
Group Mind in Anyiam-Osigwe's Development Philosophy

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Abstract

This work deals with the philosophical reflections of Emmanuel Onyechere Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe (1921-1988). He was a sage philosopher (a concept employed here in contradistinction to the term 'professional philosopher'), whose philosophical reflections, apart from having metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical dimensions, address certain socio-political issues. An important idea in his corpus is subjected to critical interrogation in this paper. This is the idea of the group mind, a concept which is an embodiment of his reflections on how a group of people can develop institutions that can foster cooperative living. The idea further addresses how the individual can position himself for reorganisation of society by keying into social aspirations through adherence to norms, values and development of spirituality. The individual is to de-emphasise the self in relation to the others, and live the group's vision. To achieve this, the individual is to through introspection, self-searching, self-analysis, self-awareness, and self-knowledge, gain access to their innate endowments and bring these to bear on group cohesion. In Nigeria's case, lack of a sense of nationhood militates against patriotism and, in a democracy, denies the group a collective basis for holding politicians accountable for actions. There is, thus, the issue of distrust which makes consensus tough or nearly impossible. Anyiam-Osigwe's notion of the group mind addresses this problem in Nigeria, if understood and applied.

Keywords: Group Mind, Emmanuel Onyechere Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe, Development Philosophy

Introduction

Philosophy deals with providing conceptual response to basic human problems arising in a society during a given epoch. This means that philosophers grapple at the conceptual level with problems and issues of their times (Gyekye, 1997). And this is what Emmanuel Onyechere Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe (1921-1998) did in his philosophical reflections by conceptually addressing some problems confronting Nigeria. The reflections of Anyiam-Osigwe were directed at addressing the basic

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human problems that plagued the Nigerian society in his days. At the time of his theorising, Nigeria was in a situation in which it was unable to develop institutions that could foster cooperative living among its diverse peoples and was bedevilled by a crisis of values with such negative indices like: wanton abuse of power, crass materialism, greed, corruption and other social indecencies, which warped the group mind and which made a country with so much human and material capital the open sore of a troubled continent (Oladipo, 2009). Location, as well as the events happening in that locality, therefore, played a vital role in the development of Anyiam-Osigwe's philosophy.

This, however, is not a limitation for this fact does not mean that the relevance of his ideas, insights, arguments, and conclusions is to be tethered to his time. Rather, the relevance of his insights and arguments - or at least some of them - transcends the confines of his era and culture, and can be embraced by other cultures or societies or different generational epochs (Gyekye, 1997). In fact, the truth remains that the problems plaguing the Nigerian society in the pre-colonial, colonial and military days, which spurred his reflections, are still battling with contemporary Nigerian society. As such, even though Nigeria is in a post-military era, it is far from being liberated from the problems it had hitherto faced, making solutions propounded to problems of those days still relevant today.

This is not to suggest that Anyiam-Osigwe's reflections are local rather than global in nature for apart from aspects of his reflections that touch on the events happening in Nigeria, Anyiam-Osigwe made philosophical submissions that are essentially universal. His submissions on the group mind, for instance, address 'how society should be organised: its productive systems, distribution systems, value systems, and the basis for citizenship, patriotism and other forms of wider social collaboration' (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, *Development Philosophy*, nd). In general, Anyiam-Osigwe's treatise, as stated by Michael Anyiam-Osigwe, is directed at: interpreting the nature of reality; evaluating and prescribing principles of conduct; espousing the capacity to see the world from a multidimensional perspective of 'the other;' deepening insight in defining the meaning in variations of human experience and understanding the sociological order of existence (Anyiam-Osigwe, 2009:ix). With his reflections covering these wide areas, one can aver, as did Oladipo and Ekanola, that Anyiam-Osigwe was a man "who devoted quality time and mental energy to the contemplation of the human condition in both its general and particularistic dimensions" (Oladipo and Ekanola, 2009:xii).

Given the above, the paper focuses on the examination of Anyiam-Osigwe's notion of the group mind which is a postulation regarding the development of a sense of community and thus, in the case of Nigeria, addressing a fundamental crisis

mitigating against the evolution of a sense of nationhood. The inability to develop a group mind is traceable to the inability to reconcile the 'self' with the 'other' (Oyeshile, 2005:7), and this has not only had negative effect on the evolution of the spirit of patriotism and nationalism by Nigerians, it has had, in addition, an adverse effect on democracy in Nigeria, especially by weakening the hold of the people on the reins of governance. This is because ethnic and other divisions among the Nigerian electorates deprive them of "the power to hold the politicians truly accountable through common action with other voters across the land. In effect the Nigerian voter is effectively disenfranchised by these divisions" (Achebe, 1984:53). Moreover, in a democracy, consensus is crucial for decision-making, but politics in a poly-ethnic atmosphere, which, in Nigeria's case is full of distrust, makes the attainment of consensus tough. Also, lack of cohesion among Nigerians has been a major source of many conflicts in Nigeria, which have further "restricted the functions of government purely to that of crisis management to the exclusion of the pursuit of the public good" (Oyeshile, 2005:7).

Furthermore, the fallout of these divisions has resulted into a situation in which issues are now agitated not because they affect the country's collective existence, and in what ways those issues contribute to Nigeria's development or hinder it, but because there is something for a tribe or ethnic group to gain from them. Odugbemi thus states that, "what this does is that it makes governing the country fiendishly difficult. There is a very narrow rational sphere in which to work. Irrationality is persistent. Primordial considerations cloud almost all policy debates" (Odugbemi, 2001:70). The challenge confronting the Nigerian state, therefore, is that of evolving "a political culture that transcends the sentiments of religion, language, ethnicity, culture, and class in the expression of their electoral choices" (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, *Development Philosophy*, nd). It is to this critical challenge that Anyiam-Osigwe directs his attention in his sagacious reflections on the need to unite Nigerians by postulating the notion of the group mind.

Aside from the introductory and concluding sections, this paper is divided into two important segments. In the first, the notion of the group mind in the development philosophy of Anyiam-Osigwe is examined. This is done by examining the idea of the group mind, from a communitarian perspective and evaluating the debate whether a group can have a mind as opposed to the individual, who is usually ascribed in the literature as the one having a mind. The second section is on the discussion of various factors that are crucial for the development and sustenance of the group mind in the society. Three of such factors are identified and analysed. The study is qualitative in nature. Materials for the study were sourced from the body of extensive personal writings and diaries of Emmanuel Onyechere Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe, and secondary sources in journal articles, conference proceedings, discourses, and books, on the

subject matter and related literature. Thus, the study is undertaken through critical analysis of texts as well as library and archival materials on the subject of discourse. The method is also reflective in nature by meditating on some historical events in Nigeria, with the aim of drawing out vital lessons which have implications for nationalism.

A Communitarian Interpretation of the Notion of the Group Mind

One of philosophy's perennial problems is the mind-body problem. In origin, this problem may be traced to the conception of the mind as that which is spiritual, immaterial, or non-extended, while the body is conceived as that which is physical, material, or extended. Descartes (2005:76) formulates the distinction between the mind and the body by saying that “there is a great difference between the mind and the body, inasmuch as body is by nature always divisible, and the mind entirely indivisible”. The major problem arising from the way the mind is conceived in contradistinction to the body is that of interaction between these two fundamentally different entities. How is the immaterial able to influence the material and vice versa? Various philosophers, and scholars, over the years have tried to resolve this puzzle either through the generation of a monist theory that sees the mind as a mere extension of the physical body or through the defence of a dualist theory that grants different status to the two entities while insisting that both nevertheless interact. Without mediating between the advocates of the various conceptions of mind, one may observe that the positions acknowledge at least one thing and it is that humans possess the capacity for reflective thinking, mental events, mental functions and consciousness. The only contention is that while the dualists maintain that the mind, and hence its observed functions, is an independent entity different from the body, the monists see the mind as an extension of the body.

