

The Yearnings of Africans for Integration: The Need for Policy Speediness

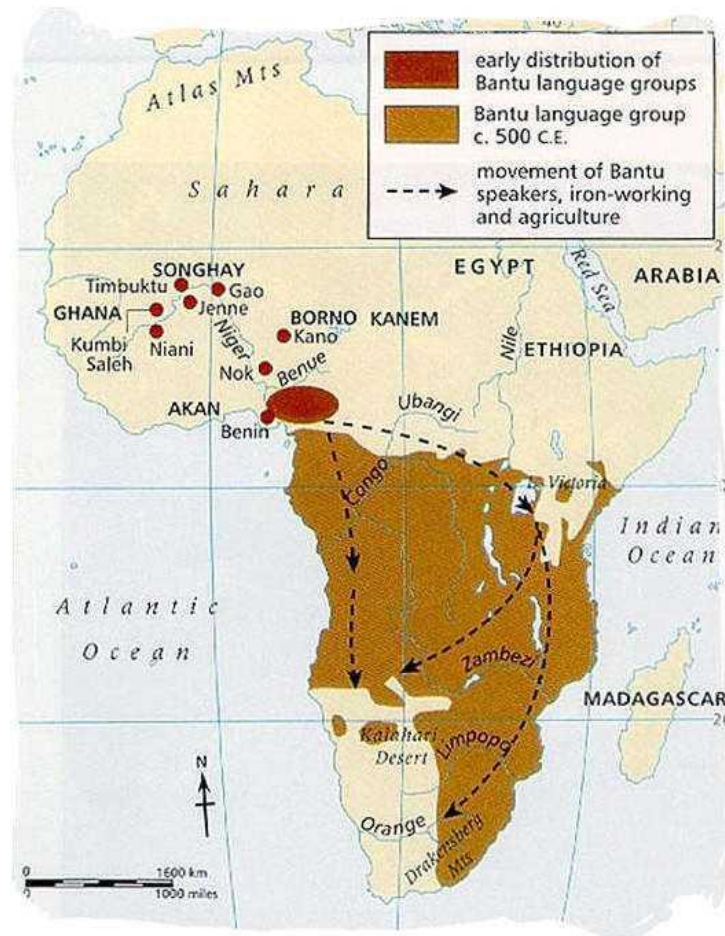
Oladele Omosegbon

Indiana Wesleyan University, USA

Africa's Evolutionary Past

- The Bantu Expansion represents both an evolutionary and a conquest process of migration and settlement
- About four thousand years ago
- It was a wholly internal process of both spontaneous and planned development.
 - (Lamphear and Falola, 1995)

The Bantu Expansion



- More recent times, many Africans and African inspired organizations and individual leaders have been known to espouse, romanticize and agitate for the unity of Africa and its descendants.
 - Decolonization and fight against Apartheid on the continent
 - Struggle to abolish slavery, gain independence and fight for civil rights in the Diaspora

On the Continent..

- OAU, 1963. To rid the continent of the vestiges of colonialism and apartheid and to promote unity and solidarity among African States.
- AU, 2000. To “expedite the process of economic and political integration of the continent”
 - “an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in global arena” AU Mission

Diaspora Parallels

- Henry Sylvester Williams, Edward Wilmot Blyden, Marcus Garvey, W.E.B. Du Bois, Paul Robeson, Bob Marley and Angela Davis.
- “Africa the first, Africa the last, Africa is the birthplace of mankind; only when Africa is fulfilled will the rest of mankind be fulfilled” - Kwame Ture

