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enslaved rebel in the province of Chocó in New Granada (modern-day Colombia), was born in the late eighteenth century. Agustina lived in the small town of Pueblo Viejo (present-day Tadó), located south of Quibdó, where she was the slave of Miguel Gómez. Agustina was admired for her tremendous physical beauty and, like all female slaves, faced the danger of sexual assault by her master, especially common among slaves who lived and worked in close quarters. This was the case for Agustina who worked as a cook, in addition to performing other household tasks. Sometime in the late eighteenth century, Agustina was raped and impregnated by Gómez. Upon discovering her pregnancy, Gómez demanded that Agustina abort the child immediately to avoid public scandal, but she refused. Abortion, infanticide, and refusal to abort were common forms of resistance employed by enslaved women to control their bodies and livelihoods. Consequently, Gómez tortured Agustina, causing her to denounce him before the local court. Although the Spanish Crown provided legal space for slaves' grievances, especially after the promulgation of the Código Negro (Black Code) in 1789, public denunciations of this nature were uncommon and dangerous for enslaved women.

In 1795 Agustina publicly spoke out against her rape and torture before Judge Álvarez Pino and Governor José Michaeli in Tadó. She provided her detailed declaration to the court in May 1796, stating that a few days after being tortured, she prematurely gave birth to a dead child with the assistance of two black women named Prudencia and Patricia, who also testified. Confirming Agustina's declaration, they stated that her dead son had a white father and was premature by a month and a half. After the death of the child, according to the trial transcript available at the National Archive in Bogotá, Agustina buried her son under her master's house (houses in the region were typically elevated off the ground by stilts made from palm trees). Eventually, Gómez sold Agustina for 350 patacones to a local woman named Maria Manuela Murillo, who then transferred Agustina to her daughter, Maria Ysavel Martínez y Murillo, Agustina's master at the time of the denunciation. Facing a court sympathetic to slave-holding interests, as most were throughout the colonial and republican periods in Latin America, the presiding justice sided in favor of Gómez, who only received a verbal warning.

According to several accounts, Agustina was said to have responded to this grave injustice by burning down several haciendas, or ranches owned by elites in the period, and *factorías*, or foundries, in Tadó. The consequences of these actions on Agustina's fate are unknown. Nevertheless, Agustina has become a local folk heroine in the region, and her rebellious actions are celebrated as a testament to Chocó's resistance against slavery. In August 2009 the town of Tadó built a statue of a sword-wielding,

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pregnant Agustina in her honor, alongside a statue of Barule, another local enslaved rebel from Chocó during the early seventeenth century. Both can be found today in the main plaza of Parque Reyes in Tadó.

[ *See also* Barule .]

## Bibliography

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### See also

Barule <<https://oxfordaasc.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195301731.001.0001/acref-9780195301731-e-50801>>