

## *Abstract*

María Eugenia Chaves, *Honor y Libertad. Discursos y Recursos en la Estrategia de Libertad de una Esclava. (Guayaquil a fines del periodo colonial)*, Avhandlingar från Historiska Institutionen, Göteborgs Universitet, 26. Göteborg: Iberoamerican Institute and Department of History of Göteborg University, 2001, 311 pp. Written in Spanish with an extensive English summary.

The focus of the present Ph.D. thesis is on the conditions that at the end of the eighteenth century made it possible for slave women in Guayaquil to become active agents in the colonial courts. The thesis aims to understand the means by which slave women gained access to the colonial judicial apparatus and influenced the construction of discourses in support of their freedom. The question about how discourses of honour could be used by a slave woman as an argument for freedom is at the core of the analysis.

The major theme of the thesis concerns the conditions, which at the end of the eighteenth century opened the possibility for a slave woman to access a series of resources and set in motion certain knowledge in order to participate in her judicial demand for freedom. These conditions emerged from a net of power relationships defining the position from which different people involved in the case could enunciate an argument, define the facts of the case, or make a statement.

Another major theme concerns the discursive conditions that allowed a slave woman to use a discourse of honour as an argument for freedom. Differing, changing and contradictory uses of the notion of honour demonstrate that, far from belonging to a stable structure, this key concept was subject to discursive struggles in the context of judicial contestations. In the final years of the colonial order normative discourses about honour not only created and imposed social closure but, at the same time, informed slave's women strategies of resistance and freedom.

*Key words:* Slavery, Slave Women, Latin American Women, Latin American Slavery, Slave Resistance, Subaltern Women in Latin America.

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