Cities in times of (post)pandemic: challenges of urban sociology research in Brazil

Cidades em tempos de (pós)pandemia: desafios da pesquisa em sociologia urbana no Brasil

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ABSTRACT
This article analyzes the urban studies debate on the Covid-19 pandemic in Brazilian cities, with a focus on the sociological discussion about public space and living conditions of the population. Dossiers published between 2020 and 2022 in national journals of urban sociology, as well as important contributions from urban anthropology, were reviewed. The analysis was conducted in three stages. In the first stage, studies on the new forms of urbanity and the crisis of public spaces during the pandemic were reviewed. In the second stage, the concepts and empirical frameworks used by the authors in their productions on the dilemmas of social distancing, denialism, and uncertainties in dystopian urban life in Brazil were examined. In the third stage, the concepts and themes aimed at deepening the understanding of the processes involved in the increase of urban inequality and the worsening of life conditions for a large part of the Brazilian population were analyzed. It is concluded that, despite the suspension of face-to-face encounters, social isolation measures have revealed new possibilities for action through virtual spaces of sociability, work, study, consumption, and access to public services via digital technologies, becoming an essential part of the "public-private" daily life of the city. However, the pandemic has also exposed existing social and economic inequalities, highlighting significant disparities in access to housing, health care, transportation, and the increase in informal and precarious work, as well as the decline in income among the urban population with lower purchasing power.

Keywords: urban sociology, Covid-19 pandemic, public space, cities, life conditions.
urbanidade e a crise dos espaços públicos durante a pandemia. Na segunda etapa, foram examinados os conceitos e enquadramentos empíricos utilizados pelos autores nas produções sobre os dilemas do distanciamento social, dos negacionismos e das indeterminações na vida urbana distópica no Brasil. Na terceira, analisamos os conceitos e temáticas que visaram aprofundar a compreensão dos processos envolvidos no aumento da desigualdade urbana e piora das condições de vida de grande parte da população brasileira. Conclui-se que, apesar da suspensão dos encontros presenciais, as medidas de isolamento social revelaram novas possibilidades de ação através dos espaços virtuais da sociabilidade, do trabalho, estudos, consumo e acesso aos serviços públicos via tecnologias digitais, tornando-se uma parte essencial do cotidiano “público-privado” da cidade. No entanto, a pandemia também expôs as desigualdades sociais e econômicas existentes, evidenciando disparidades significativas no acesso a moradia, saúde, transporte e no aumento do trabalho informal e precário, além da queda de renda entre a população urbana de menor poder aquisitivo.


1 INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly impacted people’s lives around the world, leading to the first wave of infections and deaths. Uncertainty about the origins, causes and consequences of the pandemic, preventive measures and isolation has led to a lack of determination in contemporary societies and triggered a major crisis in the global economy. Understanding its developments as a process of social change is relevant to the updating of sociological studies and the re-updating of themes and issues pertinent to the understanding of contemporary society. In view of this, it is proposed to analyze recent research in urban sociology and contributions of urban anthropology on the context of health crisis in cities.

The pandemic has changed daily life and the flow of people, goods, capital and technologies in cities and other localities such as indigenous lands and small villages to large metropolises, spelling out the unequal set of urban experience and environmental injustice in Brazil and the world. On the one hand, the measures of social isolation, despite the suspension of face-to-face encounters, revealed the possibilities of action through the virtual spaces of sociability, work,
studies, leisure, consumption and access to basic social services via digital technologies, becoming an essential part of the city’s “public-private” daily life and affecting the way we think about global connectivity. On the other hand, it revealed social and economic inequalities, exposing significant disparities in living conditions and in access to collective consumption such as housing, health and transportation, besides the increase in informal and precarious work accompanied by the fall in income of a large part of the urban population with less purchasing power and marginalized.

This contradiction points to important clues about the new characteristics and configurations of public space in (post-)pandemic society, as well as the behavior in the relationships of coexistence, sociability and conflicts marked by the intense social and political fragmentation of Brazil in the last ten years. It should also point to the directions of urbanism and public health policies for cities and public spaces. Thus, this article aims to analyze how research in Urban Sociology has tried to understand and interpret the effects of the pandemic in cities, focusing on the debate about public space and the living conditions of the population.

