Imagery Narrative of the Covid-19 Pandemic: What Medical Professors Tell Us?

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ABSTRACT

To work with images is to deal with the primary language of the psyche. Between May 2021 and February 2022, Medical professors were interviewed online. They evoked representative images of the pandemic period and told a story about the pandemic through metaphorical images and memory recreations. The interviews were analyzed by Content Analysis, in a phenomenological approach, seen as metaphors of the time lived by the participants. Twenty-eight professors participated, giving rise to five categories, with images of fear, suffering, hope, nature and learning. The discussion about the pandemic was expanded, anchored in archetypal psychology, proposing another place to think and dialog with health and illness, with life and death, with the uncertainty that permeates the world.

1. Introduction

To start this article with a quotation from Hillman (2022), in his book *Archetypal Psychology*, is to give a small glimpse of the pathway chosen to work with the images brought by the participants of this research: "the act of cultivating the soul is to imagine, since images are psyche, its substance and its perspective. To deal with images [...] is therefore an equivalent of cultivating the soul." (p. 64, our translation).

According to Jung, the image is the language of the soul, since it is constituted by images: "everything that becomes conscious is an image and of that image is a soul" (Jung, 2002, CW 13, p.75, our translation). For him, the language of the mind consists of images (Maroni, 2001); it is through this first form that thought begins and evolves into expression through words. Following his reasoning, there are two ways of thinking: linguistic thinking or directed thinking, which serves culture, the common reality of everyday life; and fantasy thinking, which takes place through dreams and imagination, daydreaming, and which it gives primacy, as a language of the unconscious and the only one capable of producing consciousness and connecting the conscious and unconscious poles. Jung approaches Nietzsche when he states that language, as a communication tool useful for the practical domains of life, is unable to express the unconventional, the true and fundamental experiences (Maroni, 2001). This puts us in front of an important reflection: knowledge is movement (movement of images and thoughts), and conversation is its expression (language and dialog). The dialog goes through the link between what is objective and what is subjective; language cannot be tied to the only conscious and practical pole; by incorporating and giving importance to images and metaphors, we can see the inner side of things and realize that our experience of world is much broader (Avens, 1993). Images, as well as the phenomenon of imagining, form the basis of myths and language, since they are prior to symbols, they are the creation of the soul/psyche. We arrive at the human aspect through poetry created in the imaginal world (Hillman, 2010; Avens, 1993).

When asking professors of medical courses about which image related to the pandemic appeared in their minds, we tried to look for something deeper, more primordial, about what it was like to live that period. Who knows, maybe even stimulate a certain type of daydreaming, as Bachelard (2018) tells us; this state that connects us to ourselves, with what he calls "the poet's creative consciousness" (p. 1, our translation). In light of the foregoing, these three names (Jung, Hillman and Bachelard) will be the theoretical basis that will support this work.

In March 2020 (OPAS, 2022), people found themselves in the situation of a Covid-19 pandemic, declared by the World Health Organization (WHO). From that moment on, the narrative about health, human and social relationships was changed to a place of strangeness. Social distancing was imposed as a containment measure, so that new types of interpersonal relationships were being created in an attempt to adapt human beings to the unusual. New (perhaps unrevealed old) problems have cropped up as well. Shadows broke loose from hidden places and spread to visible places in people's daily lives. New images were emerging in the mind, others were rescued from a past that was thought to be forgotten. Thus, a new story was formed, full of questions, uncertainties, fears and hopes.

To work with images is to try to deal with the primary language of the psyche. By provoking the professors to tell me the image that emerged as representative in the pandemic period, I tried to understand what these people were realizing, feeling and constellating in their social group. By putting them together, a fabric was formed: an archetypal support, as if it were a great collective dream, which shows us a part of this unconscious.

By working directly with dreams, Jung alerts us to this direct access to the unconscious and dreams in times of war or distress that reveal the fears and insecurities of people who are living these times (Zerbatto, 2020). By treating the images evoked by the participants of this research as oneiric images, I tried to approach this context and write an imagery narrative, which was crossed by the professors in this period and by myself, in a metaphorical way. It means looking at the moving images and seeing through them what is told in this period. Since the soul is made up of images, it is an imaginative activity with a poetic basis. This in the words by Hillman (2010a), who understands the soul as a possibility of imagining, reflecting, dreaming and daydreaming, thus admitting symbolic or metaphorical realities in the plurality of images produced in this process.

