

TOWARDS A PHILOSOPHICAL SOLUTION TO THE INCIDENCE OF CORONAVIRUS ACROSS THE GLOBE

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, I set out to achieve three specific objectives. First, I will try to show that the outbreak of the deadly disease commonly known as coronavirus has revealed in a much broader sense the increasing interrelated nature of the universe in both positive and negative terms. The world is so interconnected that whatever happens in a given region affects other regions of the world. If there is an economic boom or recession in any country, other countries which have economic ties with this particular country will be affected accordingly. This fact is strengthened by the outbreak of the coronavirus in Wuhan, China which has affected the entire globe without exception, and irrespective of colour, race and language. Second, I will also try to argue that due to the strain this incidence will necessarily bring on world economy and foreign relations; there is a need now for improved international cooperation more than ever before. Third, I will try to argue that since medical and scientific approaches seem not to have offered the much needed solution at the moment, the relevance of philosophy in attending to societal challenges of this nature should not be neglected. Using the principles of 'transculturalism' and 'ka so mu adina', each from the philosophical methods of conversational thinking and complementary reflection respectively, I will demonstrate the usefulness of philosophy in presenting a viable strategy in confronting the existential problem of coronavirus.

Key Words: coronavirus, conversational thinking, complementary reflection, interrelated world, philosophy

1.0 INTRODUCTION

What is the nature of corona virus disease? What are the possible effects of this virus outbreak on world economy, foreign relations, and the international community? Apart from medical/scientific approach which is yet to present the required therapy, what is (are) the possible philosophical approach (es) to containing this global epidemic? Is there anything philosophy can offer in a time like this? These and many more questions have become the subject of current global debate on the state of health of the global community following the outbreak of the corona virus in December 2019. Many of the proposed solutions from scientists, virologists, epidemiologists, medical personnels and health workers have been based on preventive measures and personal hygiene.

The World Health Organization (W.H.O) has described the outbreak as a global controllable pandemic. This, points to the fact that this phenomenon is not uncontrollable. Statistical reports from the World Health Organization (W.H.O) reveal that many countries of the world have already recorded cases of corona virus with some deaths resulting there from. Hence, the need for control measures to prevent further spread of the disease. Such control measures

include the use of face masks, hand sanitizers, isolation, quarantining and general observation of personal hygiene. Weiss and Navas-Martin (2005, 654) have shown in a study that treatments of coronavirus infections have been generally ineffective. According to them, such treatments have been based on the administration of anti-bacterial and steroids, aimed at preventing secondary bacterial infections. This further suggests that in spite of the efforts by different countries, there is currently no antiviral therapy for the corona virus disease.

It is important to note that, the American Chemistry Council in March 2020 presented what it described as Novel corona virus – fighting products (A.C.C 2020, 1). These products have been pre-prepared by the US Environmental Protection Agency (E.P.A) for use against the corona virus outbreak. However, it is saddening to note that in spite of the laudable nature of this move, the same document declared that these products have no warranty and that the Centre for Biocide Chemistries cannot make a determination of the effectiveness of the product in fighting pathogens of the likes of corona virus (A.C.C 2020, 2). This again confirms the fact that there is no medical solution or treatments of this disease as at the moment. What have been presented so far are only preventive measures.

Similarly, a report of the Department of Health and Social Care (2020) in United Kingdom shows that there is yet no vaccine or immediate treatment of the corona virus disease. The department of public health, UK, presented measures that have been put in place to prevent the spread of the disease (2020, 11-12). In most countries of the world, what is prevalent are preventive measures being put in place by the government and health care providers to contain the incidence of corona virus. What is evident from the above is that countries are fighting the disease as singular entities. Every country is going about this occurrence as a country in the best way they deem possible and at the exclusion of sister countries and this approach has not yielded the much desired result. The role of philosophy in the society becomes very significant at this point. This is why I argue in this work that there is a philosophical dimension to this epidemic that can guarantee a robust strategy capable of not only confronting the outbreak but also nipping it to the bud.