To develop the discussion around this goal, a qualitative bibliographic survey was conducted in national journals published between 2020 and 2022 in the areas of urban sociology and urban anthropology. The research, presented in part two of the article, was carried out in three stages, and the selection of the articles gave priority to publications in book collections and in the dossiers of academic magazines about cities and pandemics, or that the theme was transversal associated and presented in the majority of the articles presented in an edition. In the first stage, a bibliographical survey and literature review was carried out on the new forms of urbanity and the crisis in public spaces during the pandemic.

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The themes were selected according to the classification of main themes published in the Annals of the Brazilian Congress of Sociology (2007-2017) by the researchers of the working group of Urban Sociology/Cities, suggested by Guimarães, Bógus and Carvalho (2018, p. 210): Way of life, sociabilities, cultural practices; Public and urban policies; Socio-spatial segregation; Urban reform; Housing; Collective action, social movements/popular participation. Such topics remain as references for discussions at subsequent congresses, including the 2021 edition, during the pandemic.
pandemic crisis. The research model replicates itself in the second stage in which the concepts and empirical frameworks used by the authors in their productions on the dilemmas of social distancing, of denials and of indeterminations about life in dystopian urbanity in Brazil were analyzed. In the third, we analyze the concepts and themes that aimed to deepen the understanding of the social processes involved in the increase of urban inequality and worsening of the living conditions of a large part of the Brazilian population.

Collections and dossiers of national periodicals were accessed through portals such as Scielo.br, Google Scholar, CAPES Journal Base and through manual searches on the theme. Regarding the year 2020, few national scientific productions based on the classical and contemporary socio-anthropological theoretical body on the relationship between cities and pandemic have been found, so some texts published in Cadernos de Campo (v. 29 n. suppl, 2020) with support of the e-book "When the 20th century ends" by Lilia Schwarcz (2020).


Contributions are invited for the publication of an English version of the book in an open access format.

2It is worth mentioning that a bibliographical survey was carried out from the website of the Observatory of the Metropolis that published dossiers about the initiatives of the public authorities in facing up to the virus in 16 nuclei throughout the country. The material titled "The Metropolises and Covid-19" features two volumes that disclose the evolution of confirmed cases and Covid-19 deaths in 17 Metropolitan Regions (MRIs) between May 2020 and June 2021. Although it contains a relevant volume of data, it was not used in the literature review due to its specificity, since the objective was to seek a more general debate.

3In the literature review, the dossiers "Work and education in times of pandemic", Norus Magazine (v. 8 n. 14, 2020), "Pandemic of COVID-19", published in the Brazilian Journal of Sociology (v. 9, n. 21, 2021), the Special Number of the Journal Sociologia & Antropologia (v. 11, 2021), and the special editions of the Revista Simbiótica (v. 7, n. 1, 2020; v. 8, n. 3, 2021); for dealing with more general analyzes or with other approaches, although they compose the sampling of this research. It is recognized that there may have been exclusion of other relevant journals and productions, including articles from the journals analyzed. It is important to highlight...
2 SOCIAL SCIENCES AND THE CHALLENGES POSED BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN UNDERSTANDING CITIES

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed significantly and unexpectedly in a number of sectors, from health practices to political and social reactions, and has profoundly affected the daily lives of people around the world, creating uncertainty regarding the geography of cities, lifestyles, public spaces and urban planning (Malta, 2022). This forced societies to reinvent themselves to deal with extraordinary socio-economic problems (Fortuna, 2021). The scenario of urban dystopia, bare since 2013, makes one reflect on the unexpected space occupied by the pandemic "that presents itself in the mismatches between forms and contents" (Barreira, 2021, p. 32) of the academic debate and the social practice of the population in general. That is, such dystopia presents itself reflexively in the clash of their oppressions and social contradictions with the mechanisms of trust of modernity (Giddens, 1991) arising from the process of devaluation that the Sciences experienced in this period by the negationist discourses.

According to Fortuna (2021), several analyzes were carried out to understand its impacts on people's lives, both in the sphere of communication and in academic research. Initially academic productions were focused on the biomedical paradigm with an emphasis on technical measures to deal with the virus, while productions in the humanities area lacked a more comprehensive conceptual and methodological approach to understanding the pandemic in urban life.

