

- Clustering of venture capital - e.g. Silicon Valley
- San Francisco
 - Huge rent increases forcing people out of their homes
 - Doubly impacts racialised surplus population

Limits to automation

- Technology still some way off
 - Huge investment in AI and machine learning
 - Is full automation possible?
- Reflects capitalism's contradictions
 - Ultimately reduces profit
 - Makes itself vulnerable to workers - huge factories, robots, etc. with a small workforce means the workforce is powerful - fixed capital investment means not easy to move, therefore a required workforce can exert influence
 - Creates monopolies - conditions where only a few companies can benefit
- Amara's law: "We tend to overestimate the effect of a technology in the short run and underestimate the effect in the long run" (Woodward, 2017)

'Utopian' automation

- Automation has potential to produce more and work less
 - Keynes estimated working week at 15 hours
 - Potential to limit 'undesirable' work
- Lean production can prevent waste, meet growing needs
 - Goods are cheaper, balance out wage decline
- Create work in emerging green economy
- Open-source revolutions in sharing economy
 - Worker-owned platforms? - For example, a localised Uber or community owned Airbnb

Making automation work for us

- Requires response to 'surplus population'
 - Re-training?
- Universal basic income?
 - Everyone irrespective of income earns a flat rate
 - Proponents on both left (people won't starve, can avoid taking bad jobs) and right (can get rid of benefits) - concerning?
 - Increasingly popular - Swiss referendum
 - Possible globally?
- Regulation and worker organisation
- Ambivalence of technology remains... whether it is good or bad is down to the will of people

Geographies of automation

- New geographies of 'premature deindustrialisation'
 - Multi scalar, but particularly in the Global South
- Production & distribution more global than ever
 - But still localised through agglomeration
 - High-tech command and control
 - High-tech production sites
- Full impacts of platforms and 'second machine age' under-explored
 - (Economic) geography well placed, but lagging