This work begins with a survey of the nature and origin of the coronavirus disease. Next, it exposes the nature of conversational thinking and complementary reflection and uses its principles of ‘transculturalism’ and ‘ka so mu adina’ respectively to show how philosophy comes very handy in confronting this global existential health challenge.

2.0 The Conoravirus

Coronaviruses are viruses that circulate among animals with some of them also known to infect humans. Weiss and Navas-Martin (2005, 655) explains that coronavirus are a fascinating group of viruses that provides animal models of pathogenesis and unusual molecular mechanisms of transcription and recombination with new forms of emerging pathogens. According to these scholars, coronaviruses are a kind of enveloped viruses with round and pleimorphic virus of approximately 80-120mm in diameter (2005, 639). What this means is that the corona virus is of a certain diametrical shape that work effectively in the membrane. Weiss and Navas-Martin (2005, 639) went further to show that coronaviruses cause acute and chronic respiratory and central nervous system diseases in many species of animals, including humans. The biological vectors or origin of this disease is not well known. Genetic and serological evidence from studies seem to suggest that it has Zoonotic origin. An epidemiological study of the coronavirus diseases carried out in Gaungdong province in China also suggest that early patients with the virus were exposed

to live wild game animals held in markets where restaurant trading went on (Weiss and Navas-Martin 2005, 649). A careful probing into the historical origin of this virus shows that it is not an entirely new phenomenon. As far back as February 2003, it was reported that the World Health Organization (W.H.O) received reports from China of a new respiratory illness outbreak in Guangdong province. In fact, it is said to have emerged in the late 2002. Narrating this incidence, Weiss and Navas-Martins explain as follows;

[A] Novel virus was isolated from patients' lungs and sputa

And cultivated on a monkey kidney cell line... the sequence information demonstrated that this was a previously unrecognized coronavirus. Proof that this virus is the etiologic agent for SARS epidemic was provided by results of infections carried out in non-human primates The SARS epidemic was effectively controlled by July 2003. It was controlled only by strict isolation of patients. By the end of the epidemic, the C.D.C and W.H.O reported more than 8000 cases, with more than 800 deaths worldwide (Weiss and Navas-Martin 2005, 649).

From the above, two things can be deduced. First, there is a connection between the earlier SARS epidemic and the present coronavirus epidemic. Second, there is no direct or immediate treatment or cure for both ailments in spite of the efforts of clinicians, medical experts and health workers all over the world.

The department of health and human services, United States of America (2020, 1) describes coronavirus as a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. Accordingly, the virus that causes COVID-19, as it is also called, was identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan China. Tracing its origin, the United State Department of Health and Human Services, reports that it emerged from an animal source. The virus is believed to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes (US Dept. of Health 2020, 1). Regarding the vaccine for the treatment of COVID-19, the US center for disease control declares "there is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19" only preventive measures through personal hygiene and cleanliness (2020: 1).

Conoravirus has had some impacts already on the globe. For one, it has exposed the vulnerable nature of most nations of the world and their dependence on other sister nations to cope with this outbreak. This is so because despite the efforts made by such world powers as China (where the disease emanated from), United States of America, United Kingdom just to mention a few; they have not been able to find a vaccine for the disease or at least prevent its rapid spread. This is unlike the cases in some African countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, and others, who have not only controlled the spread, but have cases where the few infected patients are reported to have recovered after intensive care and tested negative. No wonder then some scholars, public analysts and government's agencies have accused Europe of 'coronising' African continent since the few cases of victims in the continent were imported cases (Amandla 2020, 1; Mamora 2020 1; Abdur 2020, 1).

