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EDITORIAL

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Pandemic and the need to humanize the human

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The COVID-19 pandemic (coronavirus disease-19) presents itself as a milestone in contemporary sociability, further highlighting the contradictions between ‘economy’ and ‘life’ intrinsic to the society and, in particular, to the Brazilian social formation. In this context, the poignant effects of the flexibilization of employment relationships, the limitation of social rights, overexploitation and precarious working conditions, on the one hand, and continuity of inadequate sanitary conditions, inappropriate housing situations, environmental destruction with unpredictable harmful effects and the underfunding and privatization of the Brazilian Unified Health System, on the other hand, are very clear thus hindering the development of emergency solutions that, in fact, present a path for the whole of Brazilian society.

Therefore, there is a historical need to promote, now even more intensely than ever, humanization of work, education and health, in line with the editorial positioning of this journal.

Considering this tragic picture, we renew our publication with the inauguration of the section entitled “Notes of the Situation”, composed of texts by invited authors,

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maintaining the double-blind evaluation process by referees. The creation of the section had already been planned before the pandemic and the adoption of the fast track system by the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation, but, of course, at this time the main theme of several upcoming issues of the journal will most likely be related to COVID-19.

The myriad of approaches to this theme seek not only to maintain consistency with multidisciplinary approach of the journal, but also to map instruments to understand, academically, the complexity of the moment, which can only be dealt with if we analyze the totality of social life. One characteristic unites and will unite all these interventions: the identification of the limits of the current sociability considering the full emancipatory development of work, education and health. The pandemic exposes these limits in an overwhelming manner, tragically sharpening the edge of the analytical razor. Therefore, there could not be a more opportune moment to launch this new section of the journal.

Nor could we fail to address the issues that should be guided by scientific journals. The first concerns the relationship between the sciences – traditionally and generically divided between exact, biological and social-human sciences. The pandemic intervention proposals, including emergency ones, have required the mobilization of all sciences, always respecting the specificities of each scientific field. This challenge is not an easy task, nor an immediate solution, but it may require re-qualifying the scientific fields and their means of circulation, dissemination and discussion of knowledge.

The second question appears to be even more striking: rethinking science at a time when, at least for a part of the population, science seems to occupy the center of the stage and regains legitimacy. It is nonetheless an encouraging news, since, in the era of post-truths and research funding, in which erroneous assumptions reign, objective, refutable and analytical knowledge, as is the case with scientific knowledge, is undermined. In this respect, it seems to us that we must double the effort to reconstruct the importance of science. However, this renewed science should escape positivisms, absolute truths and power over the social; traits that, ultimately, can also contribute to the context of inequality and to the reaffirmation of the social form as it appears. It would also imply questioning quantitative productivity, meritocracy and hegemonic competitiveness as bases for assessing the quality of scientific knowledge (Gouveia, 2016; Contribuições..., 2020). The construction of this democratic field – understood as socially referenced and collectively agreed upon – is more urgent than ever, requiring a broad debate and an articulated organization of various sectors of society.

As this journal also aims at reflecting on integral education and human formation, we cannot end this editorial without pointing out that the production of a meaning for the events and developments generated and deepened by the pandemic will not only pass through science, even if in the revitalized terms outlined above. The search for meaning for the historical-social context and the imagination of a new society impose themselves beyond the limits of scientific production, finding in art and, in particular, in literature, a memory that offers a wide field of discussions and enquiry (Assim a literatura..., 2020).

Perhaps, in the future, in the archeology of social life produced under and over this moment, a common space will be revealed (Willsher, 2020): the return to the literature of Camus (2009), *The Plague*. Without wishing to impose simplistic functionality to literary art, we cannot avoid noting that, in this specific book, sociability, health, economics and politics are mixed in the allegory painted about the city of Oran by the Franco-Algerian author, pointing out the inevitability of building bonds of collectivity and solidarity, especially when the veils of apparent social normality are torn without mercy.

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