



Confronting/reinscribing the argentine white narrative : identity construction and the reclaiming of indigeneity through autochthonous and folkloric music /

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Monografía

Although Argentina has not been a place associated with indigenous scholarship this image is shifting as scholars, activists, musicians, and artists have begun to challenge the myth of a homogenous Argentina and recognize the country's estimated 900 indigenous communities. This dissertation analyzes the role that musicians, dancers, and other culture bearers of Argentine popular and folkloric music play in this burgeoning indigenous movement. In an attempt to capture a multifaceted indigenous narrative of Argentina, I begin from the premise that identity is not static but rather a "'production', always in process" (Hall 1990:222). Thus, I consider the multiple ways that Argentines choose to align or distance themselves from a shared indigenous ancestry and how they use particular dress, symbols, musical genres and instruments to do so. I analyze shifts in this discourse in relation to broader trends of tourism, national politics, transnationalism and a growing international indigenous awareness. This dissertation begins with a look at indigenous trends in national music and within the country's capital Buenos Aires and moves into a detailed study of musical practices in the northern province of Salta, a locus of gaucho folklore. In particular, I examine the ways--again--through which instruments, genres, and dress, that three separate groups of musicians: copla performers, an "Indian" comparsa, and an ethno-folkloric fusion group, revalorize indigeneity by representing native northern Argentine communities in their performances. Ultimately I argue that musical expressions of indigeneity in Argentina both contribute to and detract from the struggle for indigenous recognition by allowing for a retelling of Argentine history and the emergence of native peoples onto a historically White nationalist narrative and by simultaneously perpetuating indigenista exoticist trends in which the "great," ancient, Indian civilizations are elevated as authentic culture bearers while extant ones are excluded or portrayed as primitive in comparison

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