It is through this pathway I chose to follow to work with the images collected in the interviews, where, more than ever, the definition of image is in perspective and not in the literal. An image is not

just what you see, but the way you see it, as Casey (1974) alerts us. What story did these professors tell me about the pandemic, through metaphorical images and memory recreations? Because the soul never thinks without a mental image [...] we are essentially creatures of images. Images, like stories, inform and shape us (Manguel, 2001).

2. Methodology

This is a qualitative and analytical study. We invited 30 professors from three Medical courses in the city (10 from each institution), two public institutions (one federal and one state) and one private institution (non-profit foundation). Professors were randomly drawn and received an online questionnaire, created on the Google Forms platform (following Google's privacy policy), with the Free and Informed Consent Form (FICF) and an invitation letter to participate in the research.

The collection process had two moments:

1. The online questionnaire, distributed among the selected Medical professors at each institution, through e-mails and the instant messaging application, WhatsApp, in order to collect sociodemographic information, taking into account gender, age group, race/color, income, semester and time availability for the interview. The FICF was forwarded in the questionnaire, and the participant should choose the option "I have read the FICF and I accept to participate in the research" to continue responding to this.
2. The second moment, the semi-structured and directed interviews, in order to obtain the narratives of their experiences during the period. One of the interview questions was: What image comes to your mind at this moment, which represents the pandemic?

The interviews were conducted online, via the Zoom platform, recorded on the researcher's computer (with password protection), transcribed using a Microsoft voice typing application at first, and then passed on and corrected by the researcher. Initially, they were analyzed by Bardin's Content Analysis (1993) for the definition of semantic units and meaning cores, but based on the phenomenological approach (Stein, 2019; Holanda, 2007), since the phenomenological method takes into account access to the essence of the experienced phenomenon, through the remembrance of what was lived via narrative (Holanda, 2007). Accordingly, the collection of narratives based on the phenomenological method has become an important resource aimed to understand how the period of the Covid-19 pandemic has affected professors working in medical courses. In this article, we decided to focus on the images evoked by the participants, trying to maintain the archetypal approach, where Hillman (Barcellos, 2021) tells us to stay with the image and ask what it wants, instead of interpreting it. Manguel (2001) explains that, when we read images, we attribute the temporal nature of the narrative, and none of these narratives is definitive or exclusive. The image occupies a frame, a space independent of the time we reserve to contemplate it. With this model, we try to tell one of the possible imagery narratives of the Covid-19 pandemic, since, as Michael Baxandall would say, "We don't explain images, we explain comments about images." (in Manguel 2001, p. 29, our translation).

As an inclusion criterion, we defined being an active professor in the Medical course at one of the three institutions. As an exclusion criterion, we adopted non-response to two invitations made, and then the next professor on the list was invited.

We designed the interview questions, taking into account the objectives of the postdoctoral project. Prior to the survey, we carried out two interviews with professors from other courses in order to assess the clarity of the questions and make adjustments if necessary.

The project was submitted to the Research Ethics Committee at UNIFESP and granted a Certificate of Presentation of Ethical Appreciation (*Certificado de Apresentação de Apreciação Ética*: CAAE), no. 52536221.9.0000.5505.

3. Results and Discussion

Of the 30 invited, 28 professors agreed to participate in the research, who were interviewed afterwards. Two professors from the Federal University did not accept the invitation; and, taking into account the saturation criterion, we decided that the sample was already complete.

The group consisted of 17 women (60.7%) and 11 men (39.3%), with a mean age of 53 years, declaring themselves mostly white (64.3%), 10 from the University State, 10 from the private and eight from the Federal. Half of the group declared their income range above 12 minimum wages, and the other half declared income between six and 12. All semesters of the course were represented in this sample, and five professors were not physicians. (Table 1)

Table 1. Socio-demographic description of participants

Variables	Mean/sd	n/%
Gender		
Female		17/60,7
Male		11/39,3
Color/race		
White		18/64,3
Black		2/7,1
Brown		7/25
Indian		1/3,6
Age (years)	**53,11±10,19**	
Institutions		
Private		10/35,7
University State		10/35,7
Federal University		8/28,6
Income range (minimum wage)		
6-9		4/14,3
9-12		10/35,7
>12		14/50

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on the data collected between the years 2021-22.