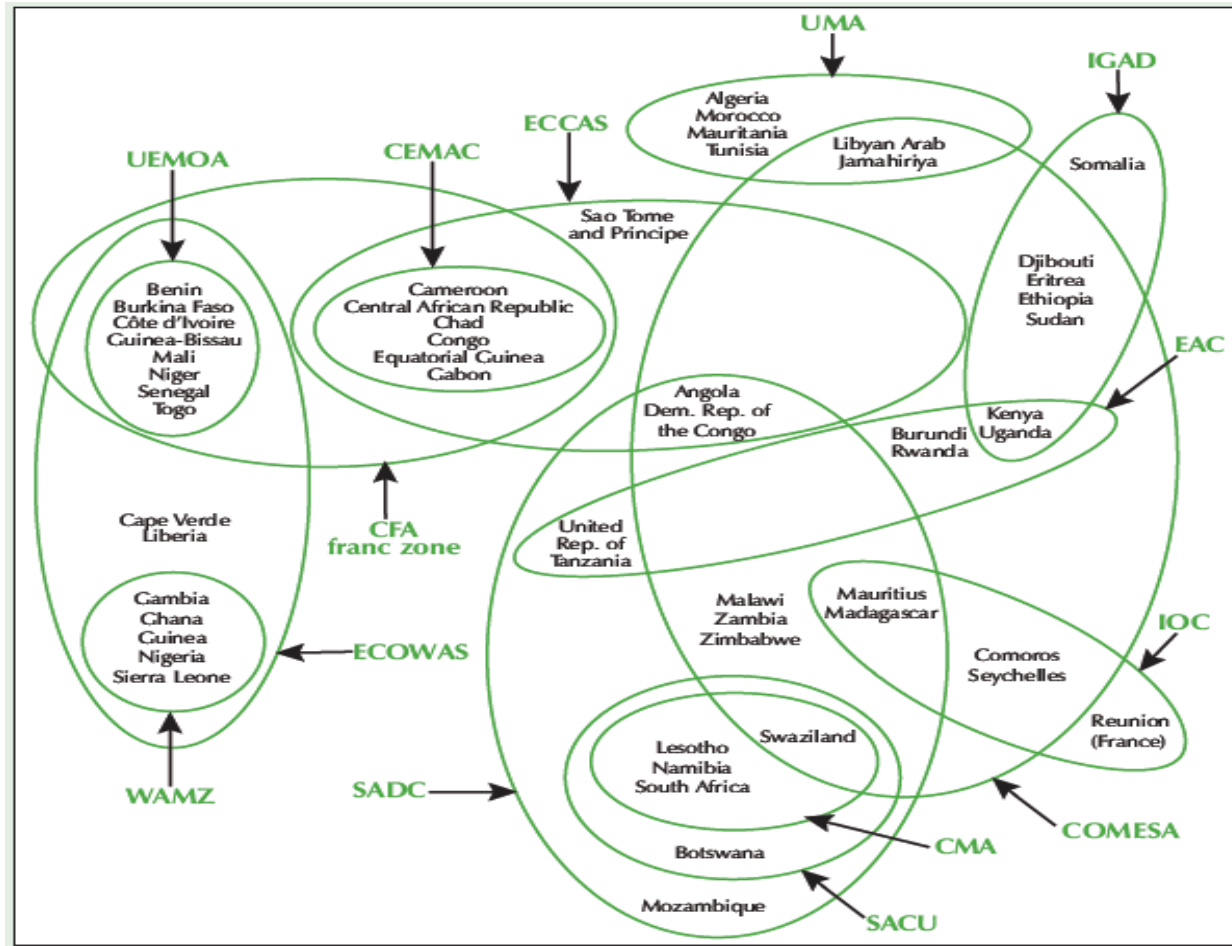
Efforts Sometimes Yielded Intractable Conflicts

- Post colonial and cold ward division of African systems of governance into the ideological camps of liberal open democracies and central command dictatorships
 - Rather intractable obstacles to regional economic integration efforts.

RECs: Overlapping and Duplicative

West Africa	1960s	1980s	1990s
Lagos Plan		ECOWAS 1975 Economic Community of West African States	1993 revised ECOWAS Treaty
	UDEAO 1966 Customs Union of West African States	CEAO 1973 Economic Community of West Africa UMOA West African Monetary Union	WAEMU 1994 West African Economic and Monetary Union
Central Africa			
Lagos Plan		ECCAS (CEEAC) 1983 Economic Community of Central African States	
	UDEAC 1964 Economic and Customs Union of Central Africa BEAC 1961 Bank of the Central African States		CEMAC 1994 Economic and Monetary Union of Central Africa
Southern and Eastern Africa			
Lagos Plan		PTA 1981 Preferential Trade Area	COMESA 1993 Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa CBI 1993 Cross Border Initiative
	SACU (originally 1889, 1969) Southern African Customs Union CMA Common Monetary Area		
		SADCC 1980 Southern African Development Coordination Conference	SADC 1992 Southern African Development Community
	EAC 1967 East African Community I		EAC 1999 East African Community II

