Veinte años después de esas fundaciones paralelas, el volumen organizado por Pablo Scharagrodsky despliega todas estas últimas posibilidades con potencia y madurez. Así como *Deporte y sociedad*, de 1998, constituyó los primeros y titubeantes pasos, este libro muestra, por el contrario, la relevancia del conocimiento que podía ser –y, consecuentemente, es– construido. El eje es la *cultura física*: de manera amplia, los pliegues en que lo corporal permite leer inflexiones del género, la higiene, la educación, el disciplinamiento, la medicalización y, por supuesto, en todo ello, la política y la construcción de la nacionalidad. El hecho de que Barrancos prologue el volumen funciona como una suerte de guiño a aquellos escarceos fundacionales; el texto de Armus, por su parte, marca la continuidad de los estudios sobre higienismo de los años 90. El resto de los trabajos, en cambio, describe brillantemente, a la vez, un estado contemporáneo de la investigación y la pertinencia social de la producción. Al poner el acento en la cultura física más que en lo *deportivo*, el libro escapa además a la trampa futbolística, en el que suele caer la mayor parte de la investigación socio-antropológica –sabido es el peso desbordante del fútbol como deporte nacional argentino, y en consecuencia esa centralidad ha opacado la investigación sobre otras prácticas. Por el contrario, el fútbol ocupa un lugar menor –fundamentalmente, en la indagación de Martínez Mazzola sobre, nuevamente, la relación entre el deporte y el Partido Socialista. Las prácticas privilegiadas como objeto son el juego, la gimnasia, el tiro, los deportes adaptados y, por supuesto, la educación física como aparato clave en la invención *escolar* de la Argentina moderna en el siglo XX. En este último sentido, los trabajos de Scharagrodsky y Aisenstein ocupan un lugar central: en términos de su importancia y extensión, y a la vez de su ubicación en el volumen. Trabajos de madurez, con solidez documental e imaginación interpretativa –una *imaginación sociológica* fundada, sin embargo, en la historia–, que señalan con contundencia que estos objetos, durante tanto tiempo menospreciados en las academias latinoamericanas, ya no pueden ser desplazados u ocultados en cualquier descripción del mundo social y cultural que se pretenda con alguna aspiración de completud y rigor.

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BRODWYN FISCHER, BRYAN MCCANN AND JAVIER AUYERO (EDS.): ***Cities From Scratch: Poverty and Informality in Urban Latin America***. Durham: Duke University Press Books 2014. – Alejandro Portes

The title of this book is appropriate in two senses of the term. First, it consists mainly of a series of focused ethnographies on specific events and processes

experienced by the poor in Latin American cities. Second, it makes *tabula rasa* of the pre-existing research literature on Latin America urbanization, the informal economy, and poverty. Most chapters breezily ignored prior generations of researchers and theorists on the topic. This is a serious shortcoming because the past literature is neither scarce nor scattered, but consists of a solid body of evidence, accumulated over many years, which led to durable conclusions about the character and origins of urbanization in the region.

A partial exception is the introductory article by Fischer. A historian, he does attempt to provide a comprehensive review of the literature, from the nineteenth century onwards. The accompanying bibliography is impressive and will be of use to specialists and newcomers to this field. The main point of this essay is that poverty and the urban poor in Latin America existed before the rise of the modern metropolis, but that this historical fact is obscured by the "presentism" of the specialized literature with successive generations of researchers rediscovering anew the phenomenon of widespread urban poverty and denouncing, time and again, the situation of the people living in these conditions.

The point is quite valid, but is not sufficient. Major findings from the past research literature are either ignored or not given their proper weight. Instead, Fischer's introductory essay moves lightly from one topic to the next and from one time period to another, as if all points and all arguments made in the course of more than a century of scholarly research were equally valid or carried the same significance. For example, Fischer does cover the research literature that did away with formerly popular characterizations of the urban poor in Latin America and elsewhere in the developing world as irrational, indolent, and, above all, politically radical. The pioneering work of Mangin, Turner, and others is appropriately cited, but the importance of their contribution is largely ignored – just another theme among many others.

Other important consensus points of the past research literature are neither mentioned in the introductory essay nor in subsequent chapters. To name but a few, these include: declining urban primacy associated with the near-unanimous adoption of an export-oriented model of development throughout the region; the phenomenon that Lucio Kowavick labeled "perverse integration" of urban space when middle-class sectors moved into previously off-limits working-class neighborhoods – including *favelas* – in search of otherwise unaffordable urban housing; and the re-definition of informal employment, by Itzigsohn and others, away from its older conventional usage as "invented" jobs at the margins of the real economy into integral components of the urban social fabric.