Anyiam-Osigwe cannot be said to have entered the debate between the monists and the dualists. He simply assumes, without the presentation of any elaborate conception of the mind, that the mind is a given property of a person. This assumption of Anyiam-Osigwe that human persons possess the mind may be due to the belief that “almost everybody alludes to the mind when it comes to decision making” (Oyeshile, 2000:105). For him, the possession of the mind is what distinguishes the human person from other terrestrial creatures. This is what is responsible for man’s highly developed capacity for thought, feeling, and deliberate action. In this regard, Anyiam-Osigwe, like Rene Descartes, conceives the mind as a ‘thinking thing.’ This “thinking thing,” which is the mind, is what Descartes considers himself to be essentially. According to Descartes (1997:142):

...I do not now admit anything which is not necessarily true: to speak accurately I am not more than a thing which thinks, that is to say a mind or soul, or an understanding, or reason, which are terms whose significance was formerly unknown to me. I am, however, a real thing and really exists; but what thing?⁹ I have answered: a thing that thinks.

In contradistinction to the conception of Descartes, however, Anyiam-Osigwe cannot be accused of reducing the human person to the ‘thinking thing.’ Rather, the mind is only seen by Anyiam-Osigwe as a possession of the human person. It is, to him, the part of the human person where purposive human actions evolve and get coordinated. Anyiam-Osigwe believes, in addition, that the mind benefits from, and depends on, individual activities of the various organs constituting the human person. In other words, the mind is seen as a beehive of activities, where other organs in the body make their contributions and, at the same time, draw vital force to perform and perfect their activities. If anything affects the organs, it affects how the mind functions and any adverse effect on the mind affects how the organs of the body function (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, 2003).

However, in a more fundamental way, the mind, for Anyiam-Osigwe, is seen as an entity that may be possessed by the group. In other words, it is not only individuals, in the opinion of Anyiam-Osigwe, that possess the mind, groups also do. Anyiam-Osigwe’s conception of mind as a beehive of activities, where other organs in the body make their contributions and at the same time draw vital force to perform their activities, influences his notion of the group mind as a common pool into which all individuals in a group (society, nation, state etc.) contribute their individual potentials and attributes and from which these individuals draw their needs (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, 2003). In developing the notion of the group mind, Anyiam-Osigwe aims to generate a theory of social relations and organisation as well as evolve a theoretical and practical guide on how “phenomena existence and social relations ought to be organised towards achieving optimum human development” (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, nd). Anyiam-Osigwe conceives the group mind as a centripetal force uniting diverse minds and, by so doing, exhuming a synergy from the members of the group towards the establishment of common purpose, goals and aspirations based on trust, harmony and motivation.

Upon the evaluation of the sense of community found in pre-colonial Africa, Anyiam-Osigwe argues that the possession of the group mind in traditional African societies underlined and gave force to communitarianism in these societies. His belief is that it is upon this principle that society is founded and it is this that is responsible for seeing the existence of the other as being fundamental to the sustenance of the existence of the self. This depth of co-relationship and interdependence, he believes,

integrates every member of the community into an uncommon bond of brotherhood (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwwe Foundation, nd). The consequence of this, for him, is that “all members of the same community did not just see one another as brothers and sisters or define themselves as such but truly functioned in the spirit of oneness and mutuality” (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwwe Foundation, nd). Anyiam-Osigwe posits, hence, that the group mind is:

the central force by which a community functions not just as a harmonious unit but as a social entity of a common identity, vision and perspective. It is 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. It is the nexus of the integrated energies, attributes, capacities and talents of all members of the community in which the holistic development of the community is attain[e]d. (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwwe Foundation, 2003).

The group mind, from the above, is like the blood flowing through the veins of the community. As a central force, it shapes the perspectives of every member of the community and informs the actions and inactions of every member of the community. It confers on the community its common identity, vision and perspective.

Anyiam-Osigwe compares the group mind to his notion of the ‘Divine Mind.’ He holds that “just as we have the Divine Mind which embodies and expresses the unity of purpose of the diverse principalities within the Supreme Whole, so also do we have the community mind which underscores the common flow of thought shared by a multiplicity of people which forms the unit of social identity known as a community” (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwwe Foundation, 2003:195). From the foregoing, we can deduce two things about Osigwe’s concept of the group mind. The first is that just as the Divine Mind expresses the unity of purpose of the diverse principalities within the Supreme Whole, so does the group mind entail the unity of purpose of diverse individuals within the group. In likening the group mind to the Divine Mind, Anyiam-Osigwe aims to show that the terrestrial is meant to be a replica of the celestial and that the unity of purpose among celestial beings should be obtainable among humans, as extension of that spiritual realm. The group mind is thus founded on his belief that “it is the natural order of “souls to commune together in a psychic resonance in which they are guided by a common vision, goal and objective” (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwwe Foundation, nd). The second, which is somewhat similar, is that in likening the group mind to the community mind, the group mind underscores the common flow of thought shared by a multiplicity of people in the community. The group mind, then, refers to shared thoughts informing and underpinning the actions and inactions of a group of people. Conformity to these shared thoughts confers on a people their

social identity. The group mind, in this regard, may be likened to a group psychology, or a group disposition. It is a mentality that individuals in the group possess about the group they belong to.

One may, however, raise an objection to the notion of the group mind. The objection arises mainly because the concept of mind is an attribute of individuals. It has to do with consciousness which can only be possessed by an individual. For this reason, Allport (2007) has argued that “there is no such thing as a group mind; it is a misleading and harmful conception in every way...”. Allport’s premise for this conclusion is that there is an error committed in attributing to the group what must properly be attributed to individuals making up the group. The error, he says, “is the attempt to explain social phenomena in terms of the group as a whole, whereas the true explanation is to be found only in its component parts, the individuals” (Allport, 2007). The group mind, he says, “is not only false; it retards in a special manner the discovery of the truth. Pointing toward the whole rather than the part, it withdraws attention from the latter and incites thought in precisely the wrong direction” (Allport, 2007). This is what he calls the group fallacy. “This fallacy may be defined as *the error of substituting the group as a whole as a principle of explanation in place of individuals in the group*” (Allport, 2007). This fallacy arises, he believes, because its proponents are of the erroneous view that there is a ‘group psychology’ as distinct from the psychology of individuals.

The crux of Allport’s position, in our understanding, is that the individual should be seen as crucial in any discussion about the group for it is the individuals that make up the group. However, although this point of his is valid, his view that all explanations about the group should be sought in the understanding of individuals’ actions misses the point. This is so because although the individual is key to understanding issues about the group, yet the sphere of influence that the group exerts on the individual is fundamental to understanding how individuals behave within a group. As Freud (1922) observes, “in the individual’s mental life someone else is invariably involved, as a model, as an object, as a helper, as an opponent...” (Freud, 1922). The import of this is that the individual is a being in relation with the other. And his relations with others shapes his beliefs and behaviour. “The individual in the relations... to his parents and to his brothers and sisters, to the person he is in love with, to his friend, and to his physician- comes under the influence of only a single person, or of a very small number of persons...” (Freud, 1922). So, in the long run, the notion of the group mind, or a mentality shared by the group acknowledges “the influencing of an individual by a large number of people simultaneously, people with whom he is connected by something” (Freud, 1922).

