Towards the Vision of the African Union:
A Critical Evaluation of the AU agenda from the perspective of Anyiam-Osigwe’s Group Mind Principle

Tetsekele Anyiam-Osigwe
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Abstract

This paper aims to establish that if the internal workings of the member states and the African Union are premised on Anyiam-Osigwe’s Group Mind Principle, the objectives of the AU will be greatly served. It introduces the Group Mind Principle as postulated by Emmanuel Onyechere Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe and discusses the transition from the OAU to AU. It recognises that countries wanted to come together for greater unity and co-operation among states. It assesses the vision of the African Union, as outlined in the Constitutive Act of the African Union, from the Group Mind perspective. At the forefront of this vision is the quest for African Unity. Against this backdrop, democratisation and governance, and development as key AU goals will be examined, with critical analysis drawn from Anyiam-Osigwe’s postulations on the Group Mind. It will maintain that the Group Mind principle presents a pathway towards the Africa’s realisation of unity, good governance and socio-economic development.
Anyiam-Osigwe’s Group Mind Principle  
As Social Theory and Development Philosophy

The Group Mind Consciousness is the fundamental centripetal force by which community or society functions, not only as a harmonious unit, but also as a social entity with a common identity. For Anyiam-Osigwe, “as a sum total of everyone’s positions and concerns, the Group Mind is a synthesis in which the defining elements of the fundamental interest of the respective participants within the Group is preserved in the resultant commonweal whose legitimacy and mutuality is subscribed to by all”. His conception of the Group Mind is therefore that of a co-operative relation, a form of team spirit that obliges everyone to employ all the resources, attributes and talents at their disposal for the common good. In his philosophy, the Group Mind refers also to an expansive resource, a well spring of ideas and thought processes that is created when people of a particular group or society intermingle their respective ideas in relation to their specific goals and interests. In this process, people willingly pull their attributes together through a synergy in which every member of the Group is convinced that the collective effort will yield higher satisfaction than individual effort.

Members who subscribe to the Group Mind are guided by the knowledge and understanding that the existence of the one is best assured or guaranteed by the existence and survival of the other. Also, that the survival and existence of the other is integrated in the existence, survival, and preservation of the whole. The Group Mind is about people, by virtue of cosmic or natural ways, willingly resolving to coexist in a community in which individuals pool together their various attributes through a synergy in which every participant is guided by the vision and interest of the Group. For him, a focus on the common good would enhance a commonality of benefits.

Some would argue that Anyiam-Osigwe’s socio-political idea is predicated on the logic of the sage’s metaphysics, with asserts, among others that man is a manifestation of Divine intelligence, expressing the fundamental oneness of all humanity as part of a cosmic order or cosmic mind. (Adegbinden: 2013). His postulations on the idea of the Group Mind are seemingly idealistic, perpetuating that an Absolute Mind is the ultimate reality in which all individuals share. The Principle itself finds it basis on the ideal that all individuals in the society are guided by the conviction that the collective efforts of all members of society will engender genuine and meaningful socio-political development.

Theorists (Hobbes, Freudians, evolutionists at al) have argued, however, that man’s instinct is self-preservation rather than the collective will. In the face of rationality demanding an inclination towards individualism, the attainment of the Group Mind seems implausible. Ipadeola (2013) however argues, “despite the widespread belief in working for one’s self-interest, it is very possible for the Group mind to operate”. She argues that, as advanced by Gauthier “…the knowledge of the fact that someone’s best interest is best protected within the group…would facilitate the realisation of the Group Mind…”. Ipadeola in recognizing compatibility between Gauthier’s social contract theory and Anyiam-Osigwe’s Group Mind reveals that, for Gauthier, “…When one is engaged in interactions such that others’ actions can affect one’s own interest, and vice versa, one does better if one acts cooperatively. By acting to further the interests of the other, one serves one’s own interest as well”. This

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2 Anyiam-Osigwe, Excerpts

iii Adegbindin Omatade Adegbindin, The Crisis Of Socio-Political Development In Africa: Making Sense Of Anyiam-Osigwe’s “Group Mind Principle” In Ifa Literary Corpus, A Holistic Approach To Human Existence And Development (Ibadan: Hope Publications, 2013)


v David Gauthier, Neo-Hobbesian Social Contract Theory Of Morality, Morals By Agreement
coincides with the Group Mind Principle. For Anyiam-Osigwe, the individual interest will always be preserved within the collective.

Regardless, Maduka\textsuperscript{vi} (2013) argues that there are grey areas in Anyiam-Osigwe’s thesis. He posits that Anyiam-Osigwe’s Group Mind raises a lot of problems by not identifying “who, for instance, would bring these people together and with what purpose or authority”. In other words, there is an absence of a facilitating body, which will synthesise individual mindsets into a Group Mind Consciousness.