But starting in the second half of 2020, sociological research began to react to questions such as the structural materiality of cities, their hierarchies and the marginality of their populations, as well as the ways of life of people, encounters and sociabilities in the face, severely affected by the effects of the virus, especially among the poorer strata of the metropolises. For Barreira:

Contrary to the common sense that considers the pandemic in its indiscriminate relationship with individuals, sociological thinking punctuates its effects associated with diverse social situations. Thus, in that this research focuses on the questions of Urban Sociology and Anthropology about cities, social practices, living conditions and other aspects related to urban life in the pandemic.
addition to thinking of it as something that affects everyone indistinctly, it is fundamental to observe its effects on the denuding of social life: the diverse rawness of problems that bring to light the conditions of vulnerability of certain social segments (Barreira, 2022, p. 1)

For Guimarães, Barreira e Leite (2022), the pandemic was an unforeseen theme and arose transversal to the studies of several fields, bringing with it an additional complexity: the need to maintain social distancing and a sudden change in urban routines due to the prevention measures against the virus. Social distancing has become a key aspect of Covid-19 prevention, and its inclusion in academic research is critical to understanding its social, economic, political, demographic, and human mobility implications and impacts. Drawing on the views of Hannah Arendt and Richard Sennett, they highlight the importance of meeting and social interaction in building an active life and the public sense of the city as a forum for civilized life. Social distancing has become a challenge to life in cities due to different ways of receiving and a methodological challenge to urban sociology for understanding that the sphere of public life is characterized by a socially shared experience:

For Urban Sociology, this intervening variable came as a double challenge, since it put in suspension not only daily routines, but ceased part of the ontological basis of social life itself: interaction and the possibility of encounter. Empty and silent cities have awakened in many the reflection on the senses of a truly active life (Guimarães, Barreira & Leite, 2022, p. 1).

Starting from this finding, the authors defend the construction of research agendas in urban sociology, identifying changes in the methodologies for analyzing urban problems and indicating tendencies in the current urban question. To do so, it is necessary to think about the new directions and challenges faced by sociological thinking itself about cities. In anthropological studies, Toledo and Souza Junior (2021) call attention to the place of Urban Anthropology in the sense that it needs both to reassess its ethnographic methodologies to research future crises and to "immunize" itself against the anti-intellectualism and anti-scientificism that has been done in the sciences in general, given a political and pandemic context marked by controversies and
disinformation in the first months of 2020. For them, it is up to the Social Sciences to claim some portion of collaboration with this "kind of epistemological sanitarism in the quest for the `cure' of the new coronavirus" (Toledo & Souza Junior, 2020, p.55).

2.1 PUBLIC SPACE AND (POST) PANDEMIC URBANITY

To what extent can urban analyzes during the pandemic contribute to the construction of new theoretical-methodological inputs in the study of cities and how do they update old issues? Oliveira et al. (2020) state that the health crisis has challenged current science and knowledge practices to a new understanding of contemporary sociability. For the authors, the pandemic has posed complex challenges to the construction of interpretative models of human communities that consider notions of difference, otherness, cultural practices, traditions and knowledge regimes. The new anthropological approaches must recognize this crisis and challenge "the complex relationship between nature and culture, city and forest, human and non-human" (Oliveira et al., 2020, p. 2), such as the rituals of death that many peoples and ethnicities were unable to perform.

In a small book titled "When the 20th Century Ends," released during the peak of the pandemic, Schwarcz (2020) endorses some of these notes about the impact of a virus on urban daily life, invisible to the naked eye, that has paralyzed and transformed the planet. This situation was only known in the allegories of the past or in scientific fantasies and dystopias. In this new world reality, the fast-paced urban world is experiencing a new temporality: Staying at home. As the author attested, "staying at home is to reinvent routine, if you discover yourself as a foreign person. [...] Now I need to reinvent myself in a different temporality. It is an inner movement of rediscovery (Schwarcz, 2020, p. 3)". In this context, the author questions the sense of the notions of home and home, the sense of the routine between physical activities, work and the exhaustion of the modern urban way of life. "Cities" generally experienced this same strangeness.

This phenomenon imposed a condition of indetermination on contemporary urban life, but the certainty that private space was imploded by
public space (Fortuna, 2020). It was not for nothing that the individuals needed to rediscover themselves and to reinvent their own temporality and the spatiality of the house, between, on the one hand, the passage of life in slow time - the windows and balconies have become a sort of connecting road between the interior world and the exterior. Separate connection by walls and people in windows of houses, a frame of everyday life "in a new language composed of ‘social distancing’, ‘notified cases’, ‘mask’, ‘face shield’ and ‘waiting’" (Gatlan, 2020, p. 16), but composed of domestic routines, feelings of solidarity, silences, loneliness, fear and hope to be recorded all over the world. On the other hand, home life is accelerated by digital means, manipulated by the online availability of home office in the near future, without major pauses or silences due to alerts from work, consumer delivery applications, leisure and health care, education and even virtual gatherings, which includes accelerated access to chats, video calls and sharing of media, information and misinformation about the virus, prevention and sanitization4.