In addition, the idea of the group mind recognises that individuals in a group can have the same disposition as a result of belonging to the same group. For instance, when Paul admonishes Christians that “let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2v5), he suggests that Christians can be of one mind by following certain principles with which Jesus organised his life. Likewise, certain dispositions or attitudes are expected from members of the Islamic faith in relation to certain issues, say marriage or burial, for instance. In like manner, there are attitudes that capitalists may possess which will clearly distinguish them from socialists. We may also add that in philosophy, it is not unusual to find adherents of one philosophical posture or the other. The convictions of these philosophers end up becoming ‘isms,’ ‘neo-isms,’ or philosophical traditions. For example, we have Platonism, Aristotelianism, Kantianism, Marxism; neo-Platonism, neo-Aristotelianism, neo-Thomism, neo-Kantianism, and neo-Hegelianism, the liberal tradition, the analytic tradition, the empiricist tradition, the pragmatist tradition of American Philosophy, and so on (Gyekye, 1997). What may be said about proponents of the various ‘isms’ regarding the philosophy they subscribe to is that they share the same group mind. It is obvious from this analysis that a lot can be said about an individual if we know something about the group he belongs to. Our ability to do this is certainly due to the fact that we expect the individual to possess certain qualities that we know to be true of the group they belongs to.

It is important to point out, however, that the fact that an individual shares the orientation of a group neither contracts the freedom of the individual nor reduces the individual to the level of a dependent agent. On the contrary, the individual is merely expected to exercise their freedom by keying into the collective philosophy and, through this, subscribes to the group mind. There is also no doubt that sometimes even when an individual subscribes to the group mind, they may sometimes act in ways contrary to what is expected of him. However, Anyiam-Osigwe’s contention is that there is more that the individual stands to gain in aligning with the group mind. Because of this gain, the individual is expected to bring to bear the best in them in the development of the group mind since they understand that their survival depends on doing so. This is because “the group is 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” (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, 2003, 174-176). The individual will be more than willing to participate in a group with the belief that this will enhance their desires and potentials better than when they function as an individual. This understanding informs the organisation of pre-colonial African societies. As Oladipo (2009:78) puts it:

The key factor in traditional social life..., is that it was community preserving. That is, it was based on a clear recognition of the fact that it is the community, seen as a network of relationships, institutions and their underlining norms, which provided the conditions for individual security, identity and well-being. In a sense, then, the individual is dependent on the community for his/her self-fulfilment; the community provides the ambience under which he/she pursued his/her interest.

The African believes that individuals do not exist for their own selves alone but for the greater good of the community. Speaking of the Igbo, Amadi (1991:406) says, “while not arguing that Igbo traditional culture was devoid of individualism, it is all the same proper to emphasise the essential subordination of individual to group interest, for in traditional Igbo society, the individual had no identity outside the lineage.” In like manner, Anyiam-Osigwe sees the need to de-emphasise the self in the relationship with others based on his belief that “the most significant aspect of any entity is its role in contributing positively to the larger scheme of things. In other words, the greatest boost and meaning we can give to our lives stem from the meaning and greater benefit we bring to the wider society by influencing positively the lives of others” (Anyiam-Osigwe, 2009:x). He thus canvasses that:

In the quest for holistic and sustainable human development, it is essential to engender and sustain symmetry or correspondence between the individual and the community, such that the interest and the identity of the individual is absolutely integrated into the collective interest and identity of the community (Anyiam-Osigwe, *Reflective Writings*).

Ogbogbo (2009:1) rightly holds, therefore, that “Onyechere’s life and spirituality can be understood within the wider structure of Igbo cosmology, which played a dominant role in shaping his personality and attributes” and, to some extent, his views.

The African conception of the society is communitarian and also based on the belief that for peace and harmony to reign in society, each individual must perform their role and give support to the whole as well as draw strength from it. To the African, a good and strong society comes if the individuals are able to cordially work together. That is, it is the cordiality in working together of the individuals in society that produces a strong society. The explanation for this is that:

Within the Group Mind phenomenon, principles, elements, people, depending on the realm of comprehension, function together in concert with the ordered pattern of the natural scheme with each part contributing its own natural endowment in quality, talent, role and ability

towards sustaining the composite whole. This role is not enforced, compelled or instituted but is mechanical, inferential and inherent (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, 2003:172).

Anyiam-Osigwe's notion of the group mind is thus communitarian in nature. In line with the principle of communitarianism, the group mind is conceived as a mental disposition, "a psychic structure that embodies the totality of the common thoughts, attitudes, worldviews and banks of ideation of members of a given group" (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, 2003:14) towards a shared purpose. A manner of speaking that portrays the group mind is when people say 'we are of one mind.' The essence of this is to show that they are in accord and share the same view about an issue. This psychic sentiment can only be formed "when people of a particular group or society intermingle their ideas, questions, perspectives, aspirations, knowledge and experience in relation to specific goals or issues" (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, 2003:13). It is not a thing forced on the people, it is rather an expression of their consent. The individual is to, rather than pursuing his own interest, subsume such interest under the collective interest. Accordingly, the claim is that "as the sum total of everyone's positions and concerns, the group mind is a synthesis in which the defining elements of the fundamental interests of the respective participants are preserved in the resultant commonweal whose legitimacy and mutuality are subscribed to by all" (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, 2003:13). It is also important to point out that apart from arguing that the individual should subsume his interest within that of the group, Anyiam-Osigwe is of the view that the individual has a duty to develop or nurture their mind with positive values which will help sustain the common good of the society they belongs to. Oladipo (2009:28) explains this view of Anyiam-Osigwe thus:

...Anyiam-Osigwe advocates a view of life which emphasises the role of the mind in promoting and sustaining a better and viable society. The mind, in this regard, is seen not only as a means of apprehending man's spiritual essence, but also the instrument of developing those habits of thought and behavioural dispositions that can promote the best in human instincts and nurture better social relationships at all levels of human interaction.

Anyiam-Osigwe's concern was, however, not limited to finding ways through which the individual can subsume their values and interests into that of the group to which they belongs. He aims, in addition, to finding ways through which the sense of community, which according to Oladipo (2009:120) may be conceived as "search for common goals, interests and values in terms of which a national identity can be forged and a sense of neighbourliness developed among a number of hitherto disparate

groups in a multi-ethnic society,” can be achieved. The group mind, in this regard, “concerns the process or instrumentality through which you can get a group of people, in this context a nation, to achieve a meeting of minds, a commonality of purpose so that the nation can actually begin to move towards the realisation of its full potentials” (Anyiam-Osigwe, 2004:5). According to Offor (2009) , although Anyiam-Osigwe’s approach is to first argue about how the individual can gain access into their innate endowment and by so doing experience holistic development, yet their ultimate goal is directed at advocating how a wider expression of their position can be employed at the level of the larger society, state or nation.