Overlapping Institutions



Factors Mitigating Integration

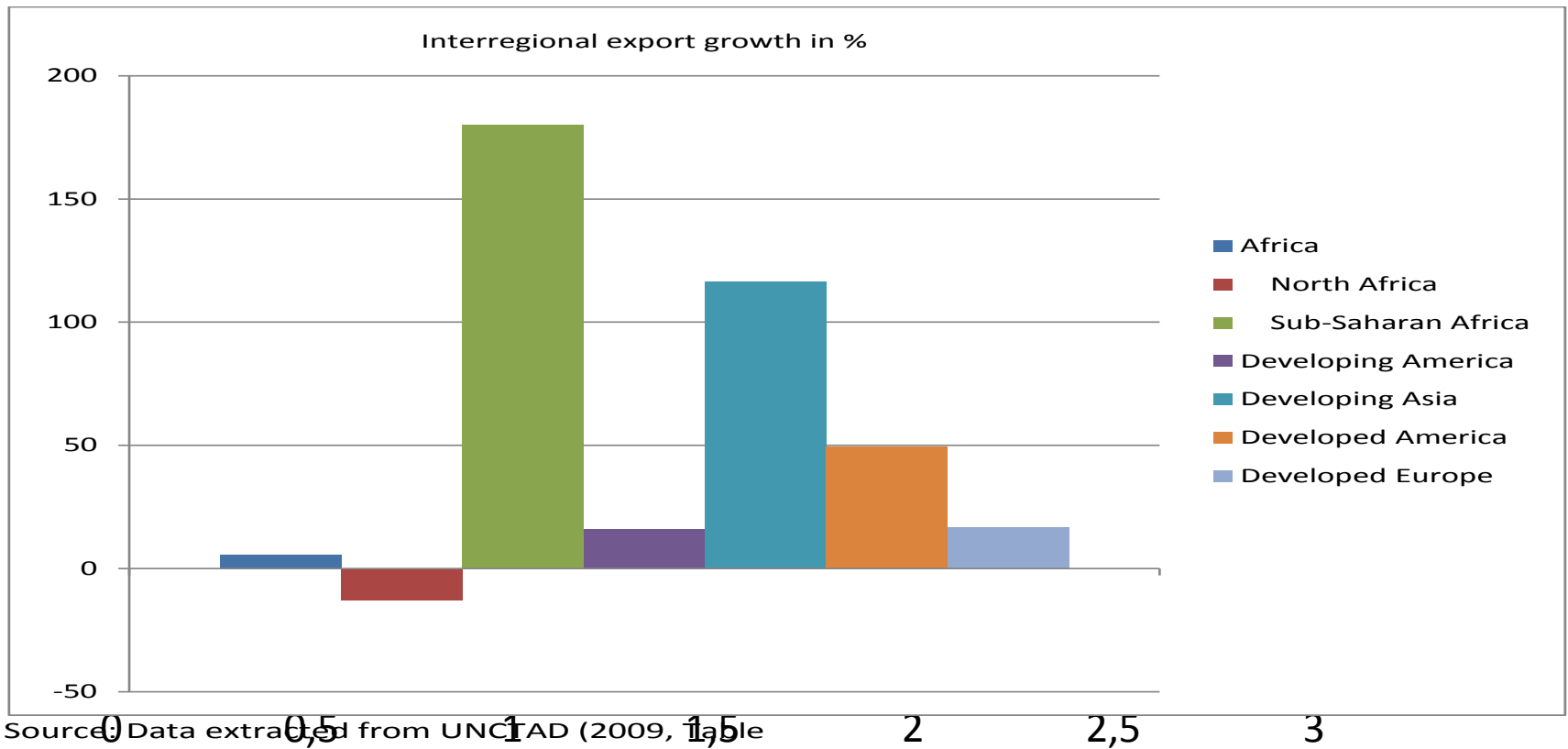
- Low inter-country and intraregional trade in Africa UNCTAD (2009)
 - Growth driven by country specific factors rather than any identifiable regional patterns
- Intraregional trade barriers
- Quick appraisal: not sure if this is surprising!
 - Tight colonial history and the successful policies to direct trade and production toward the metropolitan nations of Europe and their non African overseas possessions.

