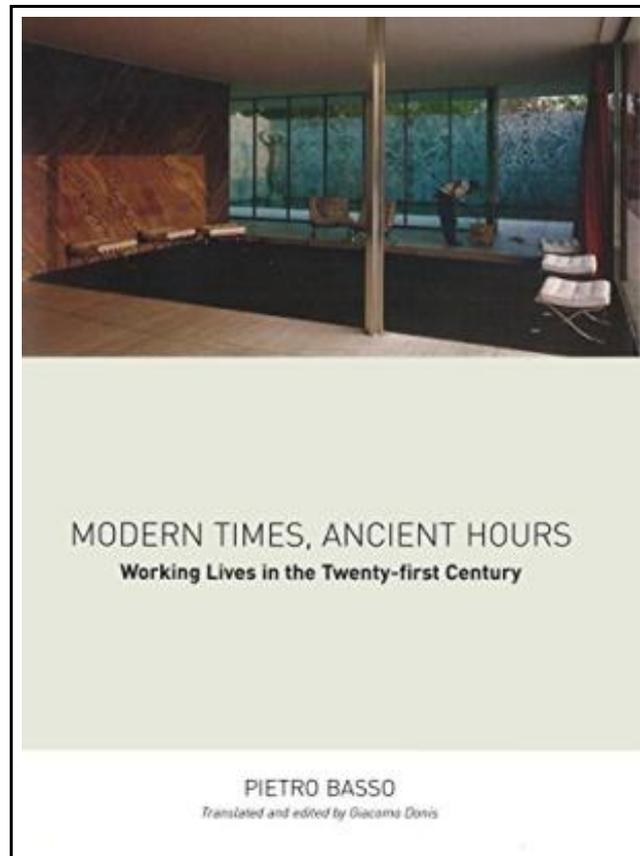


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MODERN TIMES, ANCIENT HOURS: WORKING LIVES IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

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Verso Books. Hardback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Modern Times, Ancient Hours: Working Lives in the Twenty-first Century, Pietro Basso, Giacomo Donis, It is a commonly expressed view that the sickness of our society is unemployment. Less frequently argued is the fact that we are, at the same time, suffering from overwork. And less frequently still that in our capitalist market society that two sicknesses, unemployment and overwork, feed off one another and jointly attack the working classes of the world. Pietro Basso's thesis is that the average working time of wage labourers is now more intense, fast-paced, 'flexible' and longer than at any time in recent history. This is true, he argues, not only in industry and agriculture, but also, and particularly, in 'services'. It is also increasingly true for all Western countries and not just the USA. The introduction of the thirty-five-hour working week in France notwithstanding, all the signs of a creeping deterioration in the working lives of millions of people are evident: a reduction in the purchasing power of wages, the mass downsizing of corporations, the continual erosion of company and state-ensured benefits, and the availability of much cheaper labour from Latin America, Asia, Africa and eastern Europe. Modern Times, Ancient Hours combines a theoretical explanation of the causes of this 'paradoxical' evolution of working hours with an impressively broad range of empirical documentation, making the book a highly significant and timely contribution to the study of the way in which most people's working lives are now lived. The book also reminds us that the human aspiration to do work that does not break the body or the spirit is universal and deep-rooted. Workers will rise, Basso argues, if they continue to be pushed beyond their limits.



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