Again, the coronavirus outbreak has forced most nations to shutdown their borders and to decline trade relations with countries associated with high rate of infection and spread. This no doubt has affected global economy, politics and foreign relations and has led to economic recession or meltdown in different countries of the world as a result of the interrelated nature of the world today. Philosophy becomes very instrumental at this point in solving this human existential problem. The nature of philosophy is such that it not only plays important roles in the development

of a nation, it also prescribes ways out of existential problems facing humans in the society. This is in line with Olusegun Oladipo's admonition that African philosophy and philosophers should be committed to problem solving in Africa in order to achieve her hopes and aspirations (1992, 74). This will reveal the significance of the enterprise of philosophy to the human society. In other words, the intellectual programme of philosophy should be problem-solving rather than myth-making (Azenabor 2002, 133).

This is why it is the position of this paper that a philosophical approach which will encourage a united action by all and sundry is needed to effectively confront this global menace. In what follows, I shall briefly expose the basic features of the philosophical methods of conversational thinking and complementary reflection with particular focus on the principles of 'transculturalism' and 'ka so mu adina' respectively.

3.0 Conversational Thinking

Conversational thinking as a methodological ambience of the doctrine of conversational philosophy developed by Jonathan O. Chimakonam demonstrates how diverse variables can interact and relate in a constructive and yet, mutually beneficial manner (2015a). In this way, conversational thinking purveys a strategy for the interrelationship of different cultural identities. This will in fact encourage intercultural philosophy. Based on his disposition that philosophy has many traditions conditioned by different cultures that inspire them, Chimakonam defines intercultural philosophy as what happens when reason emanating from different places converges at a borderless epistemic point, the tool of reason being what drives thought (2017a, 118). Conversational thinking recognizes that there are different traditions, different variables, different nations and stake holders that are differently conditioned or inspired, yet it recognizes the need for interrelationship, complementarity and interdependence of these different variables and the possibility of their reaching a point of complementation where the significance or identity of one cannot be denigrated by the other. Instead, one's significance or identity can be enhanced. Conversational thinking orchestrates "a strategy of exchange derived from an under-explored African notion of relationship that under-girds the method of African philosophy teased out of the world-view that reality exists as a network in which everything depends on everything else" (Chimakonam and Nweke, 2018: 289). In other words, conversational thinking recognizes that everything that exists serves a necessary link of reality, which implies that, every existing thing, individual or nation rather than being neglected or eroded is made significant by the other (Enyimba, 2016: 57). Complementarity of diverse cultural identities or places rather than displacement of one by the other become the watchword of conversational thinking which makes it a viable tool for the enhancement of a united action among different variables in the face of a common existential problems of humankind. What is implied here is that all nations should work hand in hand without denigrating the efforts of any nation of the world, and the possibility of a solution coming from any part of the world irrespective of climate, colour, race, 'developed' or 'underdeveloped'.

Accordingly, conversational thinking purveys a strict formal intellectual engagement between a proponent called *nwansa* and an opponent called *nwanju* who engage in an arumaristics on a specific thought in which critical and rigorous questioning and answering are employed to creatively unveil new concepts and open new vistas for thought" (Chimakonam, 2017b:116; 2015a:463; 2015b: 19). *Nwansa* is the party in a relationship that holds and defends a position. *Nwanju* is the other party in that creative relationship whose duty is to question the veracity and

viability of the position of nwanza. In the context of our discourse, nwanju and nwanza represent different cultural identities that constructively engage with each other in a mutually beneficial and creative encounter. The aim is to reveal the loopholes and creatively fill up the lacuna and not to destroy, discount or displace the identity of the other. As we have observed elsewhere, this relationship between nwanza and nwanju is flexible and accommodative of other indices, traditions, cultures, identities, or positions so as to ensure progress and development that can be sustained for a long time (Enyimba, 2019: 11).

The argument of this paper in relation to the above exposition is that the West and other countries in the global north needs to consciously and open-mindedly engage in a convivial exchange of ideas and values with other countries of the world on the issue of curbing the rapid spread of the corona virus bearing in mind that no culture, nation or individual is superior. Each culture or nation has something to learn from the other and as such, following conversational thinking, no culture or nation is permitted to impose itself on another as an absolute instance. This is made even clearer by a conscious application of one of the two major principles of conversational thinking, namely; T-principle as enunciated by Chimakonam and Nweke (2018, 291-292).