"Staying at home" has also contributed to the transformations of uses inherent to public spaces, cultural policies and consumer practices in the areas of the arts, museums, historical heritage, music, audiovisual and editorial market, as well as urban activism have been strongly mediated by digital technologies and it is up to the social sciences to reflect on the fields of art and culture in a future setting for their professionals and captive audiences. Canclini (2021) argues that the pandemic has accelerated the reconfiguration of cultural markets, the bonds between creators, distributors and audiences that needed to replenish themselves to keep activities at the expense of contract breaks, layoffs and online adaptations.

In this period of accelerated competition with the internet, streaming and digital media the arts and culture audience has become more itinerant and more promiscuous to the digital industry's onslaughts. According to the author, "in the

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4 In 2020, the Pan American Health Organization with the WHO classified this context as infodemia, characterized by the speed of the emergence and sharing of new information and its counterproductive need, as it revealed itself "in the opposite direction of deepening a critical debate, provoking more anxiety" (Rui et al., 2021, p. 19).
disputes between written, media and digital culture, the pandemic has made the trends of previous years even more uncertain and less universalizing" (Canclini, 2021, p. 151) and this is not due to partial or total substitutions of consumer goods (books by PDFs, DVDs by downloads etc.), paid or free. In this way, the reconfiguration of these areas in the midst of the crisis is due to the need to offer readers-viewers-internet plural opportunities of choice through an algorithmic treatment that gives privileges to online consumer platforms aiming at the future possibilities of differentiated service offerings.

This is also reflected in the urban art and culture activism that, according to Rocha (2021), without being able to intervene freely in the spaces it was necessary to promote the urban interventions and actions live on the internet, promoting cultural spaces, urban micro-interventions with shows and diverse manifestations, supporting themselves through online cows paid via QRCode and Pix. These new practices of living are called by her co-authorship of the “urban house”, in which its residents, of various social classes, inscribed urban practices within the scope of the house during the quarantine ranging from leisure, leisure, diverse productions and work. The author says that as the house is the main daily space to be explored in the first months of the pandemic, in a more errant or more attentive way, the mechanical relationship of the inhabitant with his property took the form of uses similar to those of elements of urban public spaces.

These authors provoke important reflections on cultural consumption by considering interactivism as a bridge to the future of art and culture policies, as well as the public space itself. However, to take a look at the reality of Brazilian cities in this context - and certainly the world of cities (Fortuna, 2020) in exceptional situations - one needs to look at themes that reach the effects of capitalist urbanization amplified by the pandemic on the conditions of urban health, life and well-being, as well as social and economic inequalities.

### 2.2 SOCIAL DISTANCING AND URBAN DYSTOPIAS

In different historical times, as in 1903, “Brazil was called a `big hospital' and had all kinds of diseases: leprosy, syphilis, tuberculosis, bubonic plague,
yellow fever" (Schwarcz, 2020, p. 7). The sanitary practices initiated in 1904 by Oswaldo Cruz sought to improve this image of the country by instituting the obligatory vaccination against smallpox. The strategy of containing the epidemics, considered authoritarian and invasive against the population resistant to vaccination — which occurred in parallel with the modernization works in Rio de Janeiro that became known as "knock it down" for the poorer population of Rio de Janeiro — generated social and political tensions that broke out in the Vaccine Revolt under the government of Rodrigues Alves.

Almost 100 years ago, during the second term of Rodrigues Alves in 1918, the outbreak of the Spanish flu reached Brazil in a manner similar to that of Covid-19: from abroad to the national territory with rapid contagion in the urban peripheries and misinformation about the lethality of the virus, though with controversial actions of the government of Jair Bolsonaro between speeches, measures and the management of the pandemic. Another difference is that while the Spanish flu spread through the ships docked in the maritime commercial ports, the new coronavirus comes through the main reference point for socioeconomic, cultural and mobility inequalities: the national elites that returned contaminated from abroad. For Schwarcz,

Inequality has many dimensions, and the pandemic opens up ours. She arrived in the country by plane, by means of elite people who had been abroad and had returned contaminated — so much so that the first figures relate to the noblest neighborhoods. But what is happening now is that the virus has arrived forcefully in the peripheries, in the suburbs, in the communities and slums scattered across the country (Schwarcz, 2020, p. 7).