This article is part of a larger project on the stories of the pandemic experienced by medical professors and covers the period from May 2021 to February 2022. We tried to bring the images, as metaphors, that could lead to an understanding of the movement of life, as well as the construction of a new way of knowing this time, which includes the inhuman in us.

The images danced around each other in a circular motion and grouped into categories. All, even the most optimistic, have brought the archetypal stamp of melancholy. A twilight which makes it difficult to see, but which can show shades not perceived in sunlight. Shadows inherent in the depth of the soul (Hillman, 2022). It is very difficult to define what an image is, especially if we stick to an optical concept only. This approach takes the complexity out of the psychic image and literalizes it; it remains on the surface of the ego, explaining the image as produced by the human being, and not as an independent creative action of the psyche (Barcellos, 2021).

Accordingly, I begin our narrative through the five categories that emerged. Interview excerpts illustrate each category, and the discussion proceeds progressively. The categories were divided into colors (randomly chosen), and the interviewees were given the name of the color and the number of their interview, thus ensuring anonymity. Each category also gained an illustration and a small poem made by me during the pandemic period, originating from the images that came to my mind, and here

they met and intertwined with those of the participants. The period crossed me and left marks, showing that research is never completely objective. and that the art produced allows another form of expression and understanding of the lived time (Battezzati, 2021).

3.1. Yellow Category: Images of pain and hopelessness

Tied lungs, air that doesn't circulate, body that slowly breaks up [...]
But there's hope in the air,
A light air balloon,
Life,
Gap [...]
(Iêda Aleluia, February 2022)

Figure 1. Watercolor on Canson A4 paper

Source: Author, own collection, February 2022

The images that emerged were of intubation, open ditches, invisible gravediggers, who do the job of hiding bodies and pain (including their own), the empty streets, the desert and the feeling of living a waking nightmare. The inhuman coexisting with the human, backed into a corner.

That picture of the *Cemitério do Caju*, with all the graves open at the same time, and the gravediggers using *Tyvek*, those white clothes, having to bury people and risking their lives, and nobody worried about them, everybody, right, just for what? He buries, he hides, but what does he hide? The pain of thousands of people. A part of humanity that has been lost to a preventable disease is painful. (Yellow 11)

The empty streets you'd put your face to the window, but there is no one there, at that beginning there. Like, like, well, that was very hard, you know? The street completely empty [...] (Yellow 15)

It's a desert! (Yellow 16)

I think it's like a [...] the feeling is of a nightmare without being, it's not really, it's not, everything we're living is very real; and, if we study history a little bit, we'll realize that this has already happened, both pandemics and fascist threats. (Yellow 18)

The speeches made by Yellow 11 and Yellow 18 also refer us to a political dimension that was evidenced in the pandemic. There is a positive correlation with images and analyses that emerged in other studies (Zerbatto, 2020; Coli, 2020; Beiguelman, 2020; Delicado, 2021), which bring the vision of action, or lack thereof, by world governments. An image is archetypal not only in its form, but also in the way the image is seen, how it affects us (Hillman, 2022). Accordingly, in front of these images, we can say we are facing archetypal images. Images that give a narrative context to what is being experienced in the psyche of these professors.

There was also shortness of breath. In addition to the explicit meaning of respiratory failure that can affect people with Covid-19, it gives rise to the image that was going through the moment: the exile of

the soul in this pandemic; the soul fled this world leaving it empty, deserted: a soulless place. Therefore, the image of pushing oxygen under pressure into the lungs to try to bring the soul to its place is very intense. There is no soul cultivation in this act, there is an ego imposition in terms of fighting death. In that respect, there was no recognition that there is soul in all things that surround us, (Hillman, 1982; Hillman 2010-b). Objects and people are lost. Despite the pandemic, the human being insists on not seeing the soul of the world, on not realizing that we are in the soul, that we are part of it. At the same time, the image said by Yellow 08 is intense in its hardness, in its powerlessness in the face of the fact.

> A person intubated in the ICU, a person intubated with ECMO in the ICU, a person with a Helmet (with that helmet) in the ICU, with NIV, HFNC, the high-flow nasal cannula, that just comes to mind. (Yellow 08)

There was also the feeling of the clock running backwards; people backed into a corner. A place and a time that no longer have the same meaning they once had, and that correlates with the flight of the soul.

