

Special editorial

25 years of *Saúde e Sociedade* What is the place of social sciences and humanities in the field of Public/Collective Health in Brazil?

Saúde e Sociedade begins 2016 with a double celebration: its 25 years of existence and an entire year of a new editorial configuration of the journal. In these 25 years, the consolidation of the journal as a space for dissemination of the knowledge produced in the connection between the Academy and health services is evident, by the solid partnership between Associação Paulista de Saúde Pública [Public Health Association of São Paulo] (APSP) and the School of Public Health, University of São Paulo (FSP/USP), and also of themes that highlight the importance of the interface between health and social sciences and humanities.

Celebrating these facts leads us to some issues, still reluctant, regarding the field of social sciences in health in Brazil. If in these 25 years there were many achievements, there was also the emergence of challenges and new dialogue perspectives between these diverse areas of knowledge, which seemed to us a good reason to write this special editorial.

We speak not only about the place of this new editorial configuration of the journal, but also about the place of social scientists active on the field of Public/Collective Health; that is, the place of social sciences in health.

The journal has been, throughout its existence, producing meetings, workshops, and thematic reports on social sciences and humanities in health, and our goal, at the moment, is to direct our attention to our readers, authors, and collaborators to express some of our current impressions on the consolidation of the journal and its role in the field of Public/Collective Health as well as his contributions to social thinking in health in Brazil.

We know that the dialogue between social sciences and health is established in a scientifically

institutionalized way with the constitution of the field of Collective Health (Luz, 2011). We also know the key role that social sciences have performed not only in the political articulation of that field, but also in the formulation of its research and practical objects, thus being developed as a subfield, the one of social sciences in health - today increased by the term "humanities".

However, paradoxically, it is precisely in the internal dialogue in the field of health that the theoretical-methodological protagonism of social sciences and humanities is more fragile. Despite the intense and increasing approach between health and social sciences, many issues regarding theoretical and methodological aspects involved increase and intensify as well. There may be several explanations for this phenomenon: the spread of the field itself with the incorporation of different actors and subjects; the emergence of new generations in the field of Collective Health to the education in the area of health sciences dedicated to social issues; the thematic diversification of the field of health, as well as within their own social sciences; the multiplication of institutional actors in the field - which involve not only the Academy but also those health services; the growth of the management area, comprising the segment of health politics; the very explanatory crisis of social sciences, more deeply experienced in the 1980s; the increasingly pragmatic and empirical directions of international and national scientific production etc. There are so many aspects that it is almost impossible to mention all of them. However, they have somehow been discussed by colleagues in the field, which indicates the deeply self-critical attitude that social sciences and humanities in health still have, loyal to their original lineage (Ianni et al., 2014).

However, as scientific publishers - at the same time, social scientists involved in this dialogue with the field of health -, we have encountered several of these issues in the conduct of the journal, in view of its editorial line. Some of them are more clearly positioned, such as: considering the scenario of a certain spread of social sciences and humanities in health in the field of Collective Health, and the loss of its protagonism, what role must (or should)

Saúde e Sociedade journal perform? What type of contribution can it still offer to the field of Collective Health, to social sciences and humanities (?) in health, and to social thinking in health in Brazil? On the other hand, will an essential contribution of social sciences to health be possible yet? Of what nature? What audience should/must the journal address? In a productivist and globalized context of the scientific production, would *Saúde e Sociedade* have the role of voicing the production of social sciences and humanities in health about Brazil? What contribution can the journal still give to the (self-)critical theoretical-methodological thinking, characteristic of the emergence of the field?

Issues such as these have concerned us and, obviously, are away from finding banal answers or solutions.

Considering the scenario of lean papers, objective writing, and of studies with empirically accurate results of fast and synthetic researches that tend to be increasingly valued by the international publishing market of scientific publications and graduate programs, these can even seem absolutely unreasonable.

However, despite this apparent inconsistency - these out of place ideas -, we formulate these issues because, beyond any pretension to answer them immediately, what we know to be impossible, our intent is that they become compasses of probable horizons, of directions to be followed. We assume, also, that having this type of concern should be an intrinsic and necessary task to those who are established in the field of social sciences and humanities (and health): to stand always in the self-critical perspective of social, historical subject.

This is the perspective that has guided us in the conduct of the journal's editorial line.

To improve the articles published aiming the development of the theoretical and methodological approach of social sciences and humanities - including the most different approaches: historical, sociological, anthropological, of political science, social psychology, philosophy, political economics etc.

To face the challenge of the new disciplinary themes and perspectives on the interface of social sciences, humanities, and health, such as ecological and environmental issues; the profound contemporary social transformations, the intersectionalities, vulnerabilities, and guarantee of rights; in addition to the resumption of old (new) issues, such as the dialectic relationship between nature and culture, or between social and biological issues, among others (COHN, 2013). What are the limits of different knowledge? How to delineate the approach of social theory in still incipient and substantially interdisciplinary themes? What kind of contribution social sciences and humanities can make to the theoretical and epistemological constitution of these new objects? How to develop new alliances - between disciplines, methodological approaches - which, in fact, involve their interrelation?

Considering a scattered scenario of knowledge production in a society like the Brazilian one, immersed in the global informational society dynamics, proposing such issues could mean a certain anachronism. However, in order to remain loyal to our origins, we believe that proceeding in such a way we will contribute to the deepening of critics and, accordingly, to the advancement of knowledge.

References

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