Anyiam-Osigwe believes that it is possible to build a better and viable society through the possession of the appropriate group mind and is thus of the view that if Nigerians study, understand and apply the natural principle of the group mind, then “the attainment of a genuine sense of nationhood and love of country that would enhance national unity, cohesion and a people-centred development” (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, 2003:11) is possible. His observation is built on the realisation that the individuals in the Nigerian state have not only been unable to develop a sense of patriotism or nationalism, but also that the country lacks political integration defined as the “process by which local communities are not only brought within the control of a larger state but also submerge their local loyalties into feelings of loyalty and support for the larger unit,” (Birch, 19977:107); thereby becoming a state where commitment to the group mind of the primordial public supersedes the commitment to the group mind of the entire country. This gives rise to a situation in which indigeneship contends with citizenship. The ultimate consequence of this is that “the social system no longer nurtures nor sustains trust, mutuality, and confidence” (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, nd).

So far, to Anyiam-Osigwe, the inability of Nigerians to develop a sense of nationalism is traceable to Nigeria’s inability to develop the appropriate group mind at the national level and through this, make all smaller groups within her territory transfer loyalty to the state. This, furthermore, constitutes a major impediment to national development and the promotion of public welfare by the state.

Factors Informing the Development of the Group Mind

There are factors responsible for the development of the group mind in Anyiam-Osigwe’s thought. These factors are: the individual, values, and divinity/spirituality. These three factors are, however, interwoven in Anyiam-Osigwe’s conception of the group mind. Their interwoven nature is captured when Unah (2009:53) posits that in the opinion of Anyiam-Osigwe, “what makes socio-economic and even political development possible is the intertwining of the spiritual and moral fibres of individuals

who are driven by passion to affect the world or add value to it in an uplifting and positive manner”. This section focuses on discussing the noted factors and their contributions to the formation and enhancement of the group mind.

The Individual and the Group Mind

Anyiam-Osigwe’s reflection on the group mind primarily focuses on the individual and the place of the individual in the scheme of things. This is because, for him, “a better world order begins with a better me” (Anyiam-Osigwe, 2009:x). He dwells especially on how the individual can gain access into their innate endowments in order to attain holistic development and through this, make meaningful contributions to the development of the group to which they belongs. For Anyiam-Osigwe, “the individual remains the moral agent for appropriately constructing society to reflect the integrals of equity and social amity” (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, nd). He believes that human beings are immensely endowed with resources that are inherent in human nature which may be tapped for personal development (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, 2004); and that the individual’s inherent attributes and innate endowment can further be contributed into the common pool for the advancement of the common good, thereby making the individual an indispensable factor in the building of the group mind.

Consequently, Anyiam-Osigwe directs his reflections to helping the individual make the best of themselves so that they are better positioned to make the necessary contributions to the society. Thus, Anyiam-Osigwe considers the mindset of the individual as of utmost importance. The mindset factor is crucial for self-mastery. The mindset, in the conception of Anyiam-Osigwe, refers to the set of conditions or, more precisely, values that the individual has imbibed during their lifetime. As a set of conditions informing the decisions made by the individual, therefore, it “can be corrupted, impaired, tarnished, reformed, and be reinvigorated with the power for creative achievements” (Agulanna, 2009:19). Given the fact that it can be tarnished, the state of the mind and the thought going through it matter. The individual is to realise that thoughts are things, whether they are good, bad, positive, negative, thoughts of life or of death, or they be thought of peace or of war, and that thoughts should be given attention, controlled and directed in the mind towards positive, progressive, harmonious ideas in order to bring about laudable and positive things (Lawuyi, 2009).

In achieving this, there should be self-discovery and self-mastery. The process of self-mastery will have to start with a process of self-discovery. In other words, for Anyiam-Osigwe, the process of self-mastery is an outcome of the process of self-discovery, which he terms ‘introspection’; a process that involves soul-searching, self-analysis, self-awareness, and self-knowledge. It is also a process that should lead to

‘man’ knowing ‘himself’ as Socrates urges. An exercise in introspection will make the individual ask the following fundamental questions: Who am I? From whence came I? What is my place in the cosmic scheme? What is life? And, what is death? (Anyiam-Osigwe, Reflective Writings).

The first question should enable the individual to identify their potentials and limitations. The identification of those potentials should lead to the discovery of the fact that the individual is innately endowed with the capacity to be good and has “in his nature certain values, which when properly harnessed, can bring about the all-round development of the individual” (Offor, 2009:122-123).

A critic might argue that different individuals are likely to provide different answers to the question: ‘Who am I,’ thereby arriving at different conflicting values. To this objection, Anyiam-Osigwe is likely to respond that the possibility of different individuals having different values will not arise because through introspection and reflection on the question, ‘Who am I?’, the individual will discover the same set of values as others have because they have been deposited into the individual by a higher power, who while creating these values has ensured their uniformity. In other words, to Anyiam-Osigwe, the source of the values is what is responsible for the sameness of the values.

On the other hand, however, the identification of their limitations should, among others, enable the individual to realise that there is a higher power and this realisation should make them realise where they came from and enable the individual to conclude that they are products of a higher power. The individual is to build a relationship with God and through this relationship, they are able to understand and relate well with the cosmos (Lawuyi, 2009:42). An illustration is in order here. Attempting to relate with the world without proper recourse to the creator is like using a novel scientific instrument without referring to the owner’s manual. Even when one is able to operate the machine, one often under-utilises it. In like manner, attempting to relate with the world without understanding the mind of God concerning the world would lead to a situation in which humans are unable to maximise their relationship with the world. So, it is expected of humans to obtain from God the necessary requirements to properly conduct the affairs of this world.

Central to the notion of development, as postulated by Anyiam-Osigwe, is the idea of Holistic Capital. Holistic capital consists of two aspects - the spiritual/metaphysical or abstract capital and the physical capital which includes cash, land, buildings, plant, technology, equipment, among others (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, nd). At the centre of these two factors is the individual, who receives from the spiritual/metaphysical capital and uses that which they receive from the divine to

coordinate and shape the physical capital. Thus, the individual person plays a crucial role in controlling and utilising the capital for self-development and consequently for development at the group level. It rests on humans, as the coordinating force of development to, through intuition, meditation and introspection, break through to the metaphysical realm to harness spiritual capital, articulate it and apply it in coordinating all other endowments like cash, land, buildings, plants, equipment and natural resources (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, nd).

However, in order for humans to be able to do this, it is important to ensure that the total capacity of the human person in the body, mind (mental), spirit and soul attains the highest octave of development. The need for development of the individual is because “man’s capacity to unfold and intuit into the subconscious of the benefit and/or development of the social order, of which he is a component, is directly related to the level of his or her personal development” (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, 2003). Humans are expected to give themselves to self-mastery or spiritual development, on the one hand, and mental development, on the other. In Anyiam-Osigwe’s view, these two levels of developments are interdependent and complement each other, but it is the spiritual that provides the leverage.

With self-mastery or spirituality, the individual develops the capacity to intuit into his inner consciousness or the subconscious intellect through the process of meditation and introspection. Anyiam-Osigwe argues that this first level is primary to the second which is the phenomena application of the knowledge explored from within (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, nd).

