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**Rivers of Gold, Lives of Bondage: Governing Through Slavery in Colonial Quito.**

Sherwin K. Bryant.

Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014. 264 pp. \$35.00.

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REVIEWED BY: Raúl Marrero-Fente

University of Minnesota

*Rivers of Gold, Lives of Bondage* by Sherwin K. Bryant offers a pioneering study of slavery in the Kingdom of Quito from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, moving the paradigm of African diaspora studies beyond the traditional focus on the Atlantic to the Pacific coast. The book differs from previous works by arguing that governance was the most important dimension of slavery. In the introduction, the author explains the complexities of the political history of slavery in Ecuador and Colombia, and the interrelations between race and slavery through the conceptualizations of postcolonial studies. Bryant sets the argument for the study of the political history of slavery, beyond law and social control, for a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between Spanish colonialism, slavery, and monarchy. He proposes a new reading of early modern legal culture expanding on previous works by Christopher Brown, Kenneth Andrien, and Kris Lane. In chapter 1, Bryant presents a detailed examination of the development of slavery in the Kingdom of Quito during the early colonial period and its connection with the process of colonization. In chapter 2, he focuses on the racialized enslaved subjects created by several modes of legal practices, including the juridical subjection of slaves, and the sociopolitical ramifications of this legal institution. In chapter 3, Bryant examines the impact of canon law and the church in the slave marriage and family, and the ways the slaves depart from these legal impositions. In chapter 4, Bryant carried out a revisionist task of rewriting the legal culture of slavery in the Kingdom of Quito by examining slaves' legal actions against their slaveholders. Using the testimony of lawsuits, he offers a unique point of view on how the institution evolved until independence. The book ended with a critical discussion of court cases as spaces of resistance to colonialism. The bibliography includes a large number of archival sources from Ecuador, Colombia, and Spain; extensive printed primary and secondary sources; four maps of the Kingdoms of Quito and New Granada, and the slave-trading routes; three illustrations; four tables on the percentage of Cartagena slaves sold in Popayán (1698–1757); translation of one *visita de despacho* of 166 slaves; the regional/ethnic breakdown of these 166 slaves; Jesuit sugar haciendas and slaveholdings in Quito (ca. 1779); and a helpful index.

One of the book's major achievements is how new methodological questions regarding slavery, governance, and race are suggested for future research in the field. By making new methodologies available, the author gives overdue attention to the role of slaves, race, and law in the Kingdom of Quito. The book is an excellent example of recent scholarship in comparative legal culture characterized by the incorporation of new objects of study. This broadening of the range of objects of slavery studies has embraced topics and issues from several disciplines, but still much work remains to be done concerning the pervasive role of colonialism, slavery, and imperial power in the Kingdom of Quito. Bryant's excellent book provides fertile soil for future research in Latin American slavery studies, representing as it does an attempt to move the discipline forward and to give proof to the new vitality of multidisciplinary research in the field. The book constitutes a valuable addition to the growing corpus of works dedicated to the history of slavery that has made possible

the task of revising this subject from a comparative perspective. Using archival materials, as well as texts and other cultural artifacts, the author brings to light a rich account of everyday events that portrays the colonial realities confronted by enslaved people in the Afro-Andes. The result is a new interpretation that will help to redefine slavery studies by guiding the research toward issues of coloniality and legal culture.

Bryant's book attests to the fact that Latin American scholarship on slavery has expanded significantly, showing up new details on slaves' life, family, kinships, and communal affinities. The book has been enriched by solid archival research and interdisciplinary orientation that has resulted in deeper understanding of Spanish colonial legal culture. By giving due consideration to unknown archival materials from legal cases, Sherwin K. Bryant offers a more complete picture of Afro-Creole slavery in the Kingdom of Quito than has any previous work on the subject. This book constitutes an invaluable research tool to scholars working on the history of slavery, African diaspora, Afro-Creole studies, and Colonial Latin American studies.