> I don't have a good image of that time at all. Although I've tried to bring good things into my personal life, I think the image for me is of the clock going backwards, a total step backwards; science denialism. (Yellow 03)

> This image: of the people backed into the corner, you know? For something bigger, I think so! (Yellow 17)

Coli (2020), specifically seeking to understand the thinking of Italian society about the coronavirus, sought this response through the theoretical line of social representation. Despite the theoretical approach different from ours, we found points of convergence in the speeches: anxiety, fear, suffering and loneliness. It is a study at the beginning of the pandemic, in a society that was being greatly affected, with many deaths and distress. However, at different times, the feeling and perception of our professors is similar, since they sought memories of what they had lived. The past time has come to the present. We also found a point of convergence in the work of Imbrizi (2021), who worked with dreamlike narratives by university students and professors: anguish, fear and disastrous health management.

3.2. Gray Category: Images of hope

It's necessary to set sail,
To arrive at a safe harbor is also [...]
(Iêda Aleluia, November 2022)

Figure 2. Watercolor on A4 cotton paper

Source: Author, own collection, November 2022

In this narrative, images also emerged evoking hope, balance and life. Perhaps the most optimistic desire or perspective to look at the world, or to look inside, that is, at the soul. A boat with a great draft that balances in the turbulence and goes in the wanted direction. Interesting that there is the direction to which he is entitled, and not a direction. Would it be the sense of vertical depth that is that of the soul? Would it be here the intention to return to the soul?

> The image that came to me is of a boat that had a greater draft and that it had a verticality, allowing itself to go, but not bumping. It was going in the direction it had the right to, but without bumps [...] if it has some way to balance this turbulence, it's in this inner side. I don't have much to hold on to anything outside [...] It's funny, I already joked that it's time to draw this boat, that I'm going to draw the boat, but I didn't stop to draw this boat. (Gray 05)

> I drew this boat because the image completely crossed me. A boat that moves forward, with the help of a billowing sail. Ulysses' boat in his Odyssey, in search of what is human, in search of himself, despite the bad weather. (Gallian, 2022)

In addition to the boat, the sea appeared, which teaches us about unpredictability, which is both frightening and refreshing. This image that we see and that looks at us in its ambivalence, in its strangeness, and that tells us about the death that is present everywhere. The death that accompanies us, that imposes itself alongside life. They are contrasting images, but they reflect the moment of intense uncertainty and dismantlement of what was known.

> This feeling of unpredictability is the sea! Because it presents itself in a different way every day, the tide is different every day, and then we need to be afraid of it, you know? And, at the same time, it can be good, refreshing, bringing joy, when we know how to experience that there. I think the image for me is the sea. (Gray 13)

Gray 20 brings a metaphor that reminds us that we have life in us and in the world, in order to manage a new life in the midst of chaos.

> A pregnant and disheveled woman. I swear because you said that, and then it came to me like this, you know: my pregnant body, making my hair stand on end. (Gray 20)

Other images that emerged were those of the sunset, the sea and the music that encouraged us in our isolation, which did not let us feel so alone. A daydream that took hold of each one of us, and thus took us to other places and other memories of life, hope or coziness.

> Five o'clock in the afternoon, I'm watching the sunset and I seeing the sea. That's how I remember the pandemic. It's isolation, but, at the same time, the sound of music, the sea and the sunset, I don't have a negative image. (Gray 21)

The discharge of a loved one from the ICU, which shows the strength of life and the strength of hope, in such dark times.

> This one is easy (laughs), it was an image from the day my mother left the ICU. Me all dressed up waiting for her to leave, my heart pounding, and hoping to see my mother leave that place, very thin and consumed, but my mother wasn't like that, she was totally good shaped. (Gray 24)

The multifaceted woman, even more present in this period, also emerged, highlighting the multiple layers of work, requests that are made to women on a daily basis, but which are wrapped in a veil of illusion in non-pandemic times. The pandemic removed that headscarf and showed the tiredness and absurdity of being the mainstay of everything and everyone. However, hope in the collective also appeared, which could provide the support required for crossing the period. These images are apparently antagonistic, but they look in the mirror and complete each other. Such images are found in other studies, such as Landau's one (2023), which revealed dreams involving mourning and pain, but also a sense of collective and refreshment as points of hope.

