quality. Programs like these, companies hoped, would keep workers motivated to work long shifts, accept mandatory overtime, and endure any management decision. Whether or not that was the outcome – we learn very little about turnover rates – attendance and safety incentives could motivate workers not to report accidents or injuries.

In terms of increasing sales and market shares, these were success stories, and many transplants also became large exporters of vehicles. Transplants tended to weather the Great Recession without significant layoffs, unlike GM and Chrysler, which entered bankruptcy, or Ford, which mortgaged almost everything to avoid that fate. Although early transplants did not spur much of a US-based parts industry, Hyundai and Kia were accompanied by suppliers, which multiplied their economic benefits to their regions. These positives are the book's biggest takeaway.

But Minchin also asks us to consider alternative perspectives. Despite harsh working conditions and high injury rates, workers accepted their conditions because they had no viable alternatives. To a large extent, the cost advantages of transplants came from not having to pay enormous legacy costs. For example, in 2008, Toyota USA had seven hundred retirees, while General Motors had more than 400,000, which added up to $1500 to the cost of each GM vehicle. Communities that won the competition for transplants rarely benefited as much as predicted. In the 2010s, transplants joined the movement toward hiring temporary employees, who worked precariously at lower wages and without benefits, undercutting much of the promise of this economic development. Automation might be reducing the number of jobs as well, but Minchin does not explore that issue. Significantly, transplants hired relatively few African American employees, even in South Carolina and Alabama. Factory sites and surrounding demographics always favoured potential white workers. The hiring of women seemed to be limited as well. Moreover, states with transplants have seen little improvement in overall poverty rates.

The auto industry remains prestigious enough that winning the factory sweepstakes remains big news and a hopeful sign of a prosperous future. It remains to be seen how the transplant story will play out, however, and this book is a helpful and engaging foray into the topic.

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Aaron Benanav, *Automation and the Future of Work* (London: Verso 2020)

In recent years there has emerged a growing literature concerned with the prospect that capitalist production is headed towards a horizon of widespread or even total automation. The central fear animating this literature is that mass technological unemployment is on its way and, if not confronted, certain to bring unprecedented social misery. For the historian Aaron Benanav, while these automation theorists are reacting understandably to real features of our economic reality, they are mistaken about what constitutes current predicaments. *Automation and the Future of Work*, which is an expanded version of two essays published by the *New Left Review* in 2019, argues that where automation theorists see technology driving down the global demand for labour, the actual cause of persistent underdemand for labour is a global capitalist economy which for decades has been defined by slow or stagnant growth.

Benanav's short book (99 pages of text) is divided into six chapters that serve three crucial and interrelated purposes: summary and critique of the existing automation discourse; economic history of de-industrialization and its effects; and the introduction of a theory of social change that suggests a path towards what Benanav calls a "world of abundance." In this way, the book stands to be of interest to a broad audience. Economic historians and those interested in the theory of work will have much to grapple with here and there are obvious stakes with regard to debates about neoliberalism. Because the analysis serves as a means of developing a vision of transformative social change, this book should also engage readers across the left.

The crux of the book is Benanav's account of recent economic history, which is commendably accessible. Over the last 50 years, Benanav shows, de-industrialization has swept across the global manufacturing sector, affecting most countries. This has not led, however, to decreased production even in rich countries that we perceive as having outsourced their manufacturing needs to poorer nations. In fact, rich countries produced more at the end of the last decade than they ever had before. More goods are being produced with reduced labour inputs, just as the automation theorists tend to suggest. But, Benanav argues, increased automation is not the cause of this trend. In fact, productivity growth (the ratio of output to employment) is measured against total output growth which, for decades, has been slowing. So, while productivity growth *seems* high, this is a sort of statistical illusion.

