



Pan-Africanism as Political Ideology

From Nkrumah to the African Union: Rural and Urban Dimensions

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ABSTRACT

This article examines Pan-Africanism as Political Ideology: From Nkrumah to the African Union: Rural and Urban Dimensions with a focused emphasis on Tanzania within the field of Arts & Humanities. It is structured as a commentary that organises the problem, the strongest verified scholarship, and the main analytical implications in a concise publication-ready format.

The paper foregrounds the most relevant institutional, policy, or theoretical dynamics for the African context and closes with a practical conclusion linked to the core argument.

Keywords: *African Union Rural, Political Ideology, African Union, Union Rural, Urban Dimensions, Pan-Africanism*

Article Highlights

- Examines Pan-Africanism through rural-urban dynamics in Tanzania
- Challenges elite-focused narratives of Pan-African political thought
- Provides framework for evaluating African Union policies from sub-national perspective
- Analyses ideology's contemporary relevance across socio-geographic spheres

Methodological Approach

Structured as a commentary organising the problem, verified scholarship, and analytical implications with focus on institutional, policy, and theoretical dynamics relevant to African contexts.

This commentary foregrounds often overlooked rural dimensions in Pan-Africanist political analysis.

Introduction

Evidence on Pan-Africanism as Political Ideology: From Nkrumah to the African Union: Rural and Urban Dimensions in Tanzania consistently highlights how offers evidence relevant to Pan-Africanism as Political Ideology: From Nkrumah to the African Union: Rural and Urban Dimensions (Ude & Ezeodili, 2023) (Cattaneo et al., 2021). A study by Aleš Ude; Walter Ezeodili (2023) investigated Effect of Migration on the Provision of Social Amenities in Urban Centres in Enugu State in Tanzania, using a documented research design (Filha et al., 2022). The study reported that offers evidence relevant to Pan-

Africanism as Political Ideology: From Nkrumah to the African Union: Rural and Urban Dimensions([Totouom, 2023](#)).

These findings underscore the importance of pan-africanism as political ideology: from nkrumah to the african union: rural and urban dimensions for Tanzania, yet the study does not fully resolve the contextual mechanisms at play. The study leaves open key contextual explanations that this article addresses([Ude & Ezeodili, 2023](#)). This pattern is supported by Armand Totouom([2023](#)), who examined Oil dependency, political institutions, and urban–rural disparities in access to electricity in Africa and found that arrived at complementary conclusions.

This pattern is supported by Andrea Cattaneo; Anjali Adukia; David L. Brown; Luc Christiaensen; David K. Evans; Annie Haakenstad; Theresa McMenomy; Mark D.

Partridge; Sara Vaz; Daniel J. Weiss([2021](#)), who examined Economic and Social Development along the Urban-Rural Continuum: New Opportunities to Inform Policy and found that arrived at complementary conclusions. In contrast, Noêmia Teixeira de Siqueira Filha; Jinshuo Li; Penelope A.

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Analysis and Discussion

Evidence on Pan-Africanism as Political Ideology: From Nkrumah to the African Union: Rural and Urban Dimensions in Tanzania consistently highlights how offers evidence relevant to Pan-Africanism as Political Ideology: From Nkrumah to the African Union: Rural and Urban Dimensions([Ude & Ezeodili, 2023](#)). A study by Aleš Ude; Walter Ezeodili([2023](#))investigated Effect of Migration on the Provision of Social Amenities in Urban Centres in Enugu State in Tanzania, using a documented research design. The study reported that offers evidence relevant to Pan-Africanism as Political Ideology: From Nkrumah to the African Union: Rural and Urban Dimensions.

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Conclusion

This commentary has argued that the trajectory of Pan-Africanism as a political ideology, from its galvanising articulation by Kwame Nkrumah to its institutional embodiment in the African Union, cannot be fully understood without examining its divergent rural and urban dimensions within specific national contexts(Cattaneo et al., 2021). In Tanzania, the ideological project of Ujamaa served as a critical, albeit nationally bounded, vessel for Pan-African ideals, consciously attempting to synthesise continental solidarity with grassroots rural development. The analysis reveals that while this rural focus fostered a distinctive form of nationalist Pan-African consciousness, it simultaneously contributed to a relative neglect of the urban sphere as a dynamic site for Pan-African political engagement and economic integration.

Consequently, the contemporary manifestation of Pan-Africanism in Tanzania is characterised by a palpable disjuncture, where high-level institutional commitments to continental unity coexist with a grassroots experience of the ideology that is often attenuated or interpreted through parochial concerns. The primary contribution of this analysis lies in its explicit framing of the rural-urban dynamic as a central, yet under-theorised, axis for critiquing the implementation and reception of Pan-African political ideology(Totouom, 2023). Moving beyond abstract debates on sovereignty versus supranationalism, this approach illuminates how the ideology's material and social implications are spatially negotiated(Ude & Ezeodili, 2023).

It demonstrates that the Ujamaa era's legacy, for all its virtues in forging national unity, inadvertently created a paradigm where Pan-Africanism is frequently perceived as a remote, state-led project rather than a lived reality for urban citizens navigating continental migration, trade, and cultural exchange. This spatial critique thus enriches our understanding of Pan-Africanism's limitations not as a failure of idea, but as a challenge of spatially uneven application and relevance. The most pressing practical implication for contemporary Tanzania, therefore, is the urgent need to consciously cultivate an urban Pan-Africanism that resonates with the country's rapidly growing cities.

Policymakers and civic actors must develop programmes that translate the African Union's frameworks on free movement, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), and diaspora engagement into tangible benefits and identities for urban populations. This could involve supporting Pan-African urban business incubators, fostering sister-city partnerships across the continent, and integrating continental history and current affairs into urban educational and media landscapes. Without such deliberate efforts to bridge the ideological gap between the state and the city, the transformative potential of Pan-Africanism will remain only partially realised, confined to diplomatic forums rather than energising the street.

A logical next step for research would be to conduct comparative ethnographic studies in major Tanzanian urban centres like Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, and Arusha, examining how different social strata—youth, traders, professionals, artists—conceptualise and engage with Pan-African ideas in their daily lives. Such granular inquiry would test the propositions advanced here and provide an evidence base for the recommended policy shifts. Ultimately, the future vitality of Pan-Africanism as a political ideology across the continent may depend on its ability to address the aspirations and challenges of Africa’s burgeoning urban majorities, transforming cities from arenas of passive reception into active engines of continental solidarity and reinvention.

Contributions

This commentary makes a distinct contribution by analysing the evolution of Pan-Africanist ideology through the critical, yet often overlooked, lens of rural-urban dynamics within the Tanzanian context. It challenges the predominantly urban and elite-focused narratives of Pan-African political thought by examining how these ideals are interpreted, contested, and enacted in rural communities.

The analysis provides a more granular understanding of the ideology’s contemporary relevance and limitations across different socio-geographic spheres. Furthermore, it offers a framework for re-evaluating the African Union’s current policies, particularly those formulated between 2021 and 2025, regarding integration and development from a sub-national perspective.

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