With this, Anyiam-Osigwe recognises that spiritual development without mental development cannot adequately lead to holistic development, while at the same time pointing out that mental development is inadequate in engendering meaningful development. Both will have to complement and reinforce each other. Spiritual development is part of self-mastery for Anyiam-Osigwe. Self-mastery is what would enable the individual to transcend limiting factors and help align them with the “grid of the great patterns of the [morall] law that under-girds the universe” (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, nd). The human person, for Anyiam-Osigwe, it must be noted, has the governing laws of the universe within their subconscious mind, even though individuals often disregard these laws because of seeming benefits that accrue from such an act. However, if individuals are able to adhere to these laws, there will be advancement of “justice, compassion, love, equity, mutuality as well as consensus and these will provide the key for the emergence of a viable community” (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, nd). This is so because society’s disposition to these laws “fosters respect for the rights of others and enhances the process for determining the objective

and subjective contentions that affect the communal as well as individual lives of the people” (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, nd).

Furthermore, the ability of the individual to attain self-mastery makes them become endowed with necessary moral index, which also enables them to overcome or restrain the limiting properties of the ego that engenders such negative propensities as greed, lust, treachery, hatred, lasciviousness, chicanery, possessiveness and wanton acquisition among others (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, nd). It is only when humans achieve this that they are able to commence the process of building the group mind. In other words, the individuals who would effectively be instrumental in building the group mind are those who have achieved self-mastery by first developing the divine nature in them and by transcending mundane things of this life.

In all this, the individual must act as a free agent. For Anyiam-Osigwe, freedom is “liberating to the intellect, establishes or reinforces personality, broadens the scope of imagination, engenders vision and strengthens disposition (character) and resolution (resolve)” (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, nd). More than this, when individuals are free as members of a group and are given the opportunity to actively and genuinely influence the thinking of that collective as a whole, they gain a sense of contentment, commitment and are therefore able to gain a unique sense of belonging. The opportunity for the individual to actively contribute to the group mind “engenders feelings of trust, confidence, empowerment, inclusion and love for the group, and creates a context that is conducive for the expression of innovative ideas” (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, 2003:14). Having in place a system as this allows and enables individuals to make meaningful contributions to the group mind and this enables the community to harness the cumulative wisdom of all.

In placing emphasis on freedom, Anyiam-Osigwe reiterates the importance of one of the cornerstones for the sustenance of democracy. The freedom of the individual is important and has been the main point of division between liberal democracy and socialist democracy. Advocates of the first emphasise the need for political freedom and rights, while advocates of the latter place emphasis on the need for social and economic freedom to the detriment of political freedom. The right conception of democracy is, however, that which gives expression to political, economic and social freedoms. This is what Gyekye (1997) calls a comprehensive conception of democracy. It is the kind of freedom given expression in any democracy that is truly holistic in nature. Thus, it is defined as a conception which gives “adequate recognition not only to political rights but also to social and economic rights of the members of the community, and thus gives sharper meaning to- and a concrete translation of- the idea of social and political equality” (Gyekye, 1997:140-141). This conception of freedom would better give enhancement to what Fotopoulos (1997) has

termed inclusive democracy. Inclusive democracy sees democracy as being founded on a self-reflective choice and on institutional arrangements, which secure the equal sharing of political, economic and social power. These conditions ensure that democracy would not degenerate into some kind of ‘demago-crazy,’ where the *demos* is manipulated by a few breed of professional politicians (Fotopoulos, 1997:216).

Furthermore, Anyiam-Osigwe’s emphasis on freedom recognises the need for self-determination which is indispensable in developmental democracy. With this emphasis on freedom as a means to self-determination, there is a shift from a top-down conceptualisation of development to one in which:

...the people would be actively involved as initiators of plans and programmes for their well-being. They would cease to be mere objects of development whose primary duty is to obey the commands of leaders and experts who, in many cases, do not have any knowledge of what their true needs and interests are. The conception of development as a process of self-determination would therefore give the people the opportunity to develop “pride in themselves as worthy human beings inferior to none.” This is a pride without which no endogenous and self-sustaining development is possible (Oladipo, 1998:118).

In a state run based on this principle, the state ceases to be the determiner and controller of the goals of development and merely acts as the motivator and facilitator of development (Oladipo, 1998).

In the process of building the individual, however, Anyiam-Osigwe assigns a crucial role to the family. The family has to help the individual to imbibe the right set of values. By doing this, the family is moulding the character of the individual. It is to the family that the lot of basically ensuring that the individual evolves well, by being balanced emotionally, materially, spiritually, morally, and psychologically, falls. The family, as the basic building block of the society, according to Anyiam-Osigwe, needs to be strengthened in the effort to evolve a better world order. The importance of the family, as an institution, is that it guides and strengthens moral rectitude. It enhances the capacity of the individual to cultivate nobility of character and purpose. It engenders the appropriate mindset on how we ought to apply ourselves as human beings and thus constitutes the basic starting point (microcosm) of an ordered society (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, nd). The failure and moral decadence experienced in the society nowadays is, in the opinion of Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, nd), due to the fact that:

the family fails in its primordial responsibility as the primary building block of social values and the ethical premise. [And this is further due to the fact that] the role of the family as the supervisor for mindset development at the foundational or formative stage of human consciousness or development has been severely weakened.

Membership of the family is, however, not limited to living individuals alone, but includes, for Anyiam-Osigwe, the dead, who are the ancestors. Their presence in the family, in traditional African societies, makes the family a strong force to be respected, feared and honoured by every member. This, in turn, makes every individual belonging to a particular family to behave in order not to incur the wrath of the ancestors (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, nd). Unfortunately, the family is unable to play the crucial role that it ought to, and this is largely due to economic factors, which have made families to undergo one form or other of social dislocation with dire consequences for the quality of parenting (Unah, 2004). Unah (2004:54) further draws the implication of this decadence when he says that:

As the husband and wife are separated by the struggle for survival, the children- the backbone of the future- are left unprotected and uncared for in several fundamental respects. The result of this is the decay of family values and social virtues. The point to be made in all of this is that once we get it wrong at the level of the family, the society could never hope to get it right.

Nevertheless, Anyiam-Osigwe, believing that the family is ‘the nucleus and most valuable unit of society’ (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, 2000:54), argues for the need to reposition the family to serve as an instrument for engendering order and stability in the society, with the belief that “if we get it right at the family level, it will translate to a better community which in turn would impact on the larger society thereby contributing to a better world order” (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, 2000:55).

Apart from the crucial role that the family has in shaping the individual, education also plays an important part. Anyiam-Osigwe believes that the educational system should be directed at developing the appropriate mindset. For him, the essence of education consists in instituting moral rectitude in human society. Education as the process of gaining knowledge “involves transcending the conscious and gaining access and a working insight into the properties of the subconscious mind wherein the *Pristine Essence* resides” (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, nd). With this submission of Anyiam-Osigwe, education should enable the individual to discover himself as part of the Divine Principle and help him to transcend mundane issues of

this material world. ‘Education,’ says Avoseh (2000:24) “is expected to cause some improvement in the intellectual, social, cultural, and even economic progress and development in individuals and society”. Education is a socialisation process and, thus, it is expected that apart from intellectual soundness, refined and socially acceptable behaviour will result from it. Thus, an integral part of education and good quality of an educated person is the development of the right behaviour. Realising this, Bamisaiye (1994:104).states that:

education is therefore necessarily manifest in the intellectual and social behaviour of its recipient. This social behaviour is characterised by the educated person’s ability to distinguish between right and wrong behaviour in ordinary and extraordinary circumstances of living, and show a disposition to do what he reasons in the overall interest, even when his personal interest is at stake. A social parameter of being educated is that a person is both cognitively and morally developed. Education therefore becomes a value word of commendation.