The T-principle of conversational thinking refers to a ‘trans-cultural’ approach in any engagement, interaction or encounter involving different indices, cultures, nations, stakeholders, and positions. In order to set aside cultural hegemony, cultural injustice, cultural centrism or inferior- superior culture dichotomy, trans-cultural conversational principle prescribes the adoption and internalization of the ideals of tolerance, equity, justice and interdependence. This means that conversational thinking is not self-centered in outlook, it is rather open-minded, giving room for every culture to not only participate in world affairs but also to contribute its part in global development project. By being trans-cultural conversational thinking encourages different cultures and nations participating in the global epistemic process to see themselves in each other in order to go beyond cultural centrism and self-centeredness to judge, will and act towards the other.

Based on the above principle, nations of the world needs to see themselves in each order to avoid the obliteration of cultural identities, cultural hegemony or imposition of one form or the other in their interactions and as they encounter themselves in the global epistemic process. Thus conversational thinking allows room for every culture to progressive transformation (Enyimba, 2019, 13). Indeed, conversational thinking provides a level playing ground for American, western, Asiatic, African, and sub-Saharan African cultures and nations, for each culture makes the other significant and none is permitted to project itself above the other, neither is their room for inferior-superior relationship among the cultures, nor the domination of one over the other. As shall be shown in subsequent section of this work, this is what conversational thinking presents as a way of confronting the present global epidemic and rescuing world economy from total collapse. The argument here is that the colonial mindset of considering some part of the human race as incapable of sound judgment and of contributing meaningfully to global development should not come into play because that could jeopardize the possibility of getting a cure should such come from Africa or any other developing countries of the world. This is the type of temperament conversational thinking advocates against because of its inimical nature in the harmonious and progressive coexistence of nations of the world.

A notable case is the incidence of Madagascar's Herbal cure which W.H.O does not seem to accept on the ground that it is yet to be scientifically tested and proven, whereas there are evidences of its efficacy even in Madagascar. Perhaps this is why Andry Rajoelina, the country's president believes that it is because of the bad faith of Europe towards Africa that W.H.O is not acknowledging the coronavirus medicine (see Asianet Newsable May 19, 2020; Premium Times May 28, 2020; All Africa Global Media, 2020). Perhaps if this cure had come from any part of Europe it would have been accepted by W.H.O and recommended for all nations of the world. This is arguable, and it is the type of reasoning that betrays ethnocentric mindset that conversational thinking and of course complementary reflection (which I will discuss subsequently) not only frowns at, but also discourages.

4.0 Complementary Reflection

To be is not to be in isolation, but to be in collaboration and mutual relationship with others. This assertion can be said to summarize Asouzu's method of complementary reflection otherwise known as *ibuanyidanda* philosophy. Asouzu used the notion of complementarity to represent the idea of *ibuanyidanda* which underlies his philosophical system. According to Asouzu, '*ibuanyidanda*' can be analysed as follows; '*ibu*'- 'task', '*anyi*'- 'not insomountable' and '*danda*'- 'a species of ant known for their team work'. Thus, '*ibuanyidanda*' can be translated as 'no task is insomountable for *danda*' (Asouzu 2013, 11).

On the basis of this, Asouzu (2004, 147) developed the method and principles of complementary reflection which posit that all aspects of reality are in a relationship of mutual joyous complementary service. In other words, Asouzu (2013, 10) wishes one to understand that the nature of reality or being can be made sense of if one approaches it from the perspective of its intrinsic interrelatedness devoid of polarization and exclusiveness. As I have observed elsewhere, an adequate grasp of Asouzu's philosophy of complementary reflection is dependent on the understanding of two major principles upon which complementarity is based. These are the principle of harmonious complementation and the principle of progressive transformation (Enyimba 2016, 58). While the former states that "anything that exists serves a missing link of reality", the latter which is a completion of the former states that one should "allow the limitation being to be the cause of your joy"