In Benanav's telling, which builds particularly on the work of the economic historian Robert Brenner, global de-industrialization has not been a feature of rampant automation but of worldwide overcapacity in markets for manufactured commodities. In the absence of a manufacturing sector to fuel global growth, workers have been funneled into low-productivity jobs in the service sector while capital accumulates in the form of financial assets rather than, say, industrial plants. Market competition in manufacturing remains fearsome, though, as there is still no more profitable area for investment in the real economy and thus international market participation can still depend on industrial production. Benanav notes instances where countries found short-term economic success by making concerted efforts to encourage domestic production for international manufactures markets, but these successes proved fleeting as they ended in burst bubbles of one kind or another.

In labour markets, Benanav argues, these structural dynamics manifest in persistent underdemand which primarily causes various kinds of underemployment rather than the runaway unemployment that automation theorists most fear. There is a resonance here with ongoing discussions about economic precarity. In the "postindustrial doldrums," which we can reasonably expect to endure, market overcapacity will force more workers into service jobs (where half of employment is already concentrated), ongoing economic stagnation will mean that increased service employment necessarily increases income inequality, and conditions will get worse accordingly.

Neither renewed Keynesian fiscal policy nor handing out money in the form of a universal basic income will solve this problem, Benanav says. The conditions of postwar full employment that are often credited to counter-cyclical spending were actually an endogenous result of industrial expansion and, anyways, fiscal Keynesianism did not disappear in the face of neoliberalism. Rather, Benanav posits provocatively, the two have often worked together. As for a basic income, the success or failure of any experiment would depend on the social conditions underpinning its implementation. In the current context, defined notably by

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recalcitrant neoliberalism, empowered capital, and a labour movement that is fragmented at best, we should not expect free money to accomplish much.

This all leads Benanav to conclude the book by asking if, "instead of presupposing a fully automated economy and imagining the possibilities for a better and freer world created out of it, we could *begin* from a world of generalized human dignity, and then consider the technical changes needed to realize that world" (82). A world of generalized human dignity, for Benanav, requires the abolition of private property and the instantiation of democratically planned production. This is not, crucially, a theory of a post-work society but rather a post-scarcity one where essential tasks in the realm of necessity are shared out fairly and free time in the realm of freedom expands accordingly for everyone. And how might we move towards such social arrangements? In a postscript Benanav is clear: leaving behind technocratic solutions (basic income, fiscal policy) requires social movements organized and built around the goal of controlling production.

Automation and the Future of Work is impressively multifaceted for such a short text. While it is appropriate to emphasize the book's function as economic history, its secondary functions as critique of the automation discourse and counter-proposal for a post-scarcity world are not merely incidental. In fact, the explicitly political conclusion to the book adds a level of interest to the economic history, rendering it not just as an academic exercise but an urgent analytical step along the way to the kinds of politicized reflection that Benanav takes part in and which readers on the left will find especially interesting. The economic history, for its part, is convincing. In addition to disproving much of the automation theory, which is not always that troublesome, Benanav effectively raises and disputes potential historical and economic counter-arguments.

To end a laudatory review on a critical note, it could be said that between the post-scarcity tradition with which Benanav allies himself and the automation discourse to which he objects there are currents of post-work thought that warrant more attention. The post-work idea gets raised in the final chapter just so that it can be dismissed in the space of a paragraph. Only a 1998 post-work manifesto is cited, and important recent publications, especially from Marxist-feminist perspectives, are not engaged. There are good reasons to prefer Benanav's post-scarcity framing, but these are not so straightforward as to be demonstrable in a paragraph. Finally, and less substantively, the book has been transparently "covidized" with rote mentions of what the analysis might mean in the context of the pandemic. The relevance of Benanav's arguments would be entirely apparent without these inclusions and at a moment or two they detract from an analysis which, if timely, is not only timely. These are small quibbles with an excellent book.

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Toni Gilpin, *The Long Deep Grudge: A Story of Big Capital, Radical Labor, and Class War in the American Heartland* (Chicago: Haymarket Books 2019)

In her study of unionization struggles at the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company and later International Harvester (IH), historian Toni Gilpin tells a story that will be very familiar to those who study the labour movement in the 19th and 20th-century United States: industrialization and the rise of corporate power during the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era, when great fortunes were built on the regimented toil of immigrant