Mitigating Factors to Integration

- Low inter African trade seems to be a good index suggesting the need to press for regional integration, rather than a weakness of integration.

With Initial Endowments, Africa is Trading with Herself

Figure 2: Intraregional Export Growth in Africa.
Y-Values



Mitigating Factors

- Too many African countries are landlocked.
- But regional integration obviates the absence of harbors to landlocked countries.
 - The planned merger of COMESA, SADC and EAC will make landlocked conditions a thing of the past for Uganda, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Burundi and Rwanda.

Factors Mitigating Integration

- Membership and partnership in multilateral organizations and arrangements tend to duplicate services and benefits expected from membership of RECs.

Towards Satisfying the Yearnings of Africans for Integration

- One size fits all:
- “having one dominant and inclusive regional economic community in each of the five African sub-regions “ (UNCTAD, 2002)
- All intra African trade barriers are abolished, including the so called rules-of-origin requirements.
- Backed by a common external tariff against imports from non African countries.

The Yearnings of Africans for Integration.

- Preferential Trade Agreement → Free Trade Area → Customs Union → Common Market → Economic Union → Monetary Union.
- “Institutional framework and relevant mechanisms must be established and/or strengthened to link integration activities, and to harmonize, coordinate and monitor the integration process”(2002)
-

The Integration of African People

- “An African cannot go to any (West) African country to get a job but will drive a taxi cab in New York, Atlanta or Boston”.
 - Professor Kwabena Gyimah-Brempong of the University of South Florida , CREPOL’s ACRIA, Accra, Ghana, 2010.
- Needed: A direct attempt to involve the people and businesses expected to integrate.
- Barriers to the free movement of workers and businesses be removed.

The Integration of African People

- This will pave way for public sector integration and more friendly attitudes toward the formation and functioning of supra national organizations, like the Central Bank for W.A.
- Trade, investment, production, technological transfer and cultural understanding will follow.
- ECOWAS passport is not enough to show for all of the efforts going to 40 years.

The Integration of African People

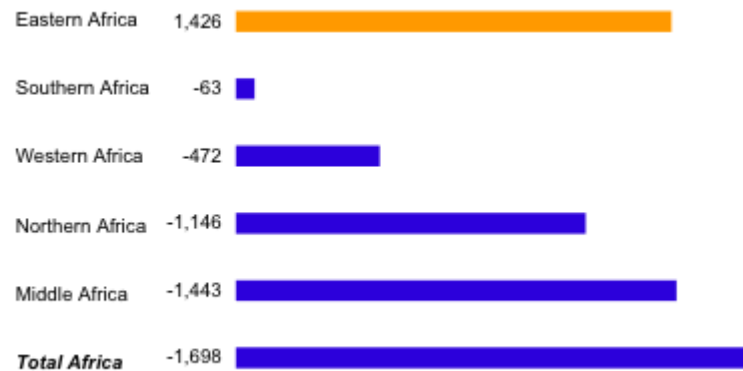
- Free labor market mobility must be strengthened
 - Credibility
 - Irreversibility
 - Stop sporadic penchant xenophobia incited by vulnerable and insecure local and national politicians.

The Integration of African People

- Differences in the sizes of GDP should not be a hindrance to regional integration, despite what may be implied by the β convergence criteria literature.
- Dichotomy in political and economic organizations puts Africans and their governments in silos of existence.

