

‘[i]nsurance can be understood as a form of solidarity in that people pool money in order to overcome adversity’ (p. 3), it remains unclear what exactly solidarity entails and how it differs from *care*, a term also frequently employed in the book. Furthermore, since the book examines a range of social networks that include but also go beyond ‘kinship’, I wondered whether the term ‘social relations’ would depict the content more suitably. Despite this criticism, *Ironies of Solidarity* would make a great addition to discussions in new kinship studies, which point out the coercive, darker side of kinship and care. The rich Southern African scholarship specifically emphasizes how kinship – in Africa as elsewhere – requires constant reworking and is intertwined with economic interactions and uncertainty, entailing disputes over state, non-governmental and kin-distributed resources.

Overall, this book provides a refreshing set of analytical tools and an exceptionally strong empirical account of the financialization of social relations and uncertainty, one that convincingly questions the causality between financialization, neoliberalism and inequality in South Africa. It serves as an important resource for scholars across political and economic anthropology and kinship studies, and for anyone interested in the social and economic lived realities of post-apartheid South Africa.

Saana Hansen  
University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland  
Email: [Saana.hansen@helsinki.fi](mailto:Saana.hansen@helsinki.fi)  
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Joshua Grace, *African Motors: Technology, Gender, and the History of Development*. Durham NC: Duke University Press (hb US\$119.95 – 978 1 4780 1059 3; pb US\$31.95 – 978 1 4780 1171 2). 2021, xiii + 416 pp.

Joshua Grace’s *African Motors* is one of very few book-length publications on the history of automobility in Africa today. While transportation in Africa, broadly defined, has attracted the attention of economic historians and historians of technology, the automobile subset began to yield consistent monograph outputs (with reference to Anglophone Africa) only from 2016, when Jennifer Hart’s *Ghana on the Go* was published.

Grace’s intellectual interest in African automobility came from an experience in a Tanzanian mechanic shop. His car had developed a serious fault, and the scope of repairs proposed by the Tanzanian mechanic was far more extensive than what would have been possible at many North American shops. Grace notes that the car would have been written off as scrap in the USA. Yet the repair process seemed routine in Dar es Salaam garages.

That encounter (and other vignettes, notably a remodelled sports car anecdote involving Frank Taylor, another research subject) became the foundation for the arguments and themes explored in the book. Grace investigates the ‘long, often intimate relationship’ between Africans and motor vehicles, arguing that automobiles (including the acts of owning, driving, maintaining, repairing and, most importantly, redesigning them) ‘provide sites, institutions, bodies, and ideas for locating systems and cultures of mechanical expertise in Tanzania’s past’ (pp. 11–12). In a monograph

spanning 150 years (from the 1860s to the 2010s), Grace spins together participant observation as a mechanic apprentice, oral histories and archival sources to tell 'motors' stories from the formal and informal sectors. These are stories of vernacular knowledge production, technological masculinity and economic constraints involving African vehicle owners, private drivers, urban transporters, mechanics, passengers, and people whose livelihoods depended on the fuel, oil and spare parts economy and other infrastructure developed around the car (for instance, roads).

The book's main themes are discussed in five chronological and thematic chapters. In the first two chapters, the author reviews the history of mobility in Tanzania, from head portage to the wheel. Grace goes beyond charting the history of the colonial-era introduction of cars; he also explores the skillsets of African mechanics, including their ability to remodel or repurpose car parts and combine components from different brands to make their hybrid models, and the vernacular masculine automobile cultures that emerged in Tanzanian garages. In these chapters, readers experience the car as a product with no fixed boundaries in the manufacturer's design process. Grace's thorough analysis of African ingenuity and deep knowledge of vehicles helps to counter the narrative of informality pervasive in African science and technology studies discourses.

Chapter 3 reveals that the daring extent of car repairs in the postcolonial period resulted from Tanzanian society's political and economic structure. Under President Julius Nyerere, postcolonial Tanzania adopted the *Ujamaa* (African socialist) development philosophy in which state planners promoted alternative perspectives on citizenship while simultaneously investing in urban infrastructure, including public transit systems. Here, Grace introduces the concept of 'technological citizenship' in which he juxtaposes the process of automobile repairs in Tanzanian garages with Nyerere's attempt at remoulding the state around socialist ideals.