The image that would arrive in front of me is of [...] I just [...] there is a post circulating on the internet, on social networks, of a woman with a sweeper, a bucket, a boy hanging, with a pencil teaching, with something from her job (laughs); for me, that's it: the multifaceted woman, did you understand? Within that process. (Gray 28)

Or we make a collective effort as professors, as students, the solution is within the collective. (Gray 12)

3.3. Pink Category: Nature Pictures

Exposed to the elements,
Do you surrender, fight, adapt?
Dive in the waters, bathe in the moonlight.
(Iêda Aleluia, May 2021)

Figure 3. Watercolor on Canson A5 paper

Source: Author, own collection, May 2021

The images related to nature carried all the strength and ambivalence of the soul; all it can contain. The cloud full of rain or sun, of sadness or hope. Metaphors that helped to embody feelings of uncertainty and insecurity that permeated the moment.

A cloud that we don't know if there will be rain or if there will be sun [...] an image of sadness, but an image of hope too, right? (Pink 06)

The sunless evening, which spoke to us of the melancholy, that is, the shadow that stretched across the world. All that continued in the silence of a speech interrupted by daydreaming.

An evening without sun, something absolutely [...] (Pink 23)

The moving sea or a storm. They are images that wanted to tell us about a troubled and mysterious time, full of a primordial destructive force, but also an energy of restoration. Jung reminds us that in order to solve catastrophic external and collective problems, we must look inside, individually, and relate to the sociopolitical context of the moment (Zerbatto, 2020). This was a time of political abrasion, with truncated and false messages, that left people bewildered. Nevertheless, it was also a time of revisions, withdrawal and recognition of uncertainty and impermanence.

The image of the desert was also able to enter here, as an image of the life that is underneath the sands and the stones, but, despite the bare surface, swept away by the pandemic, it manages to flow. There is a pulse of life, like a groundwater table, hidden, pulsating, that runs despite everything. However, it is also the shadow that invades consciousness; the unsaid that emerges.

3.4. Blue Category: Images of obstruction and confusion

Behind the screen, I see the world,
And it sees me.
But what do we see?
(Iêda Aleluia, April 2023)

Figure 4. Watercolor on A4 cotton paper

Source: Author, own collection, April 2023

A window that is not a window; some smudges that could be obstructions; wounds that do not let you see through. The images placed us in an ambiguous place, a place of "in-betweenness", strangeness, and asked to be seen and "heard". They asked not to be interpreted, but lived.

> As if it were a window, but it's not a window, it's rounded. These blurs, I don't know if they are obstructions, wounds, I can't explain [...] Behind that image, I could see things, which is why I had this feeling that the blurs are obstructing [...] That's hard, I don't even know how to explain. (Blue 02)

The hopelessness that blurs everything and that makes it hazy. Accordingly, the rational mind, used to analyses, weighing and explaining, found itself in the uncomfortable place of not knowing, not understanding; just feeling and experiencing. Didi-Huberman (2021) poses a question to us: "Would it be the psychic function of images to make us consider – in the repetition compulsion – our different deaths? Would it be the original function of images *to start at the end*?" (p.249, our translation). Accordingly, does this not place us on a threshold between life and death, between the conscious and the unconscious?

> Hopelessness in the broadest sense, with respect to health, whether you will get it, who will die. General hopelessness, right? So, if it is an image, is it like that filter that is behind here, like this? This is the image, people here at the front seeing it; and, when you look back, you see everything hazy. (Blue 08)

Another strong image that emerged was that of the mask that prevented the child's interaction (of life) with the people around (doctors and parents); the old masks of the plague, of death, of another time that seemed to no longer exist, and which has reappeared with force.

> I only remembered wearing a mask because of that. People are always so important, at least in my profession, the issue of interaction, you know? The baby interacting; and today, when I examine the children, and you're wearing a mask. (Blue 04)

> The 20s of the last century had the Spanish flu, the decade [...] They were doing this study, and what come to my head are old images, you know? Of masks. (Blue 09)

The mask is seen as a prevention of contagion, a protection against a life-threatening condition: the virus. Nevertheless, it also brings up the perception of fear of illness and death. It is unpleasant and uncomfortable, but it is a new habit to be developed in society. The mask that protects and keeps away at the same time (Lima, 2022)

Idoiaga (2020) warns of the lack of attention to children right at the beginning of the pandemic. With social isolation, the possibility of being held responsible for the contagion (and possible death) of grandparents was present; it was said, but it was not addressed. Here we find a link with the speech made by Blue 04, who wonders about the repercussions that may happen to children due to the use of the mask that protects, but also isolates and prevents bonding. It is an ambiguous image, full of meanings, which needs to be looked at, lived, and not just interpreted (Didi-Huberman, 2021). Loneliness emerges, bringing with it fear. It is the fear that the use of the mask tries to ward off, but which, in its discomfort, continually alerts us that death and loss are at our side. Thus, the relationship with death "is a function of the metaphorical activity of the psyche." (Hillman, 2022, p.54, our translation).