Anyiam-Osigwe maintained however, that the facilitator of the Group Mind was the State. “The State is the Group Mind existing as a polis” with the fundamental task of harnessing the various individual attributes and talents into a common framework that would ensure the welfare of all the citizens in the state (Adegbindin: 2013). He posits that the various political traditions in Africa had structures that operated within those ideals, which epitomise the Group Mind Principle. He however reveals, “the concept of the Group Mind cannot be sustained in an atmosphere of unbridled ethical relativity occasioned by the dissatisfaction of the people with the amoral status of the state (Anyiam-Osigwe)\textsuperscript{vii}

He argues that the disintegration of the Group Mind in African society occurred due to the incursion of Western hegemony and the colonial enterprise. He writes “Owing to the worldview, moral perspective and cultural premise of the European explorers, this society of integrated unity lost its metaphysical depth and assumed a multifaceted social expression in which the Group Mind became severely weakened. Inter-subjective harmony was broken by the yawning manifestation of individualism. Subterfuge became prevalent in advancing personal objectives and goals; the spirit of community started to lose its flavour and value for holism”\textsuperscript{viii}. For him, there was mistrust between the State and the citizenry, and any sense of loyalty was eroded. He contends that the new social order enthroned a peculiar moral expression, where morality and that sense of community assumed a more subjective and relative facet, unlike the absolute dimension of the pristine African setting.

The Group Mind Principle raises the issue of the intractable contradictions between holism and individualism\textsuperscript{ix} in society. Having reviewed the debate between the supporters and detractors of the Group Mind Principle, this paper will assume its validity in order to use it to assess the success of the AU. Assuming Anyiam-Osigwe is right, the Group Mind can be developed within structures that can be carefully appropriated in the making and implementation of policies that can address, at the state level, the challenges of the present global socio-political and economic order. This strategy, when it becomes successfully operational at the level of the state, can then enhance the workings of regional and international socio-political and economic unions, like the African Union.

\textsuperscript{vi} Chukwugozie Maduka, Development Philosophy Of Julius Nyerere And Of Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe: A Study Of Synergies, A Holistic Approach To Human Existence And Development (Ibadan: Hope Publications, 2013)

\textsuperscript{vii} Cited In Excerpts And Quotes Of Emmanuel Onyechere Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe: Philosophical Fragments (Lagos: Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, 2008), pg. 9

\textsuperscript{viii} Anyiam-Osigwe, Excerpts And Notes

\textsuperscript{ix} J.A.Aigbodioh
Transition from OAU To AU
The Historical Development Of The African Union

The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) was founded in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on the 25th of May 1963. The OAU, made up of 31 African countries, aimed to promote independence, anti-colonialism and the fight against apartheid. One of the primary goals of the OAU was the realisation of the African identity, embedded in Pan-Africanism and the African personality, largely advocated by Kwame Nkrumah. He propounded on political unity being a prerequisite for economic unity and development.

The vision of the OAU was both liberation and integration. Structurally, the OAU did not succeed. In its 39-year history, it established itself as a compromise between African leaders who supported the Union and those who pursued a loose association. Loyalty to the OAU was affected and undermined by the economic powers outside Africa, including the EEC, Eastern Europe and America. At the economic front, member countries had to rely on the goodwill of these outside powers for economic and technical advancement. In the hostile antagonism existing between the capitalist-driven interest of the EU, the US and Canada on one front, and the socialist-driven interest of Eastern Europe on the other, the OAU functioned as a polarised entity. Individual countries subscribed, not to the OAU, but to the directives of imperialist nations, to which they relied on for economic and social security.

With African leaders looking towards a structurally relevant institution with less dependence on external forces, the AU came into fruition 37 years later. Its focus was on the attainment of good governance, socio-economic development and peace.

Inspired by guiding principles of the founding fathers of the OAU to promote unity, solidarity, cohesion and co-operation among the peoples of Africa and African states, the OAU Extraordinary Summit met in Libya in September 1999 and agreed to the establishment of the AU. The Constitutive Act was signed in Togo in July 2000.

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Towards the Vision of the African Union

On the 11th of July 2000, 53 African leaders acted as signatories to the Constitutive Act of the African Union. It set out the objectives of the Union and identified Africa’s need for a larger synergy that will offer a higher socio-economic yield and build coherence and a common identity for all Africans.

At the forefront of these objectives was the quest for African Unity. According to Obasanjo (2001:64), “the African Union is the final goal of African unity that leaders have been pursuing for more than 40 years”. However, any form of integration, be it economic or political, has to be preceded by member states being guided by the knowledge and understanding that the existence of the one is best assured or guaranteed by the existence and survival of the other. Also, that the survival and existence of the other is integrated in the existence, survival, and preservation of the whole. When this perspective constitutes the mindset of each person, it establishes the Group Mind. In this regard the re-establishment of the Group Mind consciousness becomes synonymous with the quest for African Unity.