By missing link it is meant the diverse component or entities of which any existing reality is constituted. Thus, Asouzu (2003, 58) explains that "a system can only work when the diverse components of which it is constituted serve each other complementarily and authentically as aspect of its existence. The point being made here is that if different components that make up a system are viewed in isolation and singly, we can say that they are missing in relation to one another in the sense that as discrete entities, they have been viewed in isolation and in total disregard to each other. The implication of this is that a unit can be unaware of the other and in such a moment, the one that it is unaware of is missing. Thus, Asouzu's complementary reflection suggests that as a system, these component parts ought to be brought in relation to each other such that they become aware of themselves and serve each other in the most authentic and harmonious way (Enyimba 2016, 59).

By allowing the limitation of being to be the source of our joy, Asouzu suggests that a thing serves a missing link of reality if and only if in the process, it can also gain in its authentic legitimation. This means that all human acts must be directed to their authentic source as a condition for them to be sources of our joy. Lucky Ogbonnaya (2016, 25) explains further the nature of Asouzu's principles of progressive transformation. According to him, this principle is a practical variant of the principle of integration which addresses particularly the issues of human actions in the society. He further explains that it is on these principles of integration and progressive transformation that the complementary imperative, which states that we should allow the limitations of being to be the cause of our joy (Ogbonnaya 2016, 25; Asouzu 2004, 273) is established.

It must be noted that Asouzu employed numerous concepts to drive home his idea of complementary reflection and the need for harmonious inter-personal relationship among constituent parts of reality. One of such concepts that attracts our attention in this discourse is his deployment of the notion of 'ka so mu adina' (that I may not be alone) in demonstrating the need for human interdependence and in surmounting common existential problems. This idea of 'ka so mu adina' stems from the basic assumption of complementary reflection that humans are finite, self-insufficient and dependent on each other. Asouzu expresses this in the following words:

For the ordinary traditional African, the experiences
Of his finitude and insufficiency in the face of the
Many incomprehensible and threatening forces
Both natural and supernatural have the natural
Consequence of his recourse to the idea of
Complementarity (Asouzu 2004, 105).

Thus, the idea of 'ka so mu adina' presupposes that man is by nature not meant to be alone he/she is meant to live in relation to others in order to be complete and fulfill his/her essence. Nweke and Ogbonnaya (2019, 1) posit that if the total ontology of humans suggests that 'to be is not to be alone' (ka so mu adina), then it is both unsound and counterproductive for any individual or group to act in a manner that negates or ignores the rights and well-being of others. This submission of these scholars stem from their understanding that Asouzu's 'ibuanyidanda' or complementary ontology buttresses the presupposition that 'to be is not to be alone' (ka so mu adina). According to Asouzu, 'ka so mu di' (that I may be alone) is a type of mindset that negates this truth. It is a negation of being propagated by Aristotle's differentiation of essence from accidents in which case Aristotle considers essence as the substance of being whereas accidents do not contribute in the essence. This type of mindset misleads human consciousness to think that to be is to live in an exclusivist segregationist type of relationship (Ezugwu 2016, 11).

It stands to reason at this point that the mindset of 'ka so mu di' is what informs the attitude of people and even nations thinking they can do things alone, surmount certain existential difficulties, like the case of COVID-19 alone without the help of other people or nations (see Asianet Newsable May 19, 2020; Premium Times May 28, 2020; All Africa Global Media, 2020). When this happens, the individual or nation tends to live and function as a singular entity in total exclusion of the other which becomes the missing links of its reality. Thus, Ibuanyidanda or complementary reflection is a philosophy of togetherness, which is the coming together of all parts of reality in order to create a nexus without which they will be a missing link. *Ka so mu adina* as

a principle of complementary reflection rejects a one-sided, fragmented, or exclusive approach to human interest, and encourages a complementary, comprehensive, wholesale, and inclusive approach to reality in doing anything.

