

EDITOR'S NOTE / NOTE DE LA RÉDACTRICE

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Al Chernov's image on our cover is of the 25-ton sculpture of Pittsburgh, U.S. steelworkers on the site of the former steel furnaces and represents a decline in large-scale industry organised around well-paid permanent unionised jobs. This in contrast to the growth of precarious work seen in Adam Cohn's image of the small scale informal garment factory in Dharavi, India, in which undocumented workers earn far lower wages, producing goods for the export market.

Warnings about impending new forms of work largely refer to the spread of artificial intelligence and the expanded use of robotics (See the World Bank's 2019 *World Development Report*). Yet the world of work has already changed for millions as neoliberal globalisation, outsourcing and employers' ongoing search for lower wages, greater flexibility and reduced regulation has led to the relocation of production to workplaces in the South with lower wages and less worker and environmental protection. The result is the rise of informal workplaces, a variety of forms of precarious employment, and increased migration, resulting in the growing erosion of decent work in both the North and the South.

These new forms of work are increasingly precarious with workers hired on a part-time or contract basis, or paid piece work, even in formal sector workplaces and in the growing number of informal workplaces, sweatshops and export-processing zones. We also see the return or persistence of indentured labour and new forms of slavery. New technologies have extended contract work in the form of platform and gig economies, where 'workers' have been replaced by 'self-employed entrepreneurs'. Many of these workplaces are in places with weak regulations around labour,

and health and safety laws including the right to unionise, and around environmental protection.

The need to migrate internationally for work has increased with the relocation of production, low wages and poor working conditions, along with the expansion of political instability resulting from war and violence. These have pushed people into labour intensive work camps, temporary foreign worker programmes where they face a context of limited rights. This increased worker mobility makes it easier for some to fall victim to traffickers or usurious contracts.

For the first time, therefore this issue of the journal brings together studies from countries in both North and South as we explore increasing similarities in the new forms of work across continents. Several articles touch on gender aspects as many of the new forms of work affect the growing number of women hired in the new workplaces. This includes in Ghana's export processing zones (Adomaa & Apatinga) and in India's information technology sector (Chakraborty). We see new forms of precarity in Canada's guest worker programme (Hastie), and in India and South Africa's auto industries (Monaco) and the gig economy in the charter fishing industry in Canada's Lake Ontario (Fanelli). Finally a presentation of the broad impacts of the growing work flexibility in Japan (Mirza & Bernier), and a look at the difficulties in finding solutions to these problems through the decent work agenda in a study of domestic workers in Nigeria (Olayiwola).

We regret to announce the passing of a cherished member of our Editorial Committee, Carolyn Bassett who had made important contributions to the journal. Carolyn obtained her PhD from York University, and had been teaching Political Science and chairing the Development Studies Programme at the University of New Brunswick at Fredericton. Her research explored the role of trade unions in South Africa both during the struggle against apartheid and more currently. She will be greatly missed.

A note to Librarians: *Labour, Capital and Society* will not be issuing Volume 47, 2014. Volume 48, 2015 was published in January 2017 as a double issue. The articles for this issue Volume 49, no. 1 were received in January 2019 and published in October 2019. It is in fact Part I on the theme of New Forms of Work. Volume 49, no. 2 will be published shortly and will be Part II of the same theme.