Neither Kowavick nor Itzigsohn are cited, nor are older towering figures in the field that helped model out present empirically grounded knowledge of urban trends in the region – Jorge Hardoy and Ramiro Cardona are never mentioned;

Anthony Leeds and Bryan Roberts barely so, and these are only a few examples. The "presentism" about which the senior editor repeatedly complains is well illustrated by the collection of studies assembled by himself and his co-editors, almost entirely focused on specific events in one city or another, ignoring what happened and was duly researched before. The chapter on Chile by Edward Murray is notorious in this regard.

On the positive side, several studies provide a wealth of up-to-date information on the specific cities and urban groups that they address. Notable, in particular, is the study by Mariana Cavalcanti on the interaction between the Rio de Janeiro's *favela* population and the established city. In local parlance, this problematic relationship is defined as the interaction between "*la favela y el asfalto*". Cavalcanti presents results of an original inquiry among Rio real estate agents as they seek to handle this tense relationship.

The chapter by Javier Auyero is an update of his well-known study of "Flammable", a shantytown built on a highly polluted river bank surrounded by a petrochemical complex and electric plant in Buenos Aires. The chapter tells the story of a lawsuit on behalf of the residents which actually reached the Argentine Supreme Court that ruled in their favor, ordering the government to clean up the place and resettle families in better public housing. However, after a year, this judicial order had not been implemented, leaving residents in the same situation as before. For Auyero, life in this shantytown amounts to an interminable Kafkaesque "waiting" for something to happen. The lives and destinies of dwellers in this slum are subject to the unfathomable decisions of higher-ups in the political establishment.

Even these solid empirical studies are limited, however, by an absence of reflection on their broader theoretical and practical implications. The tug-of-war between "favela and asphalt" in Cavalcanti's study could have been fruitfully contrasted with the situation in most Latin American cities where poor settlements are located at a distance from the regular formal city. It takes a bus or car ride to get to the shantytowns in Santiago or Bogota whereas, in Rio, they directly confront the eyes and sensibilities of middle and even upper-class residents.

In Buenos Aires, unlike Rio, the shantytowns are located at a considerable distance from the established city, but here the important issue deserving theoretical reflection is that of institutional quality. As shown by Auyero's study, Argentina has a sufficiently developed judiciary to allow the urban poor to seek redress via formal lawsuits. The institutional system's quality, however, does not extend to the effective implementation of judicial writs whose reach is confined to written declarations without leading to any effective improvements in the condition of the poor.

Overall, the book provides a valuable glimpse into the different forms that urban poverty and informality take in Latin American cities at present. However, the failure to connect with a well-established research literature on urbanization and development in the region renders the collection less valuable than it could have been. Building "from scratch" has its costs, both for cities and for academic projects. Inventing a field anew is a poor strategy when a solid foundation already exists to frame and to clarify the theoretical and practical implications of contemporary studies.

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ANA MARÍA OCHOA GAUTIER: ***Aurality: Listening and Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Colombia***. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2014.

In this book, Colombian ethnomusicologist Ana María Ochoa Gautier examines how voice was embedded in the 19th-century debates on the boundaries between nature and culture, between the civilized and the barbaric, and between inclusion or marginalization in a public civic domain. Through voice, sound becomes a way to make sense of the world and a medium to build knowledge about it. Hence, the book speaks of the relevance of the aural in the construction of history, culture, and politics in late 19th-century Colombia. A key feature of the theoretical framework, though, is that Ochoa Gautier, uninterested in simple oppositions, does not pose the aural as an "other" of the lettered city, but rather as an element that questions and upholds, alternatively, its very foundations. She is also keenly attentive to how, in the context of the postcolonial period, the zoopolitics of the voice—a term coined by Argentine scholar Fabián Ludueña to distinguish between politically qualified life and a more natural version—served as a means to redefine the relationship between the colonial and the modern. The volume is judiciously divided into four chapters that deal in an orderly manner with each of the pertinent cases.

Chapter 1 dwells on the difference between the way Creole elites and Europeans assessed and mapped the vocalizations of *bogas*, the boat rowers of the Magdalena River, and the way Afro-descendants and indigenous groups understood these very same vocalizations. According to the author, the *bogas*' capacity to envoice animal sounds resulted from their acceptance—unlike Creoles and Europeans—of a shared capacity of humans and animals to have a voice, to sing, and to speak. Through their mimesis, *bogas* did not enact hybridity. Instead,