Nueva Granada to identify products whose exploitation could result in benefits for the Crown and himself. His mining activity represented a way of funding his natural history related work. He obtained his knowledge in mineralogy from his books, among which there were mining treatises that illustrated gold and silver extraction processes.

In his journeys, he found various *Cinchona* species, a plant that was exploited in Perú. He studied it as a febrifuge, and requested authorization from the Crown to establish a regulation on prices and sales over this product. His request was disregarded. However, his research about this species was the only work that he published. Under the title *El arcano de la quina*, it appeared weekly in the *Papel Periódico de Santa Fe* starting on May, 1793.

Between 1766 and 1770, he worked at *Real de Minas de Montuosa*, Nueva Pamplona, where he applied gold and silver production methods. In 1777 he settled close to El Sapo mines, near Ibagué. Mutis drew maps and schemes of the mines and deposits, and observed the surrounding flora and fauna. He left several descriptions of diverse species, anticipating the objective of the Royal Botanical Expedition.

Núm. 89.

PAPEL PERIODICO

DE SANTAFE DE BOGOTA.

Viernes 10 de Mayo de 1793.

EL ARCANO DE LA QUINA

REVELADO A BENEFICIO DE LA HUMANIDAD [*]

Discurso que contiene la parte médica de la Quinología de Bogotá, y en que se manifiestan los yerros inculpablemente cometidos en la práctica de la Medicina por haberse ignorado la distincion de las quatro especies officinales de este genero, sus virtudes eminentes y su legitima preparacion: conocimientos, que ofrecen el plan de reforma en la nueva práctica de esta preciosa cortéza.

Qq

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First edition of *El Arcano de la quina*
Papel Periódico de la ciudad de Santafé
de Bogotá, May 10, 1793

[*] Quantos elogios hiciese el Redactor con objeto de recomendar este precioso Escrito, serian ociosos; pues el merito de la misma pieza, y el notorio de su Autor el Doctor Don Joseph Celestino Mutis, no necesitan de prevencion alguna para el Publico. Es inexplicable el gusto con que damos a luz esta obra tan util à la Humanidad. Varias razones han hecho condescender à su Autor à la publicacion de ella en nuestro Periódico, en cuyos Nú-