Chapter 4 redirects the story of technological citizenship from cars and their drivers to petroleum pipelines and products, and their consequences for economic development in Tanzania before, during and after the OPEC-led oil boom (roughly from the 1960s to the mid-1980s). A focus on petroleum – the very thing that makes cars move – enables Grace to examine the fault lines in the *Ujamaa* model of agricultural development in rural Tanzania. The *Ujamaa* model was meant to promote local technological 'self-reliance' in villages through small tools. Yet the growing reliance on petroleum-driven machines and the impact of rising oil prices during the 1970s ultimately sounded the death knell for Tanzania's alternative economic freedom experiment.

In the fifth chapter, Grace analyses the socio-economic world that automobiles created in Tanzania. The author examines cars as tools that not only make movement possible, but also facilitate social mobility and moderate access to the spoils of socialist development. Cars and the roads they travelled also became the conduit for redefining ideas about home and family ('motorized domesticities', p. 239) and evaluating ideas of masculinity, valour and cowardice. They also drove skills and expertise, especially within the context of bad road conditions and a general disregard for rules, accidents and other travel risks. The author addresses these and other themes, including relationships and community connections through long-distance travel and how automobility inspired and undermined modernization.

Overall, Joshua Grace's *African Motors* is a dense, multidisciplinary book that opens new vistas in the history of transportation, gender, modernity, and the political and economic history of Tanzania. African ideas of sustainability are one theme that I wish

the book would have analysed in more detail. Grace briefly engages with this theme, arguing that environmental sustainability was not a priority in the evolution of the Tanzanian automobile culture. However, there are opportunities to probe socio-economic aspects of sustainability (perhaps in another project) by using the extensive car repair and remodelling processes to interrogate the topics of waste, scraps, recycling and second-hand product importation in the Tanzanian/African technological imagination. Despite this minor concern, *African Motors* is undoubtedly a product of erudite scholarship. The writing is lucid, the narratives are nuanced, and the plot will be easy to follow by specialists, students and general readers alike. Beyond Tanzania, *African Motors* will remain an essential text for years to come for scholars of technology, gender, urban and rural studies, (auto-)mobility and Third World socialism.

Adewumi Damilola Adebayo  
York University, Toronto, Canada  
Email: [adebayod@yorku.ca](mailto:adebayod@yorku.ca)  
doi: [10.1017/S0001972024000111](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0001972024000111)

Sara Salem, *Anticolonial Afterlives in Egypt: The Politics of Hegemony*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (hb £83.99 – 978 1 108 49151 8; pb £25.99 – 978 1 108 79838 9). 2020, 294 pp.

How can we explain the outbreak of the 2011 revolution in Egypt? Some scholars have been content to highlight the role of social media, attributing such a monumental event to the spread of Web 2.0 tools. Others have focused on divisions within the regime's ruling class on how to manage the neoliberal transition. More nuanced approaches have situated the revolt within a rising social movement that started a decade earlier, with the second Palestinian intifada.

Sara Salem's fascinating piece of scholarly work, however, goes back as far as 1952 to explain how the scene was set for the 2011 uprising. Why would the search for the roots of a revolt in 2011 take us on a journey back to the mid-twentieth century, when an eclectic group of nationalist army officers overthrew the British-backed monarchy and founded Egypt's first republican order?

Drawing on the works of Antonio Gramsci and Frantz Fanon, Salem argues that Nasser's era was the only moment of 'hegemony' in Egypt's modern history. The officers managed to form a 'historical block' where a ruling class successfully sold its vision to the wider public, enabling Nasser to rule primarily by consent and build a wide class alliance that responded to the nationalist and social aspirations of workers, farmers, the middle classes and sections of local capital.

In pulling together such a hegemonic project, Salem further explains, Egypt's case challenges some of Fanon's reflections on the postcolonial bourgeoisie as incapable of severing ties of dependency on the imperial centre. In fact, Nasser's Egypt did. Such hegemony does not mean that coercion was not employed. The Free Officers, after all, inaugurated their rule by cracking down on industrial strikers in Kafr el-Dawwar and executing two communist workers. This was followed by the establishment of a labyrinth of security services, which did not hesitate to arrest, torture and kill dissidents.