The frames on digital platforms, which captured images, people's souls, in a relationship with the ancient belief of original peoples with photographs: they imprisoned the person in paper and stole his/her life. The tele-face meetings brought a new form of relationship and conferences, which kept individuals at a protective distance against the contagion of the virus. However, while providing protection, they invaded our homes, our time and our routines. They imprisoned us in computer screens, but they brought us closer to people and allowed us to experience a new world, as also found in Zerbato's study (2020).

> It's these frames here in front of the screen (laughs). I swear to you that, thanks to God, this year there weren't so many meetings like that, I don't know if you must have much more than that, but there was a torrent for me last year, every day, I don't know how many discussion meetings. (Blue 14)

Another aspect that emerged was terrifying, the fear of not venturing out, as opposed to the possibility of growing up to appreciate the simple things in life. It means uncomplicating everyday life and letting go of a spiral of repeated tasks and futile appearances.

> A storm that I don't know what lies ahead, and I don't know this dread, this fear keeps something from not venturing out; on the other hand, to grow up and to value the simplest things in life, that you don't need to have so many things to be happy, to be wise, to be a professor; that you can appreciate very simple things, give thoughts to others and, examples of life above all. (Blue 22)

These speeches bring us the ambiguous and polysemic nature of the images and, consequently, of the psyche. Images are not restricted to visual perception, they are:

> Consciousness in its pure state; takes place every time the individual's experience finds expression in the psyche, whether through perception – visual, tactile, olfactory, gustatory or auditory – or through intuition, emotion, language or sense. (Sant'Anna, 2005, p. 20; our translation)

3.5. Red Category: Learning pictures

I shrink into myself,
Melancholy, hopelessly,
I dilute and dissolve myself
(Iêda Aleluia, November 2022)

Figure 5. Watercolor on A4 paper

Source: Author, own collection, November, 2022

In this category, participants referred to growing up with pain during the pandemic. This concept is anchored in a Christian-Jewish vision of the sacrifice of pain in order to evolve. For many people, the pandemic was an opportunity for humanity to evolve; however, as every image has multiple possibilities in itself, we tried to find the narratives they wanted to tell us.

> The image of growth with pain during the pandemic. (Red 01)

This moment was reported as a lot of learning; the siren that warns to focus on a different awakening for life. A professor (Red 19) tried to find a response, an interpretation for the siren as "awakening to life.". Nevertheless, what is a siren, if not an object that makes a shrill and loud noise to attract attention, which is associated with educational institutions, but also with penitentiaries, military groups, as well as the warning of catastrophes?

> It's a moment of a lot of learning; so, in my process, which I went through, and I'm still going through, I always ask myself what I have to learn [...] The image I would have would be a siren, you know? A siren as soon as there is an alert, siren ringing, see if you wake up, because human beings need to wake up; of course, each one has a moment to wake up, a different awakening; what's my wake up, what's your wake up? The way I'm sleeping without conscience. The perspective of everyone in vigilance, awake to life. (Red 19)

This speech is in line with the study by Zerbatto (2020), who, when working with the dreams of a group of psychologists during the Covid-19 pandemic, highlighted the need to learn something from this experience. Accordingly, despite the fear and the action of the virus in the body, there is the possibility of finding a way out through learning and personal growth.

Another professor evoked the image of changing and restoring the personal box, which the pandemic has shaken and forced to arrange. It is a compulsory rearrangement of life, a re-looking at itself.

> This made me see in the pandemic a constant change and restoration of my personal box, from which I took some objects, some images with meanings, but I put others. As our box is mobile, you cannot have a representative and fixed box, as these objects in your work are under constant development. The impression I had is that my box had the same objects for a long time, and the pandemic shook everything; and, when I wanted to redo my box, put it in order, I saw that some objects were going to leave and others were going to go in, it's as if the pandemic had shaken me up and forced me to rearrange. (Red 25)

The bridge that connects and allows crossing to some other place, where there is an understanding of change, also emerged. An archetypal image of crossing in process, unfinished, just like humanity that needs to see something beyond. But see what? The bridge and the walk? A new horizon? Here, we can verify the image as a threshold too, an "in-betweenness", that looks back at us.