The principle of ‘*ka so mu adina*’ is understood even more within the spectrum of the concept of complementarity as used by Asouzu. Complementarity is a type of mindset or attitude which obtains wherever human beings understand that their survival depends on their ability to reach out to others like themselves (Asouzu 2004, 23-24). Complementarity is the spirit of mutual help, readiness to work with others for the overall benefit of all (Etuk 2016, 110). This is why it is reasonable to think that an individual or a nation with a complementary mindset or spirit will strive not to be alone (*ka so mu adina*) because of the negative consequences it will bring to him/her. No wonder then Asouzu refers to complementary reflection as a normative practical philosophy. Thus, in this period of global epidemic of COVID-19, what immediately comes to the minds of individuals or nations is self-interest and self-preservation. But ‘*ka so mu adina*’ as a principle of complementary reflection insists that these self-centred approach cannot achieve the desired result without the efforts of the other. In the words of Asouzu;

The person is to be pitied who thinks that a Subject can afford to live alone, outside of the legitimacy provided by the mutual Complementary relationship between all Missing links and calls this existence (Asouzu 2013, 10).

Therefore to exist in the true sense of the word entails the capacity to affirm complementary co-existence of existential realities. This is what ‘*ka so mu adina*’ (that I may not be alone) entails. It is opposed to ‘*ka so mu di*’ (that I may be alone) which entails the act of negation of being or negation of complementary co-existence of all existent realities (Asouzu 2011, 11). Thus, to be is not to be alone (*ka so mu adina*).

5.0 Philosophy and Coronavirus

The philosopher is a man whose passion is to seek the truth and whose heart is fixed on reality (Plato, 475-480). In other words philosophy seeks to unveil the truth underlying an aspect of reality. As has been rightly pointed out, “philosophy is a rational search for answers to the questions that arise in the mind when one reflects on human experience” (Omogbe 1990, 3). This conception of philosophy implies that philosophy raises basic questions about the nature of the world and of human life. The brevity of human life, the vagaries of living, human joy, sorrows, successes, failures, experiences of suffering, anxiety, diseases, and death are all subjects of philosophical ruminations (Omogbe 1990, 3-4).

Thus, philosophy is not merely an abstract speculative theoretic intellectualizing with no practical relevance to life. Instead philosophy has over the centuries greatly influenced human attitudes to life by bringing changes in the societies and contributing to nation building, economic and socio-political transformation of the society. For instance, the philosophical ideas of scholars like Plato, John Locke, and Karl Marx, just to mention a few, have in no small measures impacted practically on different spheres of their societies. Based on the above, this section demonstrates the practical relevance of the philosophical principles of ‘transculturalism’ and ‘*ka so mu adina*’

as found in the philosophy of conversational thinking and the philosophy of complementary reflection respectively for the incidence of coronavirus rocking the world today.

Accordingly, transculturalism as a principle of conversational thinking needs to be adopted as a mode of action by all actors, stakeholders, and nations of the world irrespective of color, race, and clime, in order to confront and deal with the coronavirus pandemic comprehensively and completely. This is because the conversational principle of transculturalism upholds the interdependence of one human on another and as such encourages a coming together to build a formidable front. Thus, China, U. S. A United Kingdom, Spain and other countries in the global north where COVID-19 is damagingly spreading should come together with Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal and other countries in the global south to form a formidable and one united front to devise a mutually-beneficial way of curbing the menace of the virus. This is possible when the medical personnel, professional health workers, clinicians, medical researchers, traditional/herbal/alternative medical practitioners as well as the governments of each of these countries combine their efforts and resources (material and intellectual) in a conference via skype, if they are too afraid to meet in the midst of the outbreak, to unanimously through ratiocination and critical-creative extrapolation with facts and figures and other forms of data to come up with a lasting solution.

