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CULTURAL WORK

COVID-19 Angst

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted traditional physical, social, psychological reference points and perspectives, through immediate lockdown, discontinuity of supply, exacerbation of demand and the generation of fear, uncertainty and panic. The latter scenarios could be reframed and reviewed through a creative and poetic lens as the matrix for creative reinterpretation by highlighting the impacts of COVID-19 on space, time, mind, consciousness, emotions, thinking, and behaviour, as seen through 'space implosion,' 'the matrix of creativity,' 'I and I,' 'technological kinship' and 'time explosion.'

Keywords

Matrix; Space; Time; Introjection; Lockdown; COVID-19

Understanding our sense of place and space

Space Implosion

Minds are akimbo
Caught in limbo
The traditional impression of forward movement
Is suddenly backedalling now
From expansion to contraction,
Projection to introjection
And even introspection,
With the sudden lockdown

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Clamping down on freedom of movement
 Dampening the motivation to explore,
 Radical coping demanding a return to basic environment
 That of family,
 Reactivating the nuclear cell
 As the last refuge
 From space implosion through COVID-19.

The boundaries are tight
 Getting tighter by the day
 Especially psychologically,
 As thought returns to self,
 The ego becoming the effect
 Of its boomeranging cognitions
 Becoming more and more morbid,
 Finding few outlets at first
 In its thirst for wider spaces,
 Forced now to drink
 At pool of contracted mental routines,
 Surrounded by same faces and tasks
 Which quickly become irritants,
 Cues for constant stress reactions
 Stressing the point
 That there is space implosion following COVID-19.

It's like people have become manacled
 Shackled by visible and invisible chains,
 Causing pains in minds and bodies
 Both hemmed in by physical walls
 And government instructions,
 Veritable stalls in which are crouching the interned
 Internalizing their unexpressed thoughts
 Stunning their creators
 By spinning in vicious circles
 Of hopelessness and despair,
 The pall of contracting scope
 Difficult to cope with
 And even the impulse to elope
 Finding no response,
 There being nowhere to escape to
 Thanks to the imprisoning implosion of space.

*

Lockdown and creation of art and knowledge

The Matrix of Creativity

Forms are crumbling
 Some are grumbling
 Minds are fumbling
 Decisions are bungling
 Fates are dangling
 Spaces are contracting
 Time is fragmenting
 Wills are freezing,
 Fauna are flourishing
 Flora are blooming
 Nature is breathing
 Humankind is masking,
 Part is returning to chaos
 The other is u-turning to bliss,
 The crucible is waiting
 Ready to bring forth new creation
 From the matrix of creativity.

The mix up is fertile ground
 The soil of infinite possibilities
 Making impossible not-a-thing,
 Meaning all is now possible,
 As all return to the base matter
 That which is not yet materialized
 But is materializable
 For the courageous
 Who will look within
 To perceive the hidden ideas,
 Soul seeds waiting for conception
 And formulation by positive imagination,
 To then burst forth
 As jewels of beauty
 Through the matrix of creativity.

Artists are in demand
 More than they can supply,
 But they need their supply to flow
 To be in infinite demand
 The way to flourish
 If they can polish their art,
 To become part of the renaissance
 Rebirth of artistic magic
 Beyond the sense of the tragic,
 To open up new horizons
 Beyond the omnipresent horizontal lockdown,

To initiate the way to the take-off
To higher and higher dimensions
Thanks to the matrix of creativity.

*

Emotional responses to lockdown

I and I

Previously I only knew my names
But now I have come to a standstill,
Thanks to enforced lockdown
Forcing me to stay home,
And not just that
But to begin to perceive that
The other parts of me
That have been forgotten
Thanks to countless distractions
Which are now gone
Are now getting attention,
And I am woebegone
Realizing that at last
I have come to roost
To become unwilling witness
To the hidden dramas suppressed
Now seeking expression
Because COVID-19 has made me
To face myself
As I and I.

