From the Ashes of History
Loss and Recovery of Archives and Libraries in Modern Latin America

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The formation, organization, and accessibility of archives and libraries are critical for the production of historical narratives. They contain the materials with which historians manufacture their reconstruction of past events. Archives and libraries, however, not only help produce history, but they have a history themselves. Their frequently fascinating history involves multiple interventions on the part of human agents and reflect past and present power struggles. Throughout the history of Latin America, archives and libraries have been affected by tragic instances of loss and destruction due to accidents or human action and negligence, but there are also cases of recovery and reconstruction have allowed historians to dig into the past using materials previously unavailable. The essays in this volume explore several fascinating cases of destruction and recovery of archives and libraries and illuminate the ways in which those episodes contribute to shape the writing of historical narratives and the making of collective memories.

Table of Contents

1. Carlos Aguirre and Javier Villa-Flores, Introduction

2. Pedro Guibovich Pérez, Fortunas y adversidades del Archivo de la Inquisición de Lima

3. Amy Chazkel, History Out of the Ashes: Remembering Brazilian Slavery after Rui Barbosa's Burning of the Documents


5. Lila Caimari and Marina Nazar, Detrás de una puerta gris. Notas sobre los archivos policiales públicos argentinos

6. Emilio Crenzel, La reconstrucción de un universo: los archivos sobre el sistema de desaparición forzada de personas en la Argentina


8. Kirsten Weld, Waging Guatemala's Archive Wars: Documentation, Mobilization, Justice


10. Horacio Tarcus, Archivos, bibliotecas y la memoria obrera, social y cultural de los argentinos