



# TRANSITION TO SURREALISM: AN ANTIBODY OF COVID-19

Dr. Tanushree sarkar

Assistant Professor, Department of English, SRM University Sikkim

## **Abstract:**

The evergreen blue planet has become colourless in these days while COVID-19 gradually snatches away precious resources of it. Human resource is one of the essential elements in it. No doubtedly, this virus is dangerous and threatening to the inhabitants of the Earth. It is really tough job to tackle this very new unwanted guest for common people of our country. The slogan "**Stay safe at home**" is futile to the homeless. Sanitisation and proper nutrition can only secure our physical health but mental health which cannot see from outside repressed pains of unconscious mind which has no painkiller is also a matter of concern. This paper aims to provide spotlight in the mental action of people in this crisis period. Creating positive vibes through Surrealism is another motto of this paper. Surrealism is a cultural movement which developed in Europe in the aftermath of World War I and is influenced by Dada. A survey among people of different age is used to examine people's mental health due to COVID-19 and LOCKDOWN period. Emotional balance which has hampered in these days are also surveyed through self-made questionnaire. A key to unlock the happiness in this devastating period is also given as a form of suggestion. Overall, this study tries to show the path of happiness via transition of surrealism in people's lives which can act as an antibody of COVID-19 for mentally weak laymen of the planet.

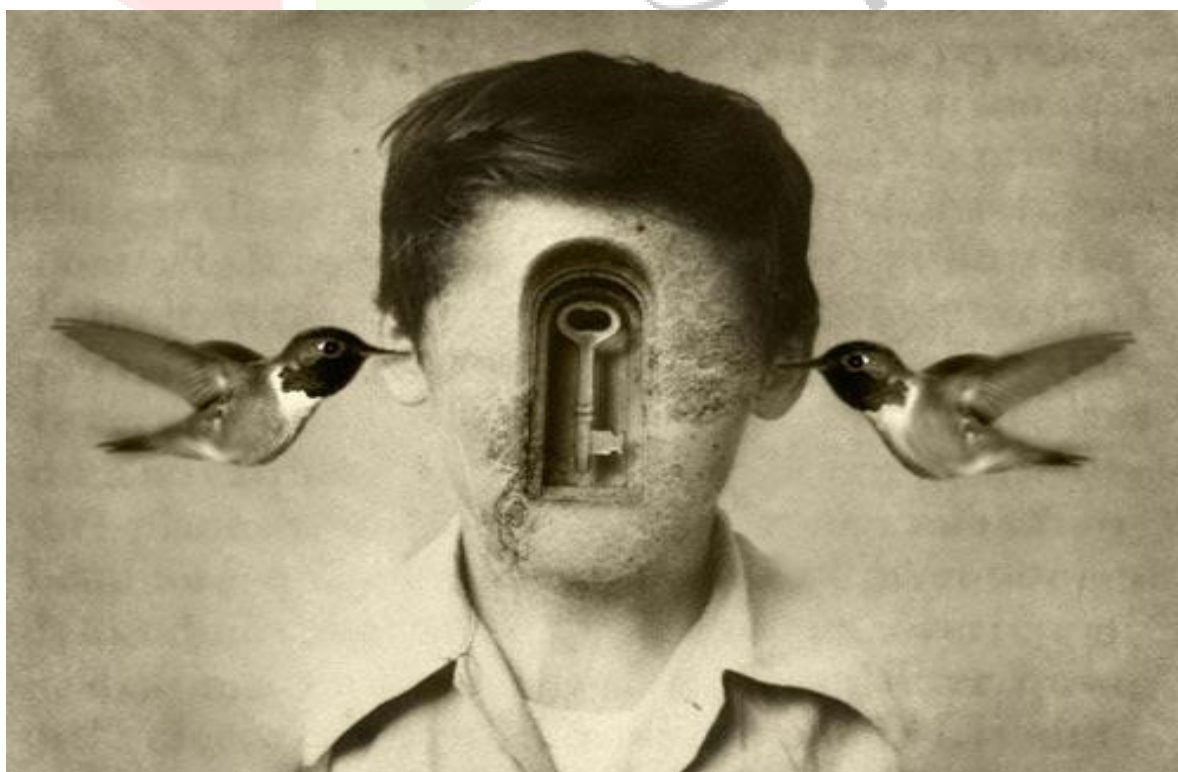
**Keywords: COVID-19, Human resource, Lockdown, Mental health, Surrealism, Key of Happiness**