The urban condition reported by Schwarcz must be analyzed in the face of the drastic worsening of inequalities and structural problems of urban contrapisages (Malta & Nery, 2018) that conventional planning in Brazilian and Latin American cities tend to obscure in favor of capital (Cobos & López, 2021; Dominguez & Klink, 2021; Flexor, Silva & Rodrigues, 2021). This was detected on a global scale, but the way each government and the governed population would behave in the face of the new scenario became one of the main inquiries.
Considering this context, it is possible to address the reception to the pandemic in Latin American metropolises through its shared characteristics, such as its structural and historical regularities, and urban fragmentation (Cobos & López, 2021; Di Virgilio & Perelman, 2021; Gledhill, 2021). According to Cobos and López (2021, p. 885), antivirus campaign focused on three slogans (and hashtags): the "stay home!, voluntarily or repressively forced quarantine; don't leave if you don't need to!; and keep a healthy distance, both at home and on the street!". In a way, these slogans help to identify the behavior and levels of understanding of people and social groups - those in total quarantine; those who have to leave but are living in a state of fear, constant tensions or are anesthetized from daily life; and the negationist group (Rocha, 2021) - before the social control exercised by health authorities, media, experts and civil society.

For Cobos and López (2021), adopting such a campaign would not necessarily protect the most underserved population without housing, water, sewage, labor market exclusion, education and digital. In metropolises such as São Paulo and Cidade do México, with more than 20 million inhabitants, maintaining a "healthy distance" has proved to be difficult to apply, on the one hand, given the informality of work and urban housing, besides those that live on the streets. On the other hand, given the existence of areas with a great flow of people such as historical centers and their public spaces, commercial services such as fairs, formal and informal public markets, public transport etc. Therefore, large concentrations of the population become very vulnerable community transmission.

The negationist reception to the isolation and social distancing of part of the population and the conservative political class explained false alternative between "either the economy or life", reasons for clashes between the official political discourse of the Federal Government and the governors of the states of the federation, STF and even the World Health Organization (WHO) (Barreira, 2021; 2022). Such dilemma only separated into existential plans, that is, the separation occurred between those who could and could not stay at home. People who needed to move around the city to work in shops and offices, shop,
go to restaurants, stay in hotels or resume family activities and sociability had to cope with the need to be aware of local movements and risk levels of contamination.

Much of the coronavirus deaths could have been prevented if the Federal Government's actions had been swift and coordinated in line with state governments and WHO guidelines. Arantes and Pereira (2021) observed that, in a different way, the Government of the State of Bahia and the municipalities that make up the Metropolitan Region of Salvador (MRS) have established intergovernmental and interfederative relations important for mitigating the impacts of the virus, developing forms of cooperation and organization about the measures of restriction or flexibility. Given the atypical condition, tackling the pandemic has momentarily suspended the partisan competition already existing for more than a decade between the State Government and the City Hall of Salvador and have brought together strategies for tackling the pandemic such as social distancing; reorganization of public services, public finances and functionalism; health surveillance actions; health care; and socioeconomic measures.

In this sense, the fact is that there was disproportionality in the distribution of the risks of the coronavirus pandemic and how this inequality affects, as a priority, the most dispossessed classes in Brazil. Torres et al. (2021) assume that the disruptive governance of the Brazilian federal government contributes to this environmental injustice by disseminating an uncoordinated operational mode in the relationship with states and municipalities. The authors recall the characters Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, the doctor and the monster, who became known in the classic work of Robert Louis Stevenson, published in the late 19th century to allude to disruptive governance in its various faces and levels, representing the phenomenon of multiple personalities of the Bolsonaro Government and the tragedy that placed Brazil as one of the leaders in the ranking of infected and dead of Covid-19.

About the resistances to social distancing and lockdown, Toledo and Souza Junior (2020) discuss how such measures led to Urban Anthropology to
reconfigure the place of ethnographies in the so-called networked society, information and virtual realities and apply ethnographic models considering that the idea of sociability points in a direction of social practices that go beyond face-to-face encounters in a breadth that goes beyond the period of massification of internet access in the first decade of the 21st century. People with internet access have intensified their virtual interactions in the concomitant *WhatsApp* networks *as places where the bodies meet in the place*. Many of these encounters resulted in sporadic forms of sociability in the streets or in forms of agglomeration in squares, avenues and other urban spaces, usually synonymous with protest against confinement.