The Re-establishment of the Group Mind Consciousness and the Quest for African Unity:

Anyiam-Osigwe contends that man, in the natural order, is known to function and exist within the Group mind phenomenon. Particularly, he argues that in the primordial African society and even to the early modern African society, the natural phenomenon of the Group Mind was the metaphysical hub of human existence. Africa’s cultural depth identified the existence of the other as integral to the sustenance of the existence of the self. This was embedded in the family structure. For him, because the atomisation of the family into segmental relationships like uncles, nieces, cousins, et al, which highlight fundamental gaps in relationship, did not feature in the African psyche, there was a depth of co-relationship that integrated into an uncommon bond of brotherhood. For him, Africans truly functioned in the spirit of oneness and mutuality.

Historically, the disintegration of the Group Mind manifested with the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885, at the formalisation of the Scramble for Africa. In this pinnacle of colonialism, Africa saw European powers carve up borders and partition the continent, regardless of cultural and ethnic attachments. By asserting European supremacy, the Berlin Conference was a manifestation of the erosion of African identity, autonomy and self-governance, with ramifications for any future prospect of unification.

To Anyiam-Osigwe, colonialism and post-colonialism confronted the Group Mind in its unperverted form. He argues that the ontological basis for socialisation in the African cosmos, through the recognition of the family unit, common ancestry, common interest and common objectives were quickly eroded when the early explorers came to Africa. They met communities in which the interest of community took precedence over the interest of the individual, whose interest was still seen as vital to the interest and wellbeing of the whole community.

Anyiam-Osigwe, like many colonial and post-colonial African leaders, claimed that Africa, prior to European colonisation was a pristine society, where communities in each region functioned as a common unit. As Anyiam-Osigwe saw the Group Mind as a potent force within African value

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xiii Anyiam-Osigwe, Notes on the Group Mind

systems, Nyerere’s philosophy of *Ujamaa* was also rooted in traditional African values and had at its core the emphasis of family-hood and communalism of traditional African societies (Ibhawoh, Dibua). Similarly, Nkrumah’s African personality and agenda for Social Revolution, Senghor’s “negritide” and Kaunda’s “Zambian Humanism” all seemingly reflected a similar African attitude, which ensured a predisposition to African socialism xv.

For some however, the rhetoric of African socialism has been perceived as naïve. Critics have argued that the postulations on African socialism present a non-existent idyllic vision of a traditional Africa, which manifested in harmony and communitarianism (Boesen et al, 1977; Freyhold, 1979; Ergas, 1980). In fact, Nkrumahxvi, in stark contrast to the colonial leaders of the day, asserted that there was no real anthropological or historical evidence for an idyllic society. He went on to repudiate African socialism, revealing that the realities were much more sordid.

Despite these criticisms, Anyiam-Osigwe’s view and that of many colonial and post-colonial still maintains some degree of validity. Nkrumah went on to still argue that the basic organisation of many African societies in different periods of history manifested a certain communalism and that the philosophy and humanist purposes behind that organisation are worthy of recapturexvii. Seemingly defending the foundations of the Group Mind principle and the assumptions of African socialism, he elucidates on a community in which each saw his wellbeing in the welfare of the group.

He however argued that rather than the structure of the traditional African society; it was the spirit that was indeed idyllic. In his words, the spirit of communalism is crystallised in its humanism and in its reconciliation of individual advancement with group welfarexviii. To him, even if there is incomplete anthropological evidence to reconstruct the “traditional African society” with accuracy, the rich human values of that society were apparent and can still be recaptured. In short, an anthropological approach to the “traditional African society” is too much unproven; but a philosophical approach stands on much firmer ground and makes generalisation feasiblexix.

Anyiam-Osigwe, like Nyerere, further maintains that the uniqueness of the extended family system in African cultures equally defined the ontological basis for socialisation in the African setting. It presented the perfect condition for the Group Mind to manifest. Anyiam-Osigwe himself often drew from his own experiences within his community. In his words, “the community functions not just as a harmonious unit, but as a social entity of a common identity, vision and perspective”. Existing within that Group Mind, he avers that it was a “convergence of minds in which the identity, interest and wellbeing of each and every member is preserved in the commonweal of the community or group”.

For Anyiam-Osigwe, colonial incursion brought about changes in the social dynamics, which meant that the African psyche lost the grip of its metaphysical depth and quickly assumed a multifaceted inclination, where the Group Mind consciousness was left weakened. African realities, to Anyiam-Osigwe, became largely distorted and enmeshed in a sea of incoherence. Consequently, there was a crisis of identity. The people were not only compelled to alter their values and interpretation of reality, but also change the patterns of socio-economic existencexx. The enthronement of individualism and strive for personal aggrandisement, coupled with the integration of a multiplicity of ethnicities with

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xvi Kwame Nkrumah, 1967, Paper read at the Africa Seminar held in Cairo at the invitation of the two organs At-Talia and Problems of Peace and Socialism, “Africa: National and Social Revolution” (Prague: Peace and Socialism Publishers), Transcribed: by Dominic Tweedie

xvii Ibid.

xviii Ibid.

xix Ibid.

xx Anyiam-Osigwe, Notes on the Group Mind
no cultural compatibility, continued to weather away the idea of the Group Mind at the state level. Thus, for many African societies, the basis for commonness and voluntarism, which is hub of the Group Mind, was altered.

