

EDITORIAL

Japanese Perspectives on Technology and Rationalization

Technology is *the* keyword of advanced industrial societies, and nowhere is this more the case than Japan which is variously viewed (and feared) as a technological juggernaut in its own right and in its own ideological pronouncements as a "technological state" which perfectly combines technical efficiency, labour discipline, and avante-garde management techniques. This issue shatters these stereotypes of Japanese society by providing a privileged viewpoint from inside the Japanese discourse on technology and rationalization. Taken together, the articles composing the special section on Japan (all specially commissioned and translated by Japanese theorists and writers) represent a coherent, eloquent, and theoretically powerful critique of technology in the Japanese case. Reading the section as a whole provides a moving and analytically rich study of the historical foundations of the "technological state" in Japanese experience, the *actual* strategies of labour oppression used to maintain the speeded-up processes of the techno-culture, and the vast *rationalization* of Japanese language, culture, and lifestyle which has been a necessary reflex of "Japan in the U.S. Dominion". This is one of those rare texts which, just because it is so authentic in its political critique, so comprehensive in its analysis and so leavened with wit, provides that singular experience of opening up the complexities of Japanese society to critical appreciation by outsiders. Following the East Asian practice, all names in the articles on Japan are written with the family name first.

The *Journal* thanks Professor Charles Lummis of Tsuda College for his diligent, creative and entirely painstaking work in assembling the articles for this special issue. Special thanks are also due to Michael Dorland of *Cinema Canada* for conceiving the idea of the issue, and for making the vital intellectual connections between Professor Lummis and the editorial board. In the third next issue, we shall publish another special theme issue on technology and rationalization, this time in the Canadian case. Titled *Understanding Technology: Canadian Perspectives*, this special theme issue will explore the remarkable development in Canada of a highly original, comprehensive and evocative discourse on technology. In addition to policy analyses of technology in the Canadian context ("technological nationalism" as Canadian ideology), the issue will examine the whole arc of Canadian perspectives on technology, from the critiques of C.B. Macpherson, Harold Innis, William Leiss, Charles Taylor and George Grant to the important writings of Marcel Rioux, Northrop Frye and Margaret Atwood.

Arthur Kroker