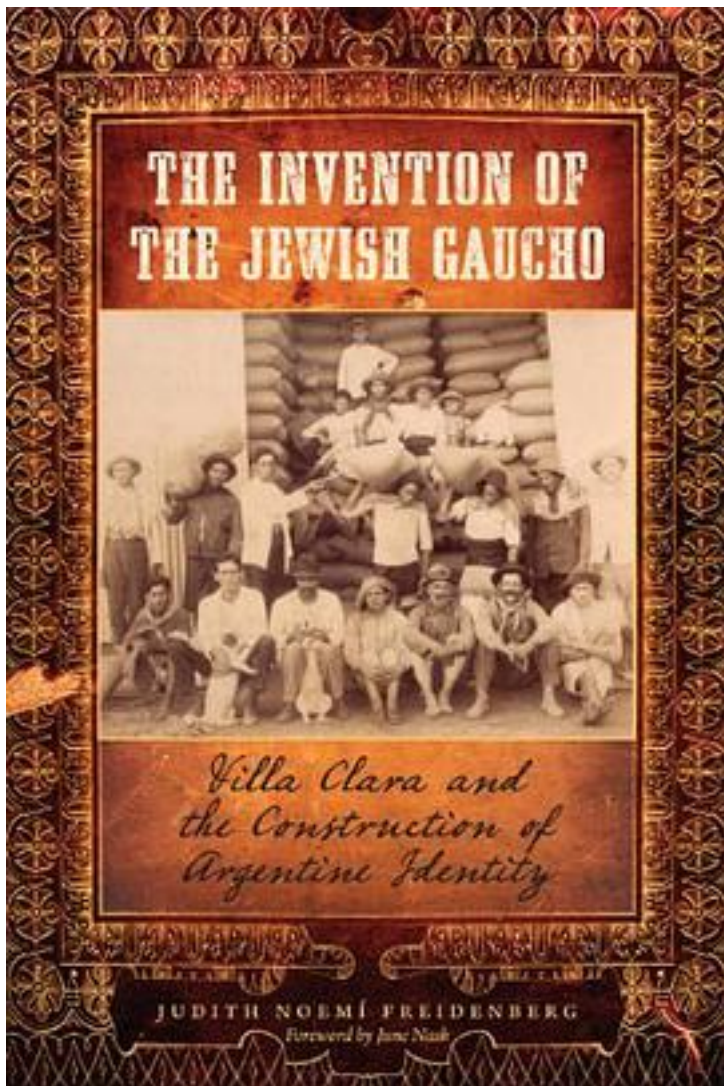


The Invention of the Jewish Gaucho



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著者:Freidenberg, Judith Noemi

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By the mid-twentieth century, Eastern European Jews had become one of Argentina's largest minorities. Some represented a wave of immigration begun two generations before; many settled in the province of Entre Rios and founded an agricultural colony. Taking its title from the resulting hybrid of acculturation, "The Invention of the Jewish Gaucho" examines the lives of these settlers, who represented a merger between native cowboy identities and homeland memories. The arrival of these immigrants in what would be the village of Villa Clara coincided with the nation's new sense of liberated nationhood. In a meticulous rendition of Villa Clara's social history, Judith Freidenberg interweaves ethnographic and historical information to understand the saga of European immigrants drawn by Argentine open-door policies in the nineteenth century and its impact on the current transformation of immigration into multicultural discourses in the twenty-first century. Using Villa Clara as a case study, Freidenberg demonstrates the broad power of political processes in the construction of ethnic, class, and national identities. The Invention of the Jewish Gaucho draws on life histories, archives, material culture, and performances of heritage to enhance our understanding of a singular population - and to transform our approach to social memory itself.

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