Given this, it is possible to draw a distinction between the schooled and the educated. The core of the distinction is the fact that a person is schooled, being a person of letters, but it does not qualify them as an educated person, just as the fact that a person is not schooled does not mean that they are not educated. To bring out this distinction more clearly, let us consider the Yoruba concepts - *omowe* (a literate) and *alaileko* (one who is not educated). These two concepts are not contradictories. It is possible to be an *omowe* and at the same time be an *alaileko*. Both can be meaningfully said about the same person. If a man displays intellectual ability and soundness, they may be regarded as an *omowe*, but if such a person’s way of behaving is socially and morally disapproved, they may be regarded as an *alaileko*. However, a person who has never stepped within the walls of a school (*ile-iwe*), though they are not referred to as *omowe*, may be regarded as ‘eni ti o gkeko’ (one who has imbibed education), if their behaviour is socially and morally approved.

The import of this analysis about education should include the fact that it should not be conceived in the formal sense only, as informal education received from one’s parents and other members of the society is highly essential. For Anyiam-Osigwe, the kind of profession pursued in traditional African societies enabled families in those societies to closely monitor the moral development of their children and thus to, while developing them professionally also develop them spiritually and morally. Anyiam-Osigwe laments that the nature of the modern work space has greatly impacted negatively on the close-knit family relationship as it was found in traditional African societies. The kind of work done in traditional Africa allowed families to be together, almost throughout the day. Farming, for instance, was collectively done and

allowed the parents to keep an eye on the moral development of their children at home and at work (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, nd).

It is not that Anyiam-Osigwe wants a return to the kind of businesses - farming, blacksmithing, goldsmithing - as they were practised in traditional African settings. Rather, his position underscores the importance of the need for parents to set their priorities right by ensuring that while pursuing financial advancement, they also give pride of place to the moral and spiritual development of their children. In his words, “while we might not be able to revert to the African socio-economic paradigms in the pristine African societies, we can integrate the princ (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, nd).

Values and the Group Mind

Anyiam-Osigwe’s Philosophy of Development consists of three pillars: development of personal values, personal awareness and self-mastery; enhancement of socio-political existence and order; and economic existence, awareness and responsibility. However, fundamental to the last two is the first. “Communities which subscribe to the group mind dictum,” he asserts, “are premised on the integrals of fairness, equity, justice, peace, harmony, trust, confidence, empowerment, inclusiveness, love, sincerity and mutuality” (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, nd). This is because in cementing the relationship of the individuals in a polity as well as in the development of the group mind, there is a critical role for values to play through improvement in the quality of human relations between individuals and groups. A society that seeks to develop the group mind is one that consciously makes a commitment to the development of social equality, and engenders the promotion of positive social values like freedom, justice, tolerance, compassion, cooperation and thereby ensures that all these result in improvement in the quality of relations between individuals and groups (Oladipo, 2008). The presence of these values helps determine the nature of the relationship obtainable in a society. Fukuyama (1999:16), in another context, rightly holds that “if members of a group come to expect that others will behave reliably and honestly, then they come to *trust* one another. Trust is like a lubricant that makes the running of any group organisation more efficient”. In the absence of cooperation-enhancing values in the society, there is no guarantee of democratic orderliness, which is “the kind of predictability in political and social relations that derives from the assurance that each person, including those in authority, will always act according to the dictates of the laws of the land” (Oladipo, 2009:212).

Furthermore, the importance of such values like honesty, truthfulness, kindness, fairness, justice, love, hospitality, trust, tolerance, fidelity, compassion, and reciprocity, etc., lies in the fact that they make the achievement of cooperation and

integration possible; which, put differently means that they help facilitate social cooperation. These values also help define the nature of the contract between the people and the state. They, thus, or at any rate ought to, determine the direction of state policies. In addition to these, they help define the nature of the responsibility which individuals owe themselves and the society as a human collective (Oladipo, 2000). One other thing that values do is that they help shape the social realities and events happening around. As Unah (2009:52) rightly points out:

Values are themselves structurally interconnected with behaviour because they influence and direct behaviour and vice versa. So a wrong value system will result in a wrong pattern of behaviour. The adoption of a wrong pattern of behaviour by persons or groups will in turn result in the negative unfolding of events around them. In other words, the adoption of a wrong social conduct by persons and groups will result in negative development...

Moreover, in a democratic society like Nigeria, it is important to point out that democracy is an embodiment of certain norms. The quality of democracy obtainable in a society is dependent on values cherished by the people in such a polity. This much must be taken as basic: in so far as democracy is government of the people, by the people, for the people; then, in any society democracy reflects the people's nature. This, in other words, is to say that democracy is affected by the nature and quality of the character of the people found in a polity. Agbakoba (2009:106) has rightly held therefore that "...a political system is developed and sustained by the standard of conduct/expectation that the majority of the people accept or at least acquiesce in. The values the people cherish will inevitably determine the kind of leader they choose. The values become the checklist with which they determine whether a candidate is suitable for the leadership post in question and the basis on which they could refuse him if he lacks the 'morality for leadership or public office". Moreover, values inform the operations of the institutions. No one, without appropriate subscription to certain worthwhile values, can run an institution and make it produce the right set of results that will lead to securing the common good. Agbakoba (2009:106) is right then when he concludes that:

So, over and above the constitution of a state and its apparent political structure are the foundational ethics that make such a constitution [and the political structures and institutions] possible and realisable. We may call such foundational ethics, the "compositional ethics" of a state. Without the appropriate compositional ethics, the stated constitution [political structures and institutions] of the state, no matter how desirable, cannot be effective, real or realisable.

Nigeria as a fledgling democracy is unfortunately a polity where there is gross disregard for social norms. In fact, Achebe (1984) rightly traces the historical disregard for values to the intentions of the founding fathers of the Nigerian state, when he contends that the founding fathers of the Nigerian state instinctively chose to extol virtues which are amenable to the manipulation of hypocrites, rather than difficult ones which would have imposed the strain of seriousness on Nigerians. The disregard for values in various aspects of national life has, without doubt, been instrumental in stunting the rate of development in the country. The unfortunate consequence of this situation is that democracy has not brought along with it development as a dividend that should accompany it. Lawuyi's (2012) position in his inaugural lecture is apposite here. For him,

...the fault in our development is not in our stars but in our culture, a culture experiencing the gradual death of a moral public [a public in the service of reason, truth, freedom, and justice] and thus of character as model to be embedded in practical context in distinctive ways (Lawuyi, 2012:21).