A pall of fear arises
And I realize
My mind is in crises mode,
For the mood is of anxiety
As the subconscious tries to make conscious
The repressed layers of myself
That my ego rejects,
But these echoes will not go away,
And they start playing games
With my thoughts and imagination
Now run riot,
Beginning to formulate terrors and horrors
Hordes that threaten to drown
My sense of being,
And I remain tense

All the time and times,
 In this shrinking space
 Which is now my only scope
 Of restricted pacing,
 And it is beginning to seem
 I and I
 Are in some kind of permanent shadow boxing.

I seem to be in a fight with myself
 Or other selves as me,
 Which now taunt and sneer
 And another part is gaunt from insomnia,
 What with these maniacs on my neck,
 And in despair I intend to react,
 And I fight back
 But this is no good,
 So I begin to take note
 Of my rejected parts,
 Slowly getting into conversations
 With the them in me,
 Gradually understanding their points of view
 Which seem new to me,
 But my perceptions too start changing,
 And so too does thinking about us-me,
 Creating new feelings,
 E-motions based on unification and forgiveness,
 To then release from negative complexes
 The power of harmony,
 And the hour of peace,
 The pieces now coming together
 Gathered into dynamic equilibrium,
 Source of authentic power
 From I and I reconciled.

*

Reimagining social relations and kinship when touching is restricted

Technological Kinship

Family links have shifted
 No longer now a function of blood ties,
 But of electronic interconnectedness,
 Creating new avenues
 For access and communication
 Based on ownership of technological appliances,

The new blood or life force
 Being data bundles,
 Determining availability for online dialogue,
 Possibilities of communication breakdown
 And information blackout real possibilities,
 Based on electronic connectivity
 And servers' bandwidths
 Determining technological kinship size
 Through virtual, audio-visual interactions,
 Physical contact now anathema
 Thanks to COVID-19,
 Ushering in new family lineages
 Integrating all races, continents, and languages
 In pockets of quasi-universal clans
 Identified as new normal technological kinship.

Behind the mechanical
 And technical masks
 In addition to the physical ones,
 Emotions are de-personalized
 Captured in and by emoji,
 Replacing previously shared laughter,
 Tears, fears, and joys,
 Sending across signals few can totally interpret,
 For technical mastery
 Might be different from real feelings
 Of hidden manipulators,
 Sending out cues
 Linked or not
 To their personal experiences,
 Expression taking precedence now,
 Expressing what it seems
 But what it means is another issue,
 As the masses slowly build up
 The tissue of technological kinship
 In numbers of followers,
 Platonic or knee-jerking compliant,
 Not to talk of the silent majority
 Seeing, hearing and doing nothing,
 Part of the invisible, passive
 And uncategorised members
 Of the technological kinship.

*

Perception of time through the crisis and in lockdown

Time Explosion

Previously time seemed certain
 Running through the grooves
 Of unwavering routines,
 Set into mechanical gears even
 With business as usual the motto
 As conservative motor of most systems,
 Motivating repetition of the same
 In the name of stability and security
 Quickly becoming fixity
 Until the bombshell struck
 To fragment time into times
 Freezing the past out of sight
 Squeezing the present tight
 And scribbling the future with uncertainty graffiti,
 To be without clear cut features
 When the COVID-19 crisis caused time explosion.

Pieces of senses fly off
 Accompanied by disoriented faculties,
 Those of thought, feeling, and will in disarray
 All trying to make sense
 Of the shifting contexts
 Caught in some disorientation ballet,
 As each and all try to cope
 To understand the scope
 Of the new paradigm
 Which tests minds to the extreme,
 Through extremes of adaptation and maladaptation
 In the ceaseless see-saw accompanying time explosion.

The sun rises and it sets
 But really the past
 Has seemingly set forever,
 With face-to-face scenarios
 Now only memories,
 Distant histories of education
 Which is now beginning to tell the online stories
 In the company of other alternatives,
 The actors and actresses of yesteryears
 Having to readjust drastically, quickly
 For there's no time to stand still, now
 In the ceaselessly moving kaleidoscope
 Of continuously contracting and widening scopes
 Difficult to cope with
 Following time explosion!