Where the Nation Group Mind slowly disintegrated, Anyiam-Osigwe argues that the Pan-Africanist dream for the continent was gradually eroding.

Kwame Nantanbu (Nantanbu, 1998:569) defines Pan-African Nationalism as the “national, unified struggle and resistance of African peoples against all forms of foreign aggression and invasion”. The primary goal, according to Nantanbu, is the total liberation and unification of all Africans and people of African descent under African communalism. For Pan-Africanists (Mbeki, Gaddafi et al), it represents a philosophy of integration, which propelled the current effort to achieve political unity in Africa through the instrumentality of the African Union (M’bayo, 2005:19). For the AU, the Pan-Africanist dream must come into fruition.

The most recent development towards further political integration in the AU’s history, since Nkrumah’s call for an African common Government in 1960, was at the 9th AU summit in July 2007, where the plan for a United States of Africa was proposed. Even where there were signs of similarities in the objectives of African leaders, the divergence in strategy highlighted disunity on a platform aimed at unification. There was a lack of concurrence between the Gradualists, like Mbeki and Yar’Adua, who sought for a slower approach with more attention towards problems with economic policy and security, and radicals who wanted immediate federation. Each country, as expected, had different politico-economic priorities, which weakened the political will to advance the collective interest of Pan-Africanism.

However, perhaps the Afrocentric analysis of Pan-Africanism underemphasises the political attitudes embedded in modern nation-states conceptions and expectation that existed in early Pan-Africanism (Okhonmina, 2009). Pan-Africanism assumes political unity on the basis of similarity. However, some would argue that Africans do not see themselves as one, and even in earlier times, discriminated against each other. The concept is further critiqued, as its assumptions of solidarity and equality are not in tune with the realism of power into the international system. Whilst emphasising on sentiments of similarities of origin, it fails to consider power leadership in anticipation of integration (Okhonmina, 2009).

The Group Mind nonetheless overcomes these challenges. On the lack of similarity, Anyiam-Osigwe observes that the weakening of the collective interest and the failed Pan-Africanist aspirations within the AU is a reflection of the absence of the Group Mind in its practical manifestation. For Anyiam-Osigwe, prerequisite to any unification is a development of a positive and contemporary identity for Africa (Odimegwu, Omazu: 2013) that would negate any feeling of significant dissimilarity amongst Africans. Only then can they not exist simply as a Group, but as a group with a Group Mind in which they intuit with the same mission, vision and objective.

Indeed, this would be difficult for the AU. Its intergovernmentalism accentuates the dominant structure of nation states in international relations. The nation states remain the primary actors in terms of policy making, whilst the AU merely represents a platform for interactions among states. Becoming

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xxii Ibid.

xxiii Ibid.


a supranational organisation, like the EU, becomes a viable solution. The strength in activating the Group Mind is identified in the EU: a region with a common currency, an EU standing force deployed under a common identity, a common citizenship run by a common visa, and free movement of the citizenry as they interact across borders.

Granted, the AU has a long way to go before it can effectively achieve this. Acknowledging that the AU is severely different from the EU, Kofi Annan noted that the European experience was not without its shortcomings, but that Africa faced a greater challenge as she attempted to form a union in “conditions that are objectively much less favourable”. Anyiam-Osigwe, understanding the circumstantial differences between his Africa and the West, believed that the Nation Group Mind at the state level must be re-established, before there is a capacity to exist as a Group and realise a collective interest within a continental Group Mind.

The process of further regional integration must involve popular participation and accrue a large support base. As Olowu argues, for the success and sustainability of the process, it is important that the debate of regional integration is decentralized away from the elitist realm of technocrats, civil society and academia, to a forum that seeks to inform the African people about the benefits and drawbacks of integration and to garner their opinions. Indeed the “common man or woman” in the streets of, inter alia, Maputo, Lagos, Accra and Kumasi, should be given the opportunity to contribute to the debate (Olowu). They should be fully aware of the consequences of the new frontier in African Unity by which the management of their political, social and economic affairs will be integrated into those of the African continent (Obasanjo, 2001: 64). The message, according to Obasanjo, should be that “the African Union is entirely in the interest of the people and they stand to gain infinitely from this new continental unity”.

It is only when this happens that the sense of belonging that totally integrates the interests of individuals and the states within the common vision of the AU will be realised, along with the assurance of the socio-economic and political security. This would require the Group Mind construct within member states and in defining the AU structurally and functionally.