> The bridge! But I haven't crossed it all yet, I'm crossing it (laughs). It connects to something, something better, because I think this comes so that we can have [...] It is not possible for this humanity not to open its eyes, not to see, right? (Red 28)

Finally, we arrive at the image of a great explosion of Pandora's box, where problems and weaknesses are exposed and ask to be seen and experienced. Just like these images, which tell us about the pandemic period.

> It's a big explosion! Do you know a Pandora's Box? Something like that, something that was contained and that [...] Because all of this is part of life, these challenges are part of life [...] The problems were not, it was not the pandemic that brought them, it only exposed weaknesses that already existed. (Red 27)

Interesting to be the image of Pandora's Box, because, at the end, after all the evils left, hope remained. The professors' narrative can end here, with this hope.

"In fact, we are *between a front and an inside.* This uncomfortable posture defines our whole experience, when it opens in us what looks at us in what we see." (Didi-Huberman, 2021, p. 234, our translation). This statement by Didi-Huberman leads us to think that really working with the images allows us to recognize the movements of the soul, thus emphasizing the importance of experiencing the phenomenon, with all its emotional charge, instead of trying to explain the images only from the point of view of the ego. The image is the language of the psyche and "is creative and self-generating in itself." (Sant'Anna, 2005, p.19, our translation).

Some studies in the literature approached visual representation in the pandemic, but they adopted the research of images conveyed in the media, government and academia, such as Delicado and Rowland (2021). In this study, they sought to make connections between how these three sectors visually represented the pandemic, what they sought to highlight, what were the differences between them, what was omitted, and whether there was similarity with visual images of previous pandemics. The images focused on medical practice: buildings, ventilators, health personnel, intensive care units, masks, etc. Nevertheless, the social dimension of the pandemic emerged in empty streets, in people wearing masks on public transports and in digital technology. In a certain sense, this analysis tried to approach the imagery language used by social groups, which reflected sensations, perceptions and emotions as well. Fear, anxiety, appreciation of science and a certain degree of hope appeared in the analysis they brought. In a way, the results are similar to ours, showing the strength of the image as an archetypal language.

By bringing this narrative, we entered a daydreaming mode, which enabled us to descend "into the depths of the speaking being" (Bachelard, 2018, p.55, our translation). To stay with the image, and let it dance, move and simply show itself, is not an easy task, because human nature has a quick judgment, a willingness to interpret and reduce things. I do not know if we managed to stay faithful to the images that were brought to us, but we tried. This may be the main limitation of the work. We can also say that another limitation was the fact that we worked with a question, and not with spontaneously arising dreams.

4. Final considerations

Our work shows the attempt to create a narrative through the images that the medical professors brought in the interviews. These are images they considered emblematic, which mean a time that crossed us in a forceful way.

The narrative that was set up, took us to many places: deserts, surreal pictures of time clocks running backwards; boats facing rough seas, following the direction of an internal compass, which showed the way from within; cemeteries with open graves and invisible bodies; disheveled pregnant women, but alive and attentive; overworked and tired women; souls trapped in their fears on digital platforms or in empty streets, listening to sirens that played loudly, but they did not wake people up; boxes that showed continents of new possibilities, as metaphors of a soul that seeks to return to the world, and finally the figure of Pandora, who, through her curiosity, opens the box of all evils, but which ambiguously also contains hope.

We can realize that, by broadening the discussion about the pandemic, listening to professors of Medical courses and based on the images evoked to represent this period, it opens up several pathways of reflection on the ethics and esthetics of health and its interaction with other fields of knowledge. Archetypal Psychology, which tells us about moving images as the language of the psyche, producers of new meanings, metaphors that oppose the desire for uniqueness and logical and reductionist explanations, gives us the possibility of facing health in a more plural way, more vertical, in a downward movement in the quest of the depths of the individual and collective psyche. Therefore, this movement is enriching for the humanized practice of health, since it mobilizes the health professional to a land crossed by the subjectivity of the relationship with the other and with itself. It proposes another place to think and dialog with health and illness, with life and death, with the uncertainty that permeates the world.

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