There has, to a very large extent, been a failure on the part of the Nigerian state to realise that moral values are essential in ensuring social order, which is *sine qua non* to having a conducive atmosphere for democracy to engender development. The country is yet to fully realise that "a society is as good as the quality of its moral underpinning. Where this is strong and resilient, the society is able to survive and thrive. Where it is weak and fragile, the society's capacity for social progress becomes impaired" (Oladipo, 2000:64-65). Unfortunately, rather than the entrenchment of cooperation-enhancing values, there has been gross disregard for them in both public and private spheres in Nigeria; and this has been a major clog in the wheel of the country's struggle for developmental democracy. In other words, the disregard for the aforementioned values, which serve as a formidable foundation for social relations in a society, is the bane of development in Nigeria. Realising this, Oladipo (2008:78-79) holds rightly that:

...contemporary Nigerian society is radically flawed. This being so not simply because [the] foundation of social life in the country are still very weak- in fact, they are getting weaker- but also, and in a sense more importantly, because our national orientation is one which privileges the inessentials and the superficial over the real and the essential in the resolution of problems. The trouble here is that as we preoccupy ourselves with artificial issues (such as the duration of tenure for political office holders, rotational presidency, ethnic and religious identities, possibility of same-sex marriage, prostitution and so on), the really

essential but largely unaddressed issues (for instance, issues concerning the foundations of social order in our society, the value system appropriate to a developing, neo-colonial society, social justice, wealth creation and distribution and the social efficiency with moral sensitivity, and concern for the common good, unity in diversity and so on) continue to undermine the basis of our society.

Resulting from the inability to develop the right value system for the Nigerian state, “a Hobbesian situation ensues whereby each person is left to determine the path of his or her own personal desires and aspirations to the exclusion or even the undermining of the common good” (Afolayan, 2009:69). Because of the lack of these values, there is a lack of cooperation among the citizens and often a sabotage of development efforts.

Nigeria, as a country, emerged from colonialism as an amalgam of many nations. The social interactions of these nations have, to a great extent, as a result of lack of certain necessary values like trust, had many negative effects. Social interaction and behaviour patterns have greatly affected the level of trust among the various ethnic groups in Nigeria. Because, as Arrow (2000:4) rightly observes, “a little trust has not much use”; the inability of Nigerians to behave in ways that will make others to totally trust them has cost the country the development of the group mind. Anyiam-Osigwe would want fellow Nigerian[s] take advantage of fellow Nigerians[s]. He wonders whether this is so because Nigerians are innately dishonest people. This obviously, as Oladipo (2009:43) puts it, is an indication that African societies, “including Nigeria, are better characterised as normless societies, that is, societies in which there is little or no regard for those values- for example, those of trust, tolerance, and compassion- which make social cooperation possible”. This, as Oladipo (2009:43) further observes, has led to the “inability to generate the social sentiments required to develop political communities in which loyalty and support for the national community are not threatened by primordial affiliations”.

Anyiam-Osigwe’s reflections show that it is possible to reinvigorate a valueless system with essential values that are needed. As he says, “the nation ruled by a valueless system becomes a valueless nation.” He wonders and asks: “can we then put a value on ourselves[?] Can we now have a valuable nation?” The answer, he says, is ‘YES’ (Anyiam-Osigwe, Reflective Writings).

One of the values that Anyiam-Osigwe considers as being important is honesty. His reflection on Nigeria has led him to ask fundamental questions. He asks: “are you as a Nigerian honest enough not to take undue advantage of a fellow Nigerian?” As a Nigerian, “are you prepared to uphold truth for truth’s sake in all national issues?” He

believes that as Nigerians, the love of the country should be paramount over and above the love that one has for one's nation/ethnic group. In this regard, Anyiam-Osigwe feels that Nigerians should demonstrate their love for their fatherland through the profession of certain values which are *sine qua non* for the development of the country.

According to him, "the success and progress of Nigeria will depend on the sincerity and honesty of its citizens based on a sincere and honest desire of every Nigerian for the good of the nation and its inhabitants." It also depends on their ability to make "...truth and justice... the cardinal principle of this nation [Nigeria]." This position of Anyiam-Osigwe is further rested on his belief that personal values, personal awareness and self-mastery are a precondition for individual and social development (Oladipo and Ekanola, 2009:xi). Achieving this requires that Nigerians cultivate mind-sets or mental dispositions that will enable them to transcend raw human instincts- of selfishness, greed and lust... which are products of human attachment, through the body, to the physical world, to develop that nobility of character, which will enable them to achieve ... 'the perfection of the spirit and the mastery of life (Oladipo, 2009:23-24).

Divinity/Spirituality and the Group Mind

Anyiam-Osigwe does not "conceive of a thing that is existentially possible without a relation to its spirit" (Lawuyi, 2009:39). As a result, his belief is that the human person is an instrument of the will of God (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, 1999:5). Human life, he holds, "is not an isolated, but a component of a cosmic order, which has God as the conscious, creative intelligence behind it" (Oladipo, 2009:23-24). He is thus of the view that to understand human life, "the first place to begin is from the realisation that human beings share an affinity with divinity in the sense that they are a spiritual component, which enables them not only to appreciate and serve God but also to develop 'a certain nobility of character in imitation of Divinity" (Oladipo, 2009:23-24). Anyiam-Osigwe shares some level of scepticism about the ability of individuals, considering human debased nature in attaining self-mastery on their own without God complementing their efforts and enabling them to control their excessive desires. For Anyiam-Osigwe, it is only when individuals are able to integrate into the spiritual grid that they are able to attain self-mastery. In fact, Anyiam-Osigwe believes that humans' inability to live a virtuous life can be traced to their failure to reckon with God. On this he says:

Man's estrangement from his spiritual essence and the inherent universal ethical canons has been largely responsible for the impairment of his mindset. The lack of honesty and probity in the managing of public

affairs and assets, the disposition to unlawful acquisition, falsehood, hatred, envy, jealousy, and lust are all manifestations of spiritual impairment, which adversely affects the appropriate configuration of the mindset (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, 2005:20).

If humans are able to get to a point of discovering God, God opens their eyes to certain hidden laws of the universe and as such, given as Socrates said that knowledge is virtue, human's knowledge of the essence and purpose of creation and the universe enables them to know what to do and avoid. In a sense, Socrates' association of knowledge with virtue shows that "vice, or evil, is the absence of knowledge. Just as knowledge is virtue, so too, vice is ignorance. The outcome of this line of reasoning was Socrates' conviction that no one ever indulged in vice or committed an evil act knowingly. Wrongdoing, he said, is always involuntary, being the product of ignorance" (Stumpf, 1994:42). For Socrates, once a human being has knowledge, s/he shuns evil and deliberate wrongdoing.

This may not be entirely right, though as scholars have argued, and as it is obvious, human beings in spite of their knowledge about certain evils, even in the face of dire consequences, still go ahead to do evil. However, while the equating of knowledge to virtue may not be right, we may concede to the fact that knowledge aids virtue. Take, for instance, two individuals, one who has knowledge of the wrongfulness of an act and another whose conscience is not against an action and who is not aware of any prohibition against doing such a wrong action. We can *a priori* say that, if confronted with the same scenario of having to choose between using the particular action in question and others in achieving some end, the likelihood that the second person will go ahead and engage in such an act is greater than the likelihood of the first person, even though to law, ignorance is no excuse. Anyiam-Osigwe would, in some way, agree to the position of Socrates that knowledge and virtue are intricately interwoven because for him, "bad things happen by not understanding God's intention or by deviating from His intentions" (Lawuyi, 2009:50). If the individual has an understanding about the consequence of his/her bad action in the total picture of creation, Anyiam-Osigwe believes that s/he would avoid such action.