The Integration of African People

- Net International Migrants (000) Africa 1995-2000



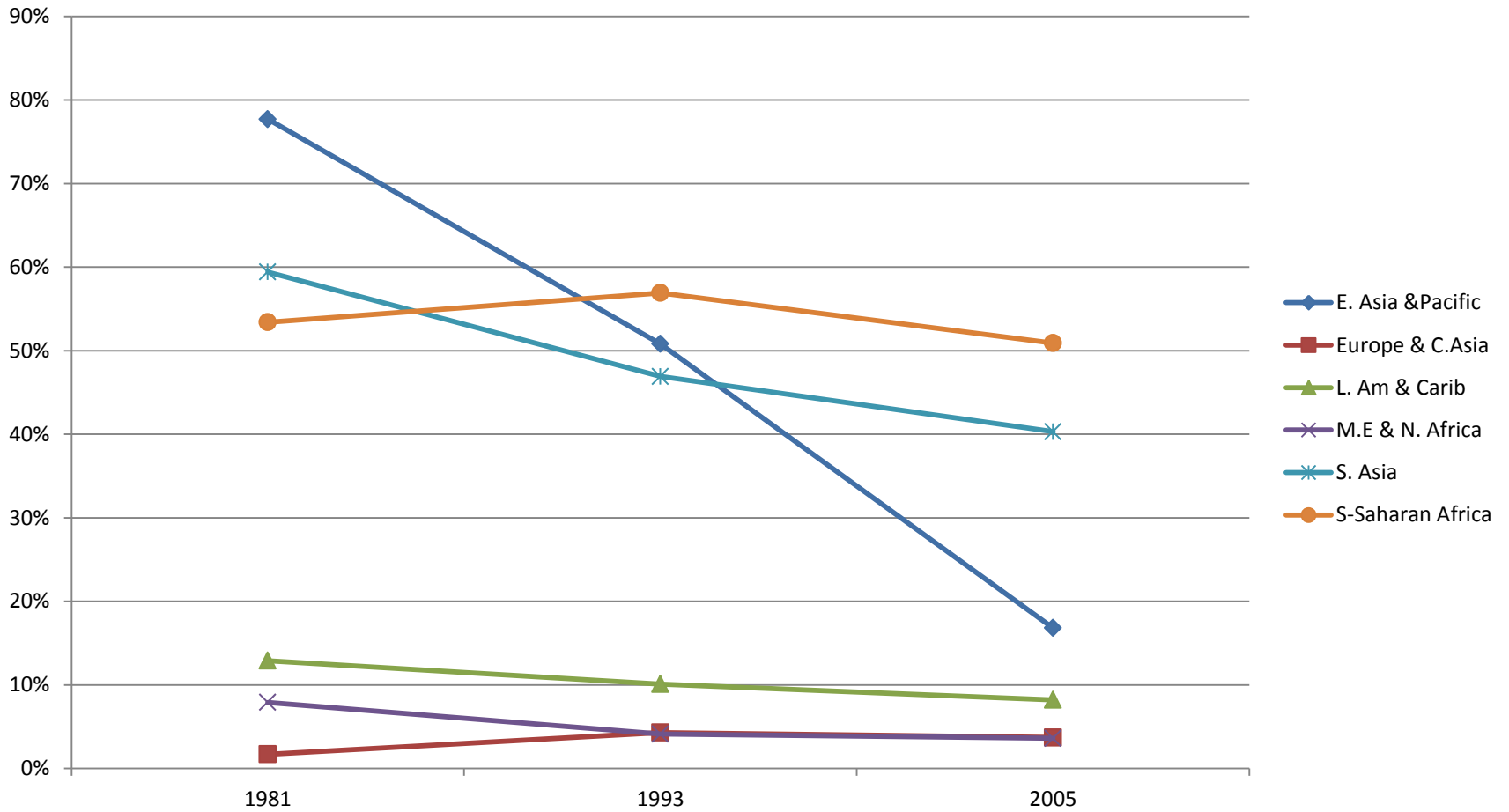
Let Africans Be Fulfilled

- A paralyzing puzzle:
 - Mankind takes Africa as its birthplace
 - Africa and all those who call the continent their recent ancestral home remain the most afflicted materially everywhere on earth.
- No evidence that material and social progress in Black Africa lagged any other region's progress up until the 17th century and beyond, Amin (1972), Diop (1974, 1991) and Inikori (2002).

Let Africans Be Fulfilled

- Slavery-mercantilist era
- Colonial expansionism
- Neocolonialism
- A counterfactual reenactment of the processes beginning from the Bantu Expansion has to continue.
 - The inevitable march toward the fulfillment of African people.

Let Africans Be Fulfilled



Let Africa Be Fulfilled

- It is time Africa was fulfilled; it is high time the rest of mankind was fulfilled!