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 backpedalling 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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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!