In considering power leadership in anticipation of integration, Anyiam-Osigwe presents another dimension of the Group Mind. He argues that the Group Mind is not about people being compelled to come together or accept to come together. Rather, it is about individuals, families, communities, nations or states willingly accepting to come together in a bond in which their individual or group interest, though subjective to, and subsumed in, the overall interest of the new superstructure, remains protected and even more attainable in the larger whole. Therefore, when the Group Mind is established, it is natural for the smaller states in the AU power structure to willingly accept the legitimate authority of those at the top. Both the smaller and larger nations within the AU are guided by the Group Mind dictum: that the existence of the one is best assured by the existence of the other and the existence of the other is integrated into the preservation of the whole: an interdependent relationship.

African Unity And The Group Mind: The AU in Motion

Once African unity begins to materialise at any pace, it is feasible to conclude that the vision of the AU is better achieved. Nkrumah himself acknowledged that Africa must find African solutions to her problems and that these can only be found in African Unity (I speak of Freedom, 1961). Rooted in this vision to overcome Africa’s problems is the attainment of democratic governance across the continent. Since inception, the AU has insisted upon constitutional governments for its members and that genuine democracy be afforded to the African people. Good governance and the erosion of the

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xxvii Olowu 2003 Transnational Law and Comparative problems 240

xxviii Badejo, Diedre L. (2008), The African Union (Global Organisations), Peggy Kahn, series editor (Chelsea House Publishers)
democratic deficit will allow member countries work more effectively to overcome Africa’s development anathema and security challenges, and possibly further socio-political and economic integration.

The Challenge of Genuine Democracy and Good Governance

“Promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance”

Article 3(g)

In Anyiam-Osigwe’s definition, democracy is integral to human dignity and constitutes an ideal in itself. It entails a system of government in which those who aspire to political position ride on the crest of the unencumbered choices of the people - a social mandate in which is embedded the sovereignty of the people’s will. He affirms that democracy constitutes the will of the people to determine who governs them and how they are governedxxix.

However, the realities within the African continent are a stark negation of Anyiam-Osigwe’s ideal. Governance in Africa has been plagued by, inter alia, authoritarianism, corruption, nepotism, ethnic-based hegemony and ethnic marginalisation, electoral malpractice, disregard for the rule of law and the constitution, and political monopolies. Following the Ibrahim Index of Governance (IIAG) 2015, the Foundation’s Global Press release reveals that the continental trend in overall governance masks varying performances and widening regional disparities. It highlights deterioration in overall governance, safety and the rule of law, against Article 3 of Chapter 3 of the AU charter, which propounds on the access to and exercise of state power in accordance with the constitution of the State Party and the principle of the rule of law.xxx Chair of the Foundation, Mo Ibrahim argues that the present index signals a “warning sign”, as only shared and sustained improvements in all areas of governance will help build a future deserving of Africans.

Despite a pro-democracy movement emphasised by the Constitutive Act of the African Union and the AU’s African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, there has been a continuous erosion of democratic values.

On the issue of governance, Anyiam-Osigwe maintains that the aftermath of colonialism exerted adverse effects on the Group Mind. He postulated that the universalisation and glorification of Western culture and hegemony and the simultaneous submergence of the African identity led to the “enthronement of individualism”. Anyiam-Osigwe argues that the moral cannons of socialisation unique to the pre-colonial African peoples thereafter assumed a more subjective and relative dimension rather than the absolute definitions. As post-colonial Africa became immersed in perversities, corruption thereby spearheaded governance in the emerging social order, where there was an emphasis on individual power.

Anyiam-Osigwe theorises a “Post-independence Criminalisation” which ran through the African political sphere. In this regard, perhaps the challenge of good governance in Africa can be traced back to the polygonal manifestations that emerged subsequently in the post-colonial state, where the Group Mind consciousness was, to a greater extent, circumscribed. Anyiam-Osigwe cites: abuse of office, corruption, misappropriation, ethnicisation and ethnonationalism, nepotism, dereliction of duty, and autocracy as the resultant forces.

The problem was that leaders became negligent of the common good and this laid the infrastructure for dictatorships. There was no collective vision that needed to be realised, so the Group Mind, as essentially the collective will of the people, was absent. At the state level, this sovereignty, alien to the

xxix Compiled by M.C Anyiam-Osigwe, Genuine Democracy: The Price And The Prize, Brief On The Central Theme Of The 14th Session Of The Emmanuel Onyechere Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Lecture Series (Lagos: Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation)

xxx African charter on Democracy, Elections, governance adopted by the eighth ordinary session of the assembly, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 30 January 2007
African citizenry but vested onto African political leaders, made governing institutions remiss towards human rights protection and democratic principles.

As individuals borne out of the post-colonial mindset established themselves as leaders and policy makers, a “trickledown effect thereof started to mechanically alter the fabric of society”. Democratic culture failed to institutionalise within the member states of the African Union. In the present political system enthroned by the dynamics of modernism, the interest of the individual is of greater importance to him than the interest of the community. For some African leaders today therefore, their dedication to their country is only to the extent that they exploit their opportunities for their selfish individual benefits.