Conversational principle of transculturalism is not selfish in outlook. In fact, being transcultural in the sense used in conversational thinking entails seeing oneself in the other, going beyond one's self-centeredness to judge, will and act towards the other and vice-versa. The principle of transculturalism discourages lopsidedness and superior-inferior type of relationship and as a result serves as a viable instrument/strategy for confronting the rapid spread of COVID-19. This approach will necessarily translate into global peace and harmonious co-existence. The outbreak of this disease/virus has shown, in line with the principle of transculturalism enunciated above, that there is no inferior nor superior race or nation, all human race and nations of the world are hit by this viral outbreak without discrimination, selection or respect for anybody, race or nation. It has shown the interrelated and interdependent nature of all humans and of all nations of the world. It has shown the common humanity of all and the need to pursue the common good of all from a common ground in addressing this common existential problem.

Applying this principle of transculturalism as expressed in the philosophical method of conversational thinking to the case of the coronavirus outbreak, one could perceive the error and folly of humankind in erecting tall walls of racial discrimination, elitism, classicism and all forms of epistemic injustice and marginalization. Coronavirus does not respect such boundaries. Otherwise it would have affected some part of the globe to the exclusion of other parts.

In the same vein, *ibuanyidanda* principle of '*ka so mu adina*' (that I may not be alone) presupposes that no individual can exist in isolation, for if that happens, it is a negation of true reality. Moreover, the one who thinks s/he can live and function alone is so greatly mistaken that s/he should be pitied in that s/he unintentionally negates his/her being or essence and will not achieve much. Thus, in the case of the COVID-19 outbreak, no individual, nation, or continent should make the mistake of thinking that she can fight the virus alone without the efforts and contributions of other individuals, nations, or continents whose missing links they are. To do so will amount to attempting to live in isolation and in the exclusion of the other to whom she is interrelated and whom she is interdependent. This attitude and mode of living violates the complementary principle of '*ka so mu adina*' (that I may not live alone) and imports the negation

– ‘*ka so mu di*’ (that I may be alone). This is played out in the case of Madagascar (an African country) and W.H.O mentioned earlier.

Ka so mu di (that I may be alone) which is a negation of the principle of ‘*ka so mu adina*’ (that I may not be alone) is at the root of all forms of unintended ethnocentric commitment or actions. This form of thought pattern and mode of living is what creates the superior-inferior posture towards the other and discriminatory and segregational attitude towards the other. This is the mode of thinking that has informed the refusal of the Madagascar COVID-19 ORGANIC by the World Health Organization, as well as the refusal of China to share with the world the strategy employed by them that has nearly brought things back to normalcy even in Wuhan where it all began. In spite of all these isolationist and exclusivist tendencies that reflect the negative principle ‘*ka so mu di*’ as against the positive principle ‘*ka so mu adina*’, the virus has continued to spread across the globe. This approach aggravates the situation and leads to global economic meltdown, breakdown of international relations which in turn negatively impacts on all nations of the world.

Thus, in this isolationist and exclusivist mode of living, the COVID-19, and the drive towards finding a cure/vaccine for it becomes insurmountable. Meanwhile, with the adoption of the conversational principle of transculturalism (seeing oneself in the other) and complementary principles of ‘*ka so mu adina*’ (that I may not be alone) the task of confronting, preventing the spread of, and finding a cure/vaccine for COVID-19 will become easily surmountable.

6.0 Conclusion

The world is so interrelated and interdependent that an incident in one part or in one nation or the other, whether positive or negative, impacts other parts or nations of the world. This fact is exemplified by the recent outbreak of the coronavirus presently ravaging the globe to the point of breakdown of foreign relations and economic ties. So far, exclusive medical hygienic measures and health precautions have so far been taken by governments of the nations of the world. Unfortunately, this has not yielded the desired result, as the virus continues to spread and take lives. The importance of philosophy in solving practical problems of human life such as the incidence of coronavirus outbreak was articulated in this work. Two major principles (‘transculturalism’ and ‘*ka so mu adina*’) derived from two philosophical methodologies (conversational thinking and complementary reflection) were deployed to demonstrate the veracity of philosophy in confronting and preventing the continuous spread of the coronavirus across the globe.

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