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Agrarian Era disease spread versus the 21st Century Pandemic

In one way or another, we were all affected by the pandemic called COVID-19. While the world is slowly recovering, the way the virus was able to spread so quickly is intrinsically connected to the global networks of the 21st century. Whereas in the past, the spread of diseases was geographically limited due to human traffic between communities. Modern advancements of technology had a significant role in the spread and reach of this contemporary pandemic.

Origins

There is little doubt where COVID-19 originated, in Wuhan, China. Yet, the honest debate is whether it was contracted by human contact with the original host, AKA a bat, or whether the virus was leaked from the P4 laboratory that lies not far from the Huanan Seafood Fishery Wholesale Market (Maxmen et al.). Regardless how, we are certain the corona virus began to infect humans in Wuhan, China in late 2019. On the other hand, understanding the origins of ancient diseases are also somewhat ambiguous due to our time differences, it was certainly so for the ancient communities who did not understand how infectious diseases worked. Ancient disease had a range of different origins, ranging from viral and bacterial infections to parasites that bred in the irrigation systems for the early farmers (Morillo 50). The

proximity to animals, a common source of disease, is something that is shared between Agrarian Era communities and our contemporary society, whether our goal is to domesticate them or to devour them. Regardless of the difference in time, it is clear that our relationship with animals and communities condemn humans to crowd diseases.

Spread

Due to the sparsity of communities, the spread of diseases in the Agrarian Era was limited. According to Morillo, In small villages, the worst case scenario is that the whole community gets wiped out, the virus or diseases that affected them would also be eradicated. In larger communities, the survivors are able to gain immunity, so the result is the same, the disease slowly, but naturally dies out (49). Hence, because of the sparsity of communities, there is a much lesser chance of a virus affecting multiple communities. Quite the contrary, COVID-19 took less than 3 months to reach Italian soil from China, more than 4,712 miles away. According to the National Library of Medicine, the first wave in Italy was between 1 Feb - 8 June 2020 (Bezzini et al. 91). Thanks to the convenience of international air travel, 2 Chinese tourists tested positive in Rome on 31 January, and from there on waves of cases raged through the country, with the United Kingdom, Russia and Spain sharing a similar timeline (Bezzini et al.). By 2021, literally all countries on the planet earth have been affected by COVID-19, it has become a truly global epidemic.

Reach

As we all witnessed, advances in modern medicine and virological research have been a big part of containing the virus and limiting damage. In areas with strict COVID-19 restrictions, the case numbers drop significantly. this is in part due to the centralized government systems that

exist in our modern world. It is now early 2023, and the light at the end of the tunnel is much brighter. Agrarian Era diseases probably wouldn't be pandemic in nature, because of the low movement and communication between communities, diseases would not have the chance to spread as they did in the 21st Century.

Conclusion

All in all, Agrarian Era communities and 21st Century society had little in common in their ability to create pandemics. Densely populated cities, globally connected trade routes and a general lack of preparedness, was the main reason you and I have had such miserable 3 years. The modern geographic boundaries are broken by the convenience of flight, but at the same time, new routes for viruses are being created. Our modern connected society is much more prone to widespread diseases compared to the Agrarian Era, yet our modern advancements and knowledge became the lifeline that prevented us from being wiped out.

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