Today, the AU continuously strives to promote democracy in Africa and overcome the governing limitations of its leaders. Article 30 of the Constitutive Act of the AU maintains that governments that come into power through unconstitutional means will not be allowed to participate in the activities of the Union (Suspension). In line with the Charter’s commitment to good governance; Article 23 of Appendix 3 of the Constitutive Act outlines the **Sanctions in Cases of unconstitutional Changes of government**, including against “any refusal by an incumbent government to relinquish power to the winning party or candidate after free, fair and regular elections” Its action in Togo (2005) after the death of Africa’s longest-ruling dictator, Gnassingbe Eyadema, was reflective of the AU’s earlier successes. Subsequently after Eyadema’s son took control via military power, the Peace and Security Council called for travel bans for Togo’s leaders from the AU, the UN and Europe. The Council expelled Togo from the West African Regional Economic Organisation, an REC closely associated with the AU. Gnassingbe stepped down shortly after, and the country returned to constitutional rule.

Like many African countries, Togo, despite the work of the AU, saw democracy and good governance only occur fleetingly. Elections in 2005 were marred by violence and Gnassingbe still ended up in power, with 60% of the vote according to officials. Despite the provisions of Article 30 and its stated resolve for good governance, the organisation has arguably been negligent in calling offending leaders to account. Many African leaders have assumed office through coup d’états, election rigging, bribery, or simply by refusing to step down.

Furthermore, the continuing safeguard mechanisms of autocratic regimes (Teodoro Mbasogo of Equatorial Guinea, Jose Eduardo Dos Santos of Angola, Omar al-Bashir of Sudan, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe et al) by the AU institution, including the appointment of Robert Mugabe as the AU Chairman, has not elicited a positive perception of the organisation by the citizenry or international society. The critical values that are integral to the Group Mind are not reflective in the constituent managing institutions of the organisation.

These negative realities, Anyiam-Osigwe argues, are the apparent limitations, which establish Africa’s governance crises to date. Fundamentally, the type of governance system that is present greatly lacks the necessary elements of the “cohesion characteristic” imperative to the Group Mind. Self-aggrandisement and the ensuing means to both attain and maintain wealth at the expense of the larger community, in this case, both nation and continent, hinders the evolution of a viable democratic matrix in Africa and the ability of the continent to enthrone capable leadership. The AU faces leadership, which understands the principle of democracy, but abhor its practical implementation. The underpinning of this philosophy of perversion, Anyiam-Osigwe notes, is that the ends and the means correlate in a dimension in which the ends by whatever means necessary provides justification for the victory in office.

He opines that the perversion of the democratic ethos fostered the emergence of clientele regimes in most African states, which have impoverished the social order and its citizenry. Thus, to him, efforts aimed at getting Africans to imbibe the democratic tenets and uphold these tenets in all aspects of

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_Article 22, Sanctions In Cases Of Unconstitutional Changes Of Government, Appendix 3, Adapted By The 8th Ordinary Session Of The Assembly, Held In Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, January 30, 2007; Constitutive Act Of The African Union_

_Badejo, Diedre L. (2008), The African Union (Global Organisations), Peggy Kahn, series editor (Chelsea House Publishers) pg. 51_
governance and public administration are integral to the continent’s development (M.C. Anyiam-Osigwe).

The Challenge the AU faces in this regard, is the deconstruction of the norms and rules, regardless of how long they have sustained, which have marred governance and democracy, in order for them to now reflect the principles of the Constitutive Act. Anyiam-Osigwe identifies the need for a central moderating and monitoring institution. Thus, the Growth and credibility of electoral bodies like the African Union Election Observation Mission becomes paramount. This however can only happen when the AU garners institutional strength, which can be attained by the re-establishment of the Group Mind. The re-establishment of the Group Mind Consciousness would mean greater levels of African unity, such that, member states willingly pull their attributes and resources together through a synergy in which every member is guided by the vision and interest of the AU, convinced that the collective effort to attain genuine democracy and good governance will yield higher satisfaction than any individual State effort. Practically, this means that pro-democracy agendas and bodies must be guaranteed to operate with adequate resources and technical capabilities, provided collectively by each member state, without undue influence or intrusion from member states.

“Democratisation”, in Anyiam-Osigwe’s view, however “transcends election and its ceremonies”. To him “ it is an organic continuous process that ensures that only the authentic will of the people prevails at all times in all matters concerning their nation. Yet, the true will of the people cannot be expressed when, at the state level, there is a conflict of loyalty to two publics: that of the nation and that of the primordial community. Anyiam-Osigwe reveals, “This active conflict of loyalty stems from the fact that the constituent peoples, of what is essentially a synthetic state did not amalgamate on the basis of their respective free will, as such, the primordial sentiments of indigeneship persists in the individual and the collective consciousness of the different peoples”. He notes “ shackled by a retained loyalty to their primordial community, the people are therefore unable to make the transformation from indigenes to citizens. In this regard, they have no hesitation in subverting the state to further the aspirations and goals of the primordial nation”.