According to these authors, the analysis of the game of forms of sociability (Simmel, 2006) associated with ludicity and the conflict arising from the political transfigurations of the "negationist bodies" led to the street the game of forms of *negationist sociability*, driven by political, religious, class ideologies and by anti-ethical practices to confinement. In Brazil, there has been a repertoire of discourses about meetings undermined by the extension of the laws of isolation and social distance to the strategies of distance gatherings incorporated in the dynamics of the virus since manifestations in carreatas, baby teas, cakes, *drive-in religious cults* to the saraus of poetry and sharing of digital books, *lives* political, scientific and cultural (Toledo & Souza Junior, 2020).

These aspects reflect the scenario of Brazilian cities that has strong expression in avoiding the streets due to the policy of confinement or in denying such policy. The street, which was once the space of cultural and civic creativity, becomes the "street of others" in the urban imagery in general and at the confluence of opinion articles, considered then the main source of the harms of the pandemic, of the negationist, threatening and/or transmitting subjects of the viruses (Fortuna, 2021).

In this sense, Barreira (2021, p. 30) takes up an important and classic sociological question about social life: "how and how is it possible to be together?" By looking at the place of affections in the interactions in urban spaces in the face of the condition of uncertainty that hangs in Brazilian cities in the pre- and post-
pandemic context. Since the so-called June 2013 days, the conflict has gained strength with the expression of hatred and intolerance to sociocultural and ideological differences. If, at that moment, the author signals, "being on the streets" was not just a sign of protest, but a significant adherence to a place of positioning" (Barreira, 2021, p. 33).

This position that resided in the conflict and unwillingness to dialog, but the "stay at home" also revealed itself as this place of unrest and conflict proper to the urban public space, both due to the (unethical)conduct of social groupings and political deniers, and the social practices resistant to the normative order very well perceived by De Certeau (1994) to refer to the tactical ways of being, living and being in the urban space, i.e. the unsubmissive ways of living (Leite, 2018).

The speed at which the virus spread in the first few months is generating discursivities that this crisis would equal everyone in the various parts of the world, regardless of the social class of belonging. This generated a feeling that "one of the expected effects of the pandemic was the resurgence of inequalities on a global scale" (Flexor, Silva & Rodrigues, 2021, p. 907), including in access to digital consumption and the new creative market. On the contrary, an uneven spread occurred in the national territory and in many countries, such as the situations of food insecurity, unemployment and informalty, school dropout in the face of the difficulties of a considerable population in adopting homeschooling and, in a more impactful manner, in adopting basic measures with washing their hands. In addition, Menezes, Magalhães and Silva (2021) report that the President of the Republic's statement, minimizing the impacts of the new coronavirus, caused the loosening in the physical distancing that had been adhered to at first by the population of the favelas.

With this in mind, slum dwellers in the Metropolitan Regions of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro built the subversive spaces, a model of subversive planning that is incorporated into the conventional and hierarchical planning of the cities (Dominguez & Klink, 2021). These spaces arose as a result of the structural problems of the favelas in the health crisis and in the planning of urban spaces. They result from the support networks of the slum dwellers of these regions that
have adopted territorial strategies and social networks mobilizing collective initiatives and measures to alleviate vulnerabilities in the face of the new health crisis, exposing the visibility of their material needs, but also their popular survival practices.

These networks have organized community panels that can be read as a form of expression among favela dwellers in Rio de Janeiro to debate the reality of the pandemic in these territories. These panels worked in conjunction with health professionals and the social and political exchange between favelas that "involves an intense exchange of knowledge, technologies, experiences and networks of contacts" (Menezes, Magalhães & Silva, 2021, p. 84). Besides exposing ancient dilemmas of conventional urban planning, these peripheral experiences exposed in the networks the following:

new communication processes between slum territories and urban peripheries. Places where collective subjects develop effective technological and spatial innovations in tackling urban structural problems [...] at the same time, indicated subversive, potentially innovative spaces (Dominguez & Klink, 2021, p. 929).

