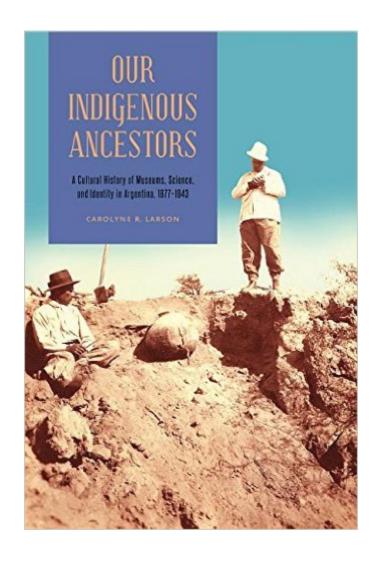
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Our Indigenous Ancestors: A Cultural History Of Museums, Science, And Identity In Argentina, 1877-1943





Synopsis

Our Indigenous Ancestors complicates the history of the erasure of native cultures and the perceived domination of white, European heritage in Argentina through a study of anthropology museums in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Carolyne Larson demonstrates how scientists, collectors, the press, and the public engaged with Argentinaâ ™s native American artifacts and remains (and sometimes living peoples) in the process of constructing an â œauthenticâ • national heritage. She explores the founding and functioning of three museums in Argentina, as well as the origins and consolidation of Argentine archaeology and the professional lives of a handful of dynamic curators and archaeologists, using these institutions and individuals as a window onto nation building, modernization, urban-rural tensions, and problems of race and ethnicity in turn-of-the-century Argentina. Museums and archaeology, she argues, allowed Argentine elites to build a modern national identity distinct from the countryâ ™s indigenous past, even as it rested on a celebrated, extinct version of that past. As Larson shows, contrary to widespread belief, elements of Argentinaâ ™s native American past were reshaped and integrated into the construction of Argentine national identity as white and European at the turn of the century. Our Indigenous Ancestors provides a unique look at the folklore movement, nation building, science, institutional change, and the divide between elite, scientific, and popular culture in Argentina and the Americas at a time of rapid, sweeping changes in Latin American culture and society.

Book Information

Hardcover: 232 pages

Publisher: Penn State University Press; 1 edition (July 31, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0271066962

ISBN-13: 978-0271066967

Product Dimensions: 6.3 x 0.9 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

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