## **1. Introduction**

Look at the sky! its smiling; the birds are chirping after so long time, butterflies are spraying colours with the touch of their wing-brushes. Stare at the flowers, they are gossiping to each other about the human being, The swans are floating delightfully in the pond, The cuckoo is so happy as he is relaxing and singing freely in noise free zone. Wow! feel the breeze of new spring leaves, hill is also inhaling mist instead of smog, the brook is again realising the fallen angels after some decades, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, Rabindranath Tagore, and their creations again become prominent in post-modern digital age. Milton's "paradise Regained" is very contextual now. But, what are about the human

beings? Where are the wanton boys and girls who came daily to play in the park? Where is the young boy who waited eagerly for his beloved? Where does the group of old people of laughing club? Butterflies are saying to their friends that people are locking down themselves in their concrete houses; Grasshoppers peep into the window of a house just now and saw everyone is busy to cleanse themselves. What is a satire! people are washing their those hands which they used to insult, rape, murder, slap, theft and so on; how can they sanitise the strain of blood? How can they remove the jealousy? Can you tell which sanitiser helps them to kill the evil ego virus of their vein? Its a doubt. Friends you are thinking what a rubbish I'm telling right? No, I am not writing down any fable consisting of moral stories, I am not producing any romantic adventure in this crisis period, I am trying to focus on the mental health of people in LOCK DOWN due to COVID-19. William Shakespeare has rightly said, "*Whats in a name?*" COVID-19 is not only of the 2019 pandemic its in 2020 and so on. So, it's not a trivial journey to save our mind.

We as an inhabitant of the blue planet are in a tremendous crisis situation, although antibody is preparing to kill the antigen but its consequences are uncertain in medical science till the date. Already we faced loss in agriculture, finance, livelihoods, economy, history, culture and everything else. But I want to ventilate through one window of your life that Medical sciences are working sincerely for the physically affected people it's very true, but have you ever think about mentally affected people? its really a vital concern of psychologists for the non corona-affected people. Our mind and body are depleting day by day silently and if thus goes on people will be destroyed before attacking corona virus only because of suffering from mental disease. A major portion of old people has already listed in this silent disease; they have neither corona nor any strong disease but are acutely suffering from thinking process about future unnecessarily. Human being are also not exceptional from any other systematic approach i.e INPUT, PROCESSING and OUTPUT . Processing section of human being is thinking level in cognitive stage. And here lies the medicine of mental illness.



## Surrealism and human condition

### 2. Objectives:

This paper aims to-

1. Highlight the mental health of people during this lockdown.
2. Make sense of what is real and what is fake.
3. How can unreal be separated from surreal.
4. seek mental relief through "surrealism".
5. Unlock the key of happiness in this crisis period through art, literature and lifestyle.

A new trend has noticed in every house that after waking up in the morning, people are starting to discuss or think about the corona virus and its effect; intentionally or unintentionally they are injecting the germ of virus within themselves in cognitive level. People who are physically fit, losing their mental peace as all the day they are dealing with newspaper, news channel, and smart phones consisting of COVID-19 and its affect. Sanitization becomes a trembling branch of daily activity. They can't even eat, drink and sleep freely. Their body is getting all the proper foods as protein, vitamin etc are advised to enhance the immunity system, but they are forgetting to feed their mind and soul? Is not it required more strong immune system?

### 3. Real vs Fake

In simple language, those are natural is real and fake is the unnatural thing. But in digital age of today we are dealing 80 percent fake activities. Think again, although the end is in real but the process? In every system there are INPUT, PROCESSING and OUTPUT are there as i mentioned before. Our mental system is also not exceptional. while we are reading through online, while we using iPod instead of pen/pencil, while we using mouse to draw an art, while we are expressing our emotions to our beloved through emotional smileys, while we are connecting our neighbours through social media. **ARE WE BEHAVING REAL?** I think NO. You can say that, at the time of '**STAY SAFE AT HOME**' social distancing should maintain and virtual world is the only way left. But I want to take back before some months of starting lockdown, did we use real activity? Were we so busy that we have to text our husband or wife from office to wish his or her birthday? Did not we say our neighbour friend in the bus sitting beside us that we would send him the old memory in WhatsApp instead of sharing then? **THINK, THINK and RETHINK.** We had already locked down our mind unintentionally before the effect of COVID-19. It's time to rest our soul and try to differentiate between REAL and FAKE.

