

Name: Yuna Song
TA: Rebeca Martinez

Class: History 129A

People currently say that individuals cannot live same life before COVID-19, so they might coexist with the virus forever. Pandemic has changed our life totally. This situation is not intended, and also people cannot manage it by themselves. These rules are identically applied to me and my family, and further to my society. During this period, I have lived in two different country so I could experience cultural difference between handling this situation. Therefore, I want to talk about personal experience that I have gone through, and cultural difference of the way how people dealing this pandemic in different countries. In addition, we can talk about the social, economic consequences in the world, that has been occurred by this pandemic. Finally, as we are student that studying history, I want to compare with the virus that has affected people a lot before, such as the black death, and the Spanish Influenza.

As I begin, I am an exchange student from South Korea but I had to come back because of COVID-19, even this was my last chance to live in United States. From that, I could undergo two countries' pandemic during very short term. As we now, COVID-19 is a respiratory infectious disease caused by a new type of coronavirus, which has spread throughout China and around the world since its first outbreak in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. Because of the location and the feature that there are a lot of Chinese tourists in Korea, this pandemic started in January 21st. It started quite earlier than any other countries in the west, and this applies to Japan as well. At first, I was in US so I cannot recognize the seriousness, while my family and friends started staying home. The main feature of dealing with Corona in Korea, is that we must wear masks, which is marked as KF94(N95 in US),

and wash our hands properly. Everyone must wear mask because someone might have virus but without symptom, so it could be spread out. Actually, the fatality rate was not so high except that there was no vaccine, and at the time it was not considered so dangerous because it was not aware of the contagious nature of the virus. But our parents and grandparents had to refrain from going out, because they already recognized that they are weaker than us.

Korona in South Korea began in earnest with mass infections such as Japanese cruise ships. A confirmed patient came from a pseudo-group, and she entered worship that over thousand people have attended. Since then, the number of confirmed cases has increased exponentially, with 1,000 confirmed cases a day in a country with a population of just over 50 million.

Korea's reaction to COVID-19 was very systematic. First of all, they have excellent diagnostic testing skills. It costs only 150 dollars, and those who have visited abroad or who have met confirmed patients can get free tests. The results of the test are also informed within 24 hours. And also, Korea has a medical insurance system, so even if you are hospitalized for a cure of Corona, you have to pay less than 50 dollars. This is the reason why I came back. I felt I was so dangerous in US because I am just a visitor, and I heard there are no space in hospital, and we have to pay for over 4000 dollars if we caught Corona. The situation has improved at a rapid pace due to the continued wearing of masks and reducing unnecessary contact by practicing social distance. And South Korea discloses the movements of all confirmed people in a transparent and detailed manner. It does not reveal personal information directly, but it is possible to infer who he is because the government releases information such as his movements, age, and gender. Therefore, people who contacted that people can get test, so we can prevent spreading out, but we could not just look at this policy positively. This is because it can be seen as an infringement of individual freedom, which is

the basic principle of democracy. Korea's economic situation can't carry out lockdown like the U.S., so loose vigilance has led to a gradual continuation of collective infections occurring in bars and clubs. Currently, fewer than 50 people are confirmed to be diagnosed a day, but people still have to be careful, but people have begun to play without feeling responsible. Students cannot go to school, even though it has a low fatality rate and a high cure rate, but our parents and grandparents still can't get around well because they're scared. The number of unemployed continues to increase, and more shops are closing down due to the lack of business. At this point, those who do not feel responsible, need to recognize that they are the cause of the never ending pandemic.

Corona began to spread relatively late in Europe and the United States. In fact, I was very shocked by the U.S. and Europe's response as I was looking at the reaction of Korea. The most shocking thing I've ever experienced in America was that they thought wearing masks would do nothing to improve the situation because they were only worn by sick people. I talked with my friends, and I looked at the article, but everyone said that they didn't need a mask. Still, I saved the mask as much as I could, and Asians, including myself, were busy protecting themselves with the mask. Paradoxically, there were people who wore gloves without a mask. As for Corona, it's basically a nasal infection, so it's no use if you don't cover your nose and mouth, but I didn't understand why did they like to wear gloves without a mask. As the population is large, the number of confirmed cases in the U.S. has increased exponentially. Canada and Mexico said they would block the border, while the U.S. walked a lockdown. I think this was a very appropriate step. It would have been difficult to control itself without national control, as it is a country where individual freedom is guaranteed. I heard that the U.S. may continue its online classes until the fall quarter. It's too bad that my

exchange student life ended in such a hurry, but I can't manage this situation. I tried to understand it but I feel helpless.

