

REPRESENTING LOCAL PLACES AND RAISING VOICES FROM BELOW

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■ Preface

The subtitle of this book, ‘Japanese contribution’ and ‘geographical thought’ do not seem to fit the main title. The following list of this series lets us know that they had started nearly a quarter century before.

- 1: *Geographical Languages in Different Times and Places*. Edited by Ichiro SUIZU, Kyoto University, Japan, 1980.
- 2: *Languages, Paradigms and Schools in Geography*. Edited by Keiichi TAKEUCHI, Hitotsubashi University, Japan, 1984.
- 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: unedited
- 6: *Social Theory and Geographical Thought*, Edited by Hideki Nozawa, Kyushu University, Japan, 1996.
- 7: *Nation, Region and the Politics of Geography in East Asia*, Edited by Toshio MIZUUCHI, Osaka City University, 1999.

I, as an editor, believe that every contribution to this book goes far beyond the traditional style of geographical studies. We should be glad to know that, during the past quarter century in Japan, many younger talented geographers have emerged and are tackling both with the challenging theoretical and empirical themes. Yes, it is partly true, but we also fear the loss of common ground for the geographical academy in Japan due to the scrap-and-built plan of university system. Amidst the trans-disciplinary wave in the human-social sciences, the ideas and knowledge of geography might become popular among other disciplines, but geographers themselves always feel uneasy, studying in a very small office of geography, and sense how big and profound our field is. In any case, the name of this title expresses our motif that we have to break through thinking and act critically in order for our insight to penetrate into the real world,

I would like to express my gratitude, first, to Professor Yoshihara (urban sociologist) who organized the study group for theory of space. He kindly introduced us to Raphaella who contributed her brilliant papers about Jakarta’s urban community. Other papers were mainly produced through our encounters at the conferences of International Critical Geography Group (ICGG) and East Asian Regional Conferences in Alternative Geography (EARCAG). We still keep in mind the statement made at the first EARCAG in Korea, which advocated 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 in understanding our peculiar settings. I hope this collection of papers contributes to the promulgation of the Asian theoretical and empirical message to the world.

The financial publication of this book was made possible by the Ministry of Education (MEXT) and Urban-Culture Research Center under the COE projects of Osaka City University.

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