Anyiam-Osigwe asserts that the transcendency from indigenes to citizens and thus the overcoming of the “violation of basic moral principles in the pursuit of the subjective interest of the primordial nation” will only come about when the State reflects the moral foundation that elicits the confidence of the people.

Whilst the evolution of the Nation Group Mind (indigenes to citizens) may primarily rest on the individual nation with some support given by the AU to promote inclusive governance, the AU, on its part, must be more vigilant in its anti-corruption agenda. This would help instigate a sense of moral worthiness of the candidates to the people, which would allow citizenship take precedence over indigeneship. A failure to call corrupt leaders to account will allow for the stark negation of the moral ethos of community, an essence of the Group Mind, in which the peoples of the African continent should identify with. This is where at a national level, the interest of the nation and not a small group of individuals is paramount; and at a continental level, the interest and needs of African sates are intermingled, such that the sum total of the position and concerns of member sates is actualised,
whilst the needs and interests of each member state, though actualised collectively, is still preserved within the AU.

The AU’s 2014 decision to adapt a Common African Position on the post-2015 development agenda reflected in the recently agreed Outcome Document of the UN Open Working Group on SDGs is movement in the right direction. Outlined is the AU’s commitment to the promotion of good and inclusive governance, anti-corruption, transparency and accountability, the supremacy of the rule of law, institutional strength as well as conflict management. The fact that it involved stakeholders at the national, regional and continental levels among public and private sectors, parliamentarians, civil society organisations, including women and youth associations and academia, epitomises the practical manifestation of the Group Mind: People willingly creating an expansive resource, where ideas are intermingled, attributes are pulled together through a synergy in which every participant is convinced that the collective effort will yield higher satisfaction than the individual effort.

Should the AU continue with and abide by agendas like the CAP whilst employing the Group Mind consciousness to achieve its goals, genuine democracy and good governance will eventually be attained. When this happens, the AU is in better position to actualise development goals.

The Quest for Development in the African Cosmos

“In promote sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels as well as the integration of African economies” Article 3(j)

In both areas of human and economic development, Africa has been found to severely lag behind the rest of the world. On the human development front, the continent is riddled by endemic poverty, inequality, widespread diseases including HIV/AIDS and malaria, low life expectancy, inadequate medical care, inadequate housing, lack of sanitation and basic amenities as well as high mortality rates. According to 2014 UN Human development Index estimates, 17 of the bottom countries classified with low human development are all African, with Niger and the Central African Republic at the bottom. In fact, ranked first in Africa at 0.784, Libya, in relation to the rest of the world, is ranked 55th. Economically, major growth is centred upon Africa’s heavyweight countries. Historically regarded as the “Giants” on the continent, these include Nigeria, South Africa and Ghana. Nevertheless, they still lag behind other national economies in Asia, Europe and the Americas, despite their capacity to be leading economies.

Against this background of the traditional discourse to development, to assert that the Group Mind could be a necessary driving force of development is contrary to the view of a contra-ethnophilosophy school of thought in African Philosophy, notably represented by Paul Hountondji, that such a notion is a myth (Aigbodioh, 2010). Aigbodioh suggests that Anyiam-Osigwe’s mind-set driven economy is resonant of “ the elusive metaphysical problem of Descartes’ mind-body interactionism, the thesis that the radically different phenomena of the mind and body have a causal effect of action and reaction to each-other”.

Whilst these criticisms are acknowledged, Anyiam-Osigwe’s espousal that the Group Mind as a supra determinant of development and the traditionally recognised development indicators act only as secondary factors is maintained. In his words, “macro or micro economics, the development question, democracy, gender sensitivity…science and technology…. while providing indices for assessing the


xxxix Wikipedia, UN HDI 2014
pace and trend of development, remain ephemeral and superficial as they do not constitute the primary factor which determine(s) development”

Though market strategies, education, employment, industrialisation, et al are indicators of development, it becomes increasingly clear that there has to a driving force which propels them to actualisation. Thus, in line with Anyiam-Osigwe treatises, the AU must employ the Group mind, which will act as the driving force.

Given the vast amount for resources from outside and within the continent geared towards development, one could argue that there would have been significant progress had development not been a political process. For Anyiam-Osigwe, harnessing these resources and bringing the attendant wealth to bear in the common pool for essential manifestation in the life of every individual will remain a mirage if the necessary team spirit is not developed”. The individualistic or self-centred mindset of leaders cannot yield any form of development, even when all the traditional indicators are in place. Certainly, given the multifaceted dimensions of governance that emerged after the colonial incursion and disintegration of the Group Mind, Africa’s development constraints may arguably be traced in part, back to the absence of the Group Mind and the ensuing undemocratic governance structures. With leaders failing to attune to the authentic tenants of democracy, they often seemingly lack the capacity, will, and resources to solve development problems. Accordingly, the organisation often relies on external help. Whilst this dampens the self-pacification initiative, it also suggests that the AU is not even in control of its own agenda.