Rocha (2021) claims based on the concept of urban co-authorship that the appropriation of the city "can be made both by the way in which space was originally thought and subverted, and this subversion can be taken by the holders of power as something negative, which generates the aforementioned conflicts" (Rocha, 2021, p. 1019). The concept of co-authorship defends the existence of the planning of the city in a way shared between subjects and institutions that have power and the citizens who appropriate it, the urban co-authors: formal citizens, marginalized and urban activists.

2.3 (RE)CONCEPTUAL UPDATES OF POST-PANDEMIC URBANITY

City life and the debate surrounding the effects of Covid-19 should be explored through theories, themes and methodologies "that highlight knowledge, practices and situated lives" (Segata et al., 2021, p. 9). Not for nothing, the anthropological approach demonstrates how the absence of state power in health
practices in urban centers reaches from the sensitive side of life to the disruptive conditions of death in the urban daily (Rui et al., 2021; Andrade Neves, 2021).

According to Rui et al. (2021), conceptual categories such as biopower, biopolitics and necropolitics have been mobilized in an unavoidable way to discuss how these populations experienced state management strategies, the pressure of entrepreneurs and negationist politicians to reopen the functioning of companies during the lockdown. These concepts have become "keys to understanding [...] to reveal the extent of the effects of neoliberalism on the social fabric both of countries that have already experienced a welfare state and of those that have never managed to reach it" (Rui et al., 2021, p. 26). In other words, we are discussing the conditions of poverty, health and aging, structural and environmental racism, gender inequalities and the pronounced social exclusions in the pandemic.

It is not by chance that the studies carried out before the pandemic on the mentioned themes were challenged to understand the new social, economic and affective contours in the city due to isolation and the sudden change in the way of living, working and being. Guimarães, Barreira e Leite (2022) argue that the complexity of life in the city requires sophisticated approaches to deal with the themes that make up the current urban agenda. It requires equally sophisticated approaches to address contemporary issues such as:

violence, organized crime, segregation, effect-territory, illegalisms, inequality, gentrification, sociabilities and public space, poverty, citizenship and rights, housing, mobility, informal and precarious work, urban social movements, cultural heritage, governance, sustainability and inclusion (Guimarães, Barreira & Leite, 2022, p. 1).

Of these issues, urban sociology is urged to analyze social inequalities, urban despoliation and the vulnerabilities of certain social segments in Brazilian

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5 Drawing on the concepts of biopower, biopolitics and necropolitics, respectively by Michel Foucault, Paul B. Preciado and Achille Mbembe, the authors explain that biopower articulates the power of scientific and institutional discourses, state practices and the creation of internal enemies in society; biopolitics retains the notion of a policy of bodies that dominates the political management of the life and death of populations; and necropolitics is a form of exercise of power that is based on the radical denial of the equality of certain populations and the instrumentalization and the systematic elimination of the most vulnerable (Rui et 2021).
metropolises. Guimarães (2022) highlights the importance of the trajectory of Urban Sociology in the study of the living conditions of the urban population, which represents more than 84% of the Brazilian population. The theoretical-methodological milestones of this discipline, between the years 1960 and 1980, can help to understand the socio-historical context of the theme "living conditions", which is linked to income, the precarious reproduction of work and consumption (basic and collective), as well as to understand the factors that affect these conditions from the 1990s and intensified during the pandemic between 2020 and 2022.

Guimarães (2022) and Barreira (2022) revive Kowarick's "analytical scheme of urban despoliation" (1979) to discuss the productive restructuring and restructuring of urban space as a set of urban experiences linked to globalization and the production of space by neoliberal urban policies, as well as the unequal access to collective consumer goods such as housing, transportation, health care and hospital. These experiences, imbued with an unequal and excluding scope, were made explicit by the pandemic. Guimarães (2022) analyzes the current issues about income, work and other trends in the relationship State, economy and society, including the pre- and post-pandemic context. The author emphasizes the need to investigate the factors and produce new theoretical and methodological approaches related to living conditions. Public health was the main concern, but the drop in monthly household income, which decreased by 7% in 2021, was felt at the same time as the population that works autonomously or informally and of consumers in debt and defaulting grew.