#### 4. Concept of Surrealism

It may be a new term to few people. But 'surrealism' is a very accepted and popular concept of literature, specially in art. After World War I, the concept of 'surrealism' came into Europe first. It was a cultural movement. *Andre Breton* defined surrealism as *"psychic automatism in its pure state, by which one proposes to express verbally, by means of the written word, or in any other manner- the actual functioning of thought."*

The work of *Sigmund Freud* was profoundly influential for surrealists, particularly in his book, *THE INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS (1899)*. Freud legitimized the importance of dreams and the unconscious as valid revelations of human emotion and desires; his exposure of the complex and repressed inner worlds of sexuality, desire and violence provided a theoretical basis for much of surrealism.

The iconic and enigmatic *Rene Magritte's* works tend to be intellectual, often dealing with visual puns and the relation between the representation of something and the thing itself. In *"The Human Condition"* "a canvas sits on an easel before a curtained window and reproduces exactly the scene outside the window that would be behind the canvas, thus the image of the easel in a sense becomes the scene, not just the reproduction of landscape. There is in effect no difference between the two as both are the fabrications of the artist. The hyperrealist painting style often used by surrealists makes the odd setup seem dreamlike.



PICTURE OF " THE HUMAN CONDITION"(1933)

#### 5. Real vs surreal

Literally, Real is that can be characterised as a confirmation of truth while SURREAL is resembling a dream: fantastic and incongruous.

## 6. Unreal vs Surreal

In a scorching summer of India, snowfall is totally an unreal fact; but if in dream or imaginary world we feel cold due to snowfall although there are heat in the weather is an example of surreal.

Now its turn to back in the real world i.e. our corona affected world. Think, if every time we give pressure to make doubt of our future plan for saving from this crisis, we will surely be depleted like ozone layer is. It's time to rejuvenate our soul which is covered by our materialistic body. If we can create a surreal fence around us no virus can attack our soul. As Body and Soul are integrated according to Metaphysicians so that we have to care for both. I am trying to inject some doses of antibody within you so that your taboo like antigen will vanish from your life. Try these magic to unlock the happiness of your life during LOCKDOWN and COVID-19

## 7. Methodology

A self-made questionnaire is made depicting 10 questions of mental health various stages of people. 50 sample is taken and random sampling method is used to get research findings. Descriptive study is done.

## 8. Research Findings

After analysis of the questionnaire it is found that most of the people of various ages are mentally imbalanced due to this lock down. They want to revive themselves from it but cannot find out the proper way. Only few have some ideas of surrealism and its concept.

## 8. Probable Suggestions

1. After waking up first, listen soft music of your favourite singer to heal you mind instead of reading newspaper(Read it surely after some time).
2. Relax your eyes not to staring at digital gadget but to the old album of your family, friends and beloved.
3. Recall the sweet memories of your life and also try to solve out all the misunderstandings with your dear and near ones, remove the misconceptions of life. Try to realise the mistakes you did in your past and resolute not to repeat those.
4. Realise you are the one without whom your family members, friends and nation will be helpless and thus boost your immunity system.
5. Read, re- read and over-read it can heal all your wounds, all your evil thought of mind.



6. In these days don't hear to the brain instead listen to the whispering of heart. May be you are in the age of 60 or more than that and till can't express your thought to ex-beloved, then take the phone and ring him or her, express your unexpressed thought, date with him or her through video call.
7. Forget social bindings, enjoy like a free bird in the sky, do whatever you want because The World itself is changing its essence gradually, then why not you?
8. At last, but not least create a SURREAL world of imagination where your unconscious suppressed mind will lead you, not the conscious one.



### **SURREALISM: VIOLETTA'S PORTFOLIO**

I hope through surrealism we can create an utopian positive vibes around us which will bound with positivity, ray of happiness, peace and utmost a sound mental relief. And if unfortunately we have to embrace Death in this crucial pandemic situation we will utter -

*"And I feel that I am dying, through the medium of art or mystical experience, I want to be reborn, wearing my dream like a diadem, in some better land where beauty flourishes".- 'Les Fenetres' excerpt*

## 8. References

1. Fijalkowski.K ; & Richardson's;(2016). "*Surrealism: key concepts*," Routledge.
2. Magritte, Rene; (1933) Oil On Canvas, "*The Human Condition*".
3. Picture from "*Violetta's Portfolio*"
4. Excerpt from 'Les Fenetres'
5. <http://en.m.wikipedia.org>
6. <http://www.threatstory.org>