To Anyiam-Osigwe, the key to Africa’s development is imbuing the individual with the Group mind: “a mindset that would elevate him beyond the subjective limitations of the encumbrances of colonial incursion, to perceiving and exploring the new opportunities that…decolonisation and globalisation offer”.

This is not to say however that the AU has not tried to overcome the development challenges of member states, even when they still face governance challenges. When the World Bank called for a Structural Adjustment Programme as a viable recovery plan for Africa, the Economic Commission for Africa (closely associated with the AU) agreed that it would be helpful, but disagreed with the Bretton Wood institutions on the perspectives and parameters for the required adjustment. The ECA reasoned that the programmes must embody a strong local content, and must be cognisant of he variables that are specific particulars of the African society. Most recently, the establishment of the New Partnership For Africa’s Development (NEPAD) seemed to put Africa in a better position for sustainable growth and development and integration into the world economy. However, the increasing failures of NEPAD to reach its targets are disappointing to the AU’s development agenda. The fact that member states fail to generate their own resources emphasises Africa’s dependency culture. Members of the African Union must shift away from the organisation’s previous reliance on foreign donors and policies (Dlamini- Zuma, Chairperson, AU Commission).

The AU would arguably be in a better position if it subscribed to the Group Mind dictum. In identifying the Group Mind as a “…wellspring of ideas and thought processes that is created when people of a particular group or society intermingle their respective ideas…in relation to specific goals and interests…” (Anyiam-Osigwe, Excerpts), Anyiam-Osigwe identifies the failed agenda of self-pacification, the African solution to African problems mantra, as a development constraint. He argues that Africa should pay attention to her inability to conjure up Africa-centred development policies that would best serve the African people. Rather than becoming “an experimental ground for policies
(largely Euro-American) and new theories focused on addressing economic stress\textsuperscript{xliii}, in the attainment of the African objective, the AU and member states must take an eclectic approach to development policy, drawing from ideas within the continent. To do so, they must tap into the Group Mind Consciousness, allowing the spirit of African brotherhood and community to dictate integrative policy. 

The success of a Group Mind-centred approach to development is evidenced by David W. Wang’s work on the forces that underpin China’s rapid development\textsuperscript{xliv}. According to him, although Macro-economic factors and foreign investments are integral to China’s economic development, they do not constitute the overall Chinese success story. Wang argues that the basic underlying factor of China’s rise to economic super-power is essentially the Chinese cultural mindset. This cultural mindset, the “Dragon hexagon” according to Wang, means a complex and cross-cultural system made of philosophy, communalism, military strategy, history, folklore and literature, and the Dar and Zen tips.\textsuperscript{xv} The Hexagon represents an integrated model of the finest Chinese ideas, values, and wisdom that have helped to bring the country to the status of superpower in the modern world, having sustained China’s survival in the early modern time (Aigbodioh, 2010).

Whilst China is only one country and the AU is made up of 54 member states, it is still possible for the AU to intuit into the Group Mind consciousness at a continental level to propel member states towards economic development. If “social development is premised on the Group Mind”, bodies like AU’s Social Policy Frame-work for Africa and the Economic Policies and Research Division should develop Africa-centred development policies and present them to member states for implementation. In advocating a holistic approach to human development, all members of society must be integrated into the development process, especially women and the youth.

When this happens, the African Union would be liberated from dependency ideology and thereby intuit the community ethos, which would allow for a people-centred initiative. In the presence of the Group Mind and its attendant development impacts, Africa’s development is enhanced by the significant extent to which member states ascribe their development to the structural impact of the AU.

\section*{Conclusion}

\textsuperscript{xliii} Michael Anyiam-Osigwe, speech Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Lecture Series

\textsuperscript{xliv} Aigbodioh, adapted David W. Wang, Decoding the dragon’s mindset.

\textsuperscript{xv} David W. Wang, Decoding the Dragon’s Mindset: Inside China’s Destiny and its Hint to the World (New York: Seaburn, 2009) pg. 7
Anyiam-Osigwe’s treatises on the Group Mind principle has the capacity to provide African countries and the continent at large with a compendium of policy resources by which the holistic development of the African Union, and perhaps even the developing world elsewhere, could be better realised. As Maduka argues, to leave Anyiam-Osigwe’s development philosophy at a level of theory would amount to regard it merely as a meta-theory on development, which is not what Anyiam-Osigwe intended. For Anyiam-Osigwe, praxis is the deepening of theory.

In this regard, whilst the Group Mind cannot solely solve Africa’s problems, it can contribute to the solutions. It has the capability to confront obvious contradictions in praxis, which might perhaps, negate their absolute premises (M.C. Anyiam-Osigwe). In asserting the applicability of the Group Mind within the AU in its attainment of the socio-political and economic objective, member States have to work more closely together, understanding that the success of the AU is integral to their own success. Pre-requisite to this, the Group Mind must be re-established within the Union, through an increase in collective strategies that make the AU more relevant.

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