Bógus e Magalhães (2022) analyzes some of the main Metropolitan Regions of Brazil (Salvador, Fortaleza, Manaus, Porto Alegre, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Belo Horizonte, Recife and Distrito Federal). In this study, the authors use the Gini Coefficient and IBGE data to demonstrate the evolution of income inequalities and vulnerabilities, the increase in the percentage of individuals living in households with monthly per capita income of up to ¼ of minimum wage and the increase of informal work around 40.1%, in the first quarter of 2022, despite the fall in unemployment, when it reaches 9.8%, the equivalent of 10.6 million
unemployed people. Such figures, Guimarães suggests (2022), show the effects of plundering processes that affect precarious workers, traders and service providers who depend on the presence of a consumer public, in addition to those who faced the choice between basic needs and economic dependency during the imposed sanitary restrictions.

Bógus and Magalhães (2022) also highlight that Brazilian cities have undergone major transformations that have generated impacts on social, economic, cultural and political structure. The capitalist logic of space production and increased poverty have generated precarious forms of life that have resulted in socio-spatial segregation and fragmentation of the urban social fabric even further during the Covid-19 pandemic, affecting more directly the low-income population with devastating effects in terms of mortality and various types of risk and vulnerabilities, as well as increasing informality and decreasing the average monthly income of families living in slums and slums in metropolitan regions. In addition to the metropolises, the "internalization of the disease" occurred due to the proximity of the urban peripheries of different municipalities and the intra-urban mobility between the MRIs and the integrated pole-municipalities.

In previous research, Bógus and Magalhães (2021, p. 49) use methodological resources called "Integration Levels of the municipalities that make up the Metropolitan Regions and the Urban Welfare Index, the UWI"\(^6\), which serve the macrosociological analysis on urban sociospatial inequalities. Using these resources, these authors demonstrate how the pandemic has decisively altered the living conditions and urban well-being of its inhabitants and demonstrate the demographic impacts of the dissemination of the virus that have resulted in the reduction of population growth in the metropolitan areas of the country, so that they call attention to reflection on the impacts of the diversity of these spaces in facing and combating the disease. Thus, "it will be necessary to look at the cities and analyze the unequal way they were and are still, on a daily basis, produced and experienced" (Bógus & Magalhães 2021, p. 49), which

\(^6\) Both were prepared by researchers from INCT Observatório das Metrópoles, with data from the 2010 Census.
includes unequal access to the medical-hospital system, to housing, work, displacement, education, home office, practically non-existent in certain peripheral regions hindering social isolation.

On this last aspect, the bulwark of publicizing the idea of a "new normal", Barreira (2022, p. 3) argues that "the middle and upper classes gathered greater amount of resources to maintain social isolation because of the possibility of carrying out the work online and being able to circulate in large spaces, from the dwelling, including mainly leisure opportunities" in isolated beaches, resorts, private condominiums. For this reason there was also a shock in the reception to isolation and social distancing in places of very dense density, which makes explicit the dystopian scenarios of Brazilian urbanity.

3 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

If there is one thing that the pandemic has exacerbated, it is the serious social and economic inequality that exists in Brazilian cities. The studies presented in this article demonstrate how the pandemic disproportionately affected popular and slum communities that depend on public spaces to carry out their formal or informal work activities, their daily activities marked by personal encounters in schools and health centers. Despite the cooling of the circulation of the coronavirus, there is no doubt that the civil, political, cultural, scientific and economic worries are the result of a health crisis that is difficult to apprehend, including in the management of the pandemic in countries such as Brazil, which has dealt with the most unexpected challenges on a local and global scale.

From this context, a review of the literature and the theoretical-methodological propositions of urban sociology and anthropology on the health crisis was presented. These investigations addressed various topics, including living conditions, urban despoliation, social segregation and unequal access to collective goods necessary for the well-being of the population. It was also discussed how confinement imposed new temporalities and spatiality on the urban daily life and routines of the people. The house and the street have become places of unrest and at the same time of resilience of urban life, revealing this
relationship in a new characteristic of connecting public and private space. The denial of isolation highlights the need for encounters, despite the risks. It also highlights the dilemmas of sociability and the inherent conflict in public spaces.

Finally, this bibliographic sampling does not exhaust the theme about cities and pandemics, but it provides important paths for future research on public spaces and urban culture in the post-pandemic context. The keys of understanding built around the concepts presented, directly or indirectly, and empirical analyzes point to a possible scenario of recomposition of the cities, that is, of urban restructuring in a general manner. Although there are clear signs of social change, life in cities continues to be marked by socio-economic inequalities and a marked differentiation of lifestyles that prevent peaceful coexistence in times of crisis. Therefore, the "normal old-new" of urban life continues to recover indeterminately.
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