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## Preface

This book was published as a research project conducted under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture, International Research Program, 1998, and Fukutake Science and Cultural Foundation, Research Program of 1997. The subtitle of this book indicates the tradition of this research project and its history. The titles of this series of publications are as follows:

- 1: *Geographical Languages in Different Times and Places*. Edited by Ichiro Suizu, Kyoto University, Japan, 1979.
- 2: *Languages, Paradigms and Schools in Geography*. Edited by Keiichi Takeuchi, Hitotsubashi University, Japan, 1981.
- 3: *Cosmology, Epistemology and the History of Geographical Thought*, Edited by Hideki Nozawa, Kyushu University, Japan, 1986.
- 4: *Indigenous and Foreign Influences in the Development of Japanese Geographical Thought*. Edited by Hideki Nozawa, Kyushu University, Japan, 1989.
- 5: unpublished
- 6: *Social Theory and Geographical Thought*, Edited by Hideki Nozawa, Kyushu University, Japan, 1996.

These books mainly dealt with the many aspect of history of the geography such as Japanese geographical thought from ancient times, the history of map making, vernacular geographical knowledge and images. Their interests also expanded to the geographical thought and history of academic geography in foreign countries. The English (including some articles written in French) publication of this kind of geographical knowledge was internationally evaluated in partnership with the Commission on the History of Geographical Thought organized in the International Geographical Union.

In the latest volume of No. 6, some research members tried to tackle the spatial theoretical studies in the current geographical debate in order to adapt them to developing an original view in their fact findings. They are also in the forefront of the stimulating research field of space and society in Japan. The two strong streams of the studies on geographical thought and those on space and society are now articulated in this volume. They also lead us to focus on the issues of nation state building, state intervention, geographical imaginations and discourse, colonialism and geopolitical concerns.

The title of this volume using the term East Asia is a statement advocating that Asian scholars must work to extend our understanding of the role of space in Asian development. Along this line, we Asians might find the concepts developed in the West insufficient to understand our peculiar settings. This recognition owes much to the fruitful discussions in the first meeting of the East Asian Regional Conference in Alternative Geography held in Kyong-ju, South Korea in January 1999, and its organizer, Professor Byung-Doo Choi of Taegu University and Prof. Fujio Mizuoka of Hitotsubashi University. This meeting demonstrated that many Asian scholars have already started to develop new spatial concepts to understand their own spatial experiences. It is my pleasure to thank Prof. George Lin from Hong Kong for contributing his paper to my book after this meeting.

I also thank Prof. Sang-Jung Kang, who made a very instructive speech, and the cordial offer of translation by Prof. Takashi Yamazaki.