

Death in pandemic contemporaneity

The concept of death as an entity has existed in many societies since the beginning of our history. From the 15th century onwards, with the revival of Greco-Roman culture as a source of artistic inspiration, it came to be represented by a skeletal figure carrying a scythe and dressed in a hooded black robe. This was inspired by Hades, the Greek god of the underworld, and by Thanatos (Figure 1), the personification of death, and is an image with strong negative connotations. The theme of death can be approached from several perspectives, including positive ones. Regardless of the angle from which it is viewed, certainly in these times of pandemic, we all think or deepen our thinking about death. But what happens to humanity afterwards? Can we become better people? A socially better human-kind? Can we produce really justifiable and sustainable health science? Transformations have taken place, but some were just repetitions of history disguised as contemporary innovation. As epidemiological data show the decline of the Covid-19 pandemic, life seems to be returning to “normality” in the concept of being

as it was before. For those who think like this, we must not forget that what prevailed before is what brought us to where we are now and, therefore, a translational historical rescue becomes essential for survival with quality of life for both humans and humanity. Hope is still inside Pandora’s box.



Figure 1. Septimius Severus, 193-211 A.D., AE16 of Nikopolis ad Istrum, Moesia. AY KAI CEYHPOC, laureate head right. / ΝΙΚΟΠΟΛΙΤ ΠΡΟΣ ΙΣΤΡ, Eros (Thanatos) standing right, legs crossed, extinguishing a torch on an altar. Varbanov 2568

in memory of Professor Edna Ferreira da Cunha

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DOI: 10.12957/bjhbs.2022.68170