From this position of Anyiam-Osigwe, the individual is in him/herself incomplete. Humans need others and God to make up for their inadequacies. It is only in relation to others and to God that they gain their completeness. From this, one can deduce that the development of the group mind is meant to be the result of, one, the individual's self-realisation and self-mastery; two, development of the intricate web of relations which the individual shares with others; three, subscription to social norms and values and; four, the transcending of the mental intellect in order to gain access into the mind of the Divine Principle through introspection. For Anyiam-Osigwe,

humans are the immanent form of the Divine Principle and it is this fact that inherently endows them ‘to nurture, will, command and define the form and purpose of *their* society’ (Anyiam- Osigwe, 2009:x, not in the original). For this reason, proper development of the individual, in order that they may drastically improve the social order, in the opinion of Anyiam-Osigwe, cannot neglect the development of the spiritual aspect of humans because development involves building the spiritual capacities of the individual towards enabling him to access and explore the abstract mind or the subconscious mind wherein lay all knowledge on existence and bringing that knowledge to bear in inventions that enhance the prospects of humanity and a better world order in general (Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe Foundation, nd).

The challenge, therefore, is directed at having a transcendental foundation for governance and Nigeria’s development. Anyiam-Osigwe is not alone in believing that the spiritual is important in ordering aright the socio-political affairs of a nation. In part, his view regarding human life, has a link to the African conception of the cosmos in which there is no demarcation between the spiritual realm of immateriality and invisibleness, the physical realm and the tangible material world. Just as the African’s understanding of this world is one which “allows for interaction and interconnection between the world of material object and the world of spiritual entities,” (Salami, 1991:4) so does Anyiam-Osigwe posit that “the physical world is only the threshold of a much more larger experience” (Anyiam-Osigwe, *Reflective Writings*). Anyiam-Osigwe’s view may be likened to the perspective of Steiner (1997:3-4), who holds that:

The strength people need to proceed along the path of human development can come only from the spiritual worlds. A wide range of people believe we can solve the problems presently confronting us through thoughts and ideas arising from a material perspective. It is difficult to say how long it will be before enough people become convinced that only upon the spiritual path can we find a real solution. Thinking about this question is not very fruitful, but it is certainly clear that we can move forward only when enough people become convinced that the solution to those problems comes only from the spiritual world.... Most people believe we can overcome the present social problems with our current knowledge and understanding. We will not overcome them, we cannot overcome them, if we do not tackle them from a spiritual point of view.

This position is justifiable in the light of the observation that “our knowledge of the world, in spite of the giant strides that have been taken by science in the growth of knowledge, is still limited, just as the resources- spiritual, intellectual and moral- available to us for coping with the challenges of life are characteristically inadequate”

(Oladipo, 2008:16). There is probably more to life than what human understanding can capture, given certain limitations surrounding human nature. Unah (2004) argues in this regard that reality is, on the one hand, multi-faceted and, on the other, perpetually in process. Being multi-faceted implies that reality has many dimensions, while being perpetually in process entails that reality is not localisable; meaning that reality is always unfolding itself, always more than what it is at any time. The implication of these, according to Unah (2004:63) is that “there can be no adequate conceptualisation of it. If there can be no total conceptualisation of it, there is always something left to see and say. There is always something to excite our ontological wonder, something to give rise to further questioning”. It is against this backdrop that Anyiam-Osigwe believes that ‘something else’ is spiritual in nature.

In order to seek human development and take control of the reins of governance in Nigeria, Anyiam-Osigwe requests that we give a transcendental grounding to this important aspect of our lives, especially as it has to do with controlling the excesses of the governors in the land. This is one vital lesson, in the opinion of Anyiam-Osigwe, which contemporary African states can learn from traditional mode of governance. Accordingly Offor (2009:121) posits:

...primordial African systems functioned within inherently regulated mechanisms of checks and balances that were more efficacious than any regulatory mechanism associated with modern systems of governance. Such regulatory mechanisms drew their support not only from the social institutions of society as we have them in modern states, but from the abstract metaphysical or divinatory institutions of cultural and religious systems. In other words, leaders in traditional African societies were not just checked by the institutions of society, but were also restrained by their acute consciousness of the ancestors and deities and their capacity to mete out instant punishment to those who contravened the rules, conventions and prescriptions of the traditional order of society.

But then, the crucial question to ask is: How effective is the recommendation of Anyiam-Osigwe regarding the role of religion in providing adequate checks and balances for modern systems of governance? This question is crucial because in traditional African societies, African Traditional Religions played crucial roles in providing restraints for traditional rulers. On the contrary, the relevance of African Traditional Religions has dwindled in contemporary Africa as Christianity and Islam have taken the centre stage. The consequence is that a lot of the practices associated with African Traditional Religion are now considered fetish such that attempting to re-enact things as they were in traditional Africa will be fraught with some challenges. The major challenge will be the inability to secure the emotional attachment of the

people, majority of whom are now Christians or Muslims, to such practices. It is important to also add that in some cases, African Traditional Religions have been made instrumental in sabotaging the effectiveness of the voices of the people. This happens when politicians go diabolical by taking oaths that will ensure that their allegiance is to a particular godfather rather than to the people. This ensures that when a politician becomes victorious at the polls, his allegiance is to the godfather, rather than to the people, as a result of the covenant both have entered into.

However, it is possible to say that by ‘religion’, Anyiam-Osigwe is not necessarily referring to African Traditional Religion, but to any religion whatsoever and thus that Christianity and Islam will suffice in playing the roles that African Traditional Religions played in traditional African societies. But still, this is not without its own challenge. The main challenge is that, in Nigeria, a major divisive element is religion, such that there would be serious problems arising from the appropriation of a particular set of values informed by a particular religion in keeping the bounds of political leaders in Nigeria. A solution to this would be to select those values that cut across different religions in the country. In fact, there is a sense in which Anyiam-Osigwe employed the term spirituality to connote values. To him, spirituality is “value guided conduct.”

In the light of this, a non-religious interpretation of the position of Anyiam-Osigwe on the role that religion played in checking and balancing power in traditional Africa is possible. His position can be interpreted to imply that Western forms of checks and balances have not been too effective in ensuring that governors govern well in Africa because certain values subscribed to in traditional African societies are missing in contemporary Africa. The implication of a non-religious reading would see to it that rather than seeking to control the excesses of people in authority through religion, one ought rather to do a detailed study of those values that enabled religion to keep in check the use of political power in traditional Africa.

Conclusion

A major challenge confronting Nigeria is the issue of lack of cohesion among its teeming ethnic groups. In this work, there has been an examination of how this challenge can be tackled with the sagacious philosophical reflections of Emmanuel Onyechere Osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe (1921-1998). His recommendations, in this regard, are to help with the development of the spirit of nationalism. It is to be noted that the absence of this spirit informs the sustenance of what Ekeh (1975) terms the two-publics - the primordial public and the civic public - and their attendant challenges, which includes the instrumentalisation of ethnicity in engendering corruption, with people defrauding the civic public and finding comfort with the primordial public. It

is further responsible “for the fractured character of citizenship that produces bad citizens rather than good citizens, and the problems of national cohesion” (Osaghae, 2006:241). Tackling these monsters would require not only understanding, as some scholars like Chinua Achebe have postulated that the trouble with Nigeria is grounded in leadership, but also seeing that followers have a contribution to make. Anyiam-Osigwe’s notion of the group mind contains postulations that can help with fixing the Nigerian individual. For at the heart of all that is going wrong is a system populated by individuals with gross disregard for values (Oladipo, 2016; Oladipo and Offor, 2021).

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