The hardest thing to do after deciding to come back to Korea was to pass through the airport. It was so terrifying because all of the confirmed Korean patients at that time were all from overseas. The appearance of LA airport was quite ridiculous. There were no people in the duty-free shop, and there was no line-up on any section. I was almost on the plane with the Chinese, who wore protective gear, goggles and gloves. It was a 13-hour flight, but almost all of them did not eat meals or snacks, and kept their masks on. Incheon Airport was quite crowded with arrivals. Those who entered the country from abroad were obliged to self-quarantine for two weeks. It can be done at the facility and on its own, but if you have a family at home, the facility is recommended. Instead, you have to pay 100 dollars a day. You can go home by filling out multiple documents at the airport and installing an app that can track your location. Public transportation is separated from others, and available only for inbound travelers, and there are also quarantine taxis. If you go home, you must go to the health center for a diagnosis within three days. The situation of being examined was fine. I put a cotton swab in my mouth and nose, and I felt a little pain, but I could bear it. But the problem was two weeks of self-quarantine. I set up a place to live alone and began isolation. I couldn't go to the mart, so I had to order everything, and even I couldn't go out to throw away the garbage. I was definitely connected to people by a mobile phone, but strangely, I felt like I was the only one apart. Living only inside the house, I didn't have any productivity at all. No task could be solved. A sense of helplessness and boredom dominated me, ruining my life pattern and making me a person who can't do anything. Many people went through the same changes as I did during the quarantine period.

Many changes have occurred around the world due to this unintended pandemic situation. First of all, the stock market plunged economically, and in his aftermath, self-employed people became debtors or go bankrupt. Manufacturing industry is also significantly affected because factories are almost closed. This is because factories are often located in China, and they cannot work for a while. Although losses have occurred in the short term, surveys show that long-term investments will not have much impact. GDP has fallen, but it is not enough to worry. Among them, tourism and airline industry are experiencing the most serious situation. For now, there are cases in which airplanes are almost reduced in number or cannot be operated. As a result, some airlines fail to pay their employees or close their doors. Tourism is a kind of luxury industry and its demand is mostly generated with Chinese. However, Chinese government's temporary ban on group trips, so they might have hard time maintaining their industry. Because of this unintended and unknown situation, there are some new customs in our society. By using social network services such as Instagram, or Tictok, there are a lot of 'challenges' that we can follow and spread it through the world only by taking a short video. Individuals are bored staying at home so cooking specific kinds of foods, and playing games such as using Nintendo device is very popular nowadays. Furthermore, almost every people in the world is staying at home so cultural events such as classic concerts or exhibition is opened in online. This is new form of event that has appeared because of this situation. And all students are taking their classes in online. I think it is still very dangerous to go school because, some school tried to start off-line class but they are closing down again because COVID-19 is not ended and there is still new infected people.

As we are keep studying history, Black Death is an example of contagious disease. The Black Death was spread to Europe in the mid-14th century. According to records around

that time, one-third to one-fourth of Europe's population died. But since then, the power of the plague has continued to be significant, and in 1664-65, about 20 percent of London's population died of the disease, and by the end of the 19th century, it also took away a great deal of human life in China. Meanwhile, as the Black Death terrorized Europe, all foreign vessels were ordered to be quarantined for 40 days before getting off at the port. This was quite a reasonable measure because the incubation period of the plague was about 10 days at the longest. So if nothing happened in 40 days, the crew of the ship would be safe to say. Meanwhile, the fear of Black Death had a tremendous impact on Europe, which first brought about a setback in art. The trips that artists used to prefer to enhance their creativity have now become taboo. There was a drastic change in the social hierarchy. Countless workers' sacrifices led to bankruptcy of their landowners, and wages rose sharply as the labor force fell short. Those who survived were allocated far more property than before. It is rare for a rich man to appear as rapidly as this one. And as a result, all kinds of superstitions and heresies emerged using the state of mind in fear of the general public. In addition, the Spanish flu is the worst infectious disease that has claimed numerous human lives in the 20th century, more than the medieval plague, and is caused by the influenza virus. In early summer 1918, the first case was reported in a U.S. military unit in France, and it spread to the U.S. from September that year as U.S. soldiers returned home after World War I. It spread throughout the world, including islands in the Pacific as well as the polar region, until June 1920, and was rampant for two years. During the period, the Spanish flu killed about 50 million people worldwide, far more than the number of World War I dead (9 million).

In addition to the coronavirus, mankind has experienced numerous epidemics. Looking at the records of the world that have changed since the outbreak of the Black Death,

I wonder what changes have been recorded since the end of this pandemic and how this time will be recorded. I think the reason why we learn history and the purpose is not to repeat the same mistakes. Of course, the same situation does not repeat itself, but I think the reason to learn history is to look at the previous records and make them better able to cope with a given situation. I hope this could be a good historical records for our descendants.