



COVID-19: Apocalypse Now?

The COVID-19 pandemic due to the novel Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) has tremendously affected the world; including the richest and the poorest ones, from East to West (1). The centennial pattern of the world pandemics was much similar to this one as quoted by many authors.

But after many decades, is there any difference in the COVID-19 pandemic with the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic? Spanish flu has been called as the mother of all pandemics (2, 3). Is the current COVID-19 more aggressive than Spanish flu? Many believe the current COVID-19 is not much less than its precedent one. Just think a moment! After 100 years, are we the same community as we were? The answer is both yes and no! Let's see which aspects of the human being has been changed during the decades and which not?

First of all, the COVID-19 pandemic once again urged us to put communicable diseases in the top list of our challenges; for many years, we were trying to convince ourselves that this epoch is the exclusive era of non-communicable diseases. Nowadays, we are again the same as 100 years ago and think about communicable diseases first.

Second, all world countries and world associations touched painfully the tangible effects of the human health; one of the "basic needs" that was going to be smashed under the industrialized current world.

Third is the effect of COVID-19 on the human way of life. Maybe no phenomenon could change the human life style as much as COVID-19 pandemic. Many metropolitan cities were locked down or became free of crowd while people stayed at home. This is still continuing in so many places.

Fourth issue is undoubtedly the similarity in the behavioral pattern of human being; not only in each affected society, but also, between most of the countries worldwide. From shortages in mask and personal protective issues to many metaphysical

beliefs that were used as pretext for COVID-19 relief.

And maybe the fifth issue is the hopefulness of the people for an extraordinary scientist or superman who could present his or her innovation overnight and defeat the virus.

The exponential scientific growth during the last century was made prominent in this worldwide challenge.

First of all, the majority of the people and all the politicians have more or less believed that they should find a scientific solution. This approach needs an integrated model of basic and clinical medicine; this is why in this pandemic, the anesthesiologists and intensivists seek for immunological basis of lung stiffness and blood desaturation (4, 5). The epidemiologists seek for ways to control viral transmission for those who are at higher risk with especial focus on personal protection and the hospitals are not considered so safe (6). There is a novel pathway for novel drug discovery, methods for vaccine generation and the application of cellular and molecular sciences for managing the patients (7). In the time of relative shortage ventilatory support systems, new model have been designed to use the old methods of respiratory support in different ways (8).

The clinicians know better than any time that their future path is back to basic sciences.

Meanwhile, a number of other novel approaches are available now. Using imaging techniques like computed axial scanning and artificial intelligence in screening, diagnosis and management of critical COVID-19 patients and predicting epidemics and the widespread use of social media for online sharing of new information (9, 10). Add to the above the role of cellular and molecular techniques in diagnostic and prognostic approaches for COVID-19 patients especially those receiving critical care.

The latter items shows us that though COVID-19 pandemic is so challenging, it is not as much

disastrous as the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic and the centennial improvements in human knowledge, culture and technology could possibly decrease the severity of the problem. So, we could possibly say that COVID-19 is not an Apocalypse now!

Let's once more quote François Voltaire "It is said that the present is pregnant with the future".

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