

# GEOPOLITICS AND GEOGRAPHY IN JAPAN REEXAMINED<sup>†</sup>

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## I

In Japan after the middle of the 1930's, it became the fashion among certain intellectual circles to discuss geopolitics under the names of *geopolitiku* or *chiseigaku*. This is generally attributed to the situation of the Japan of that period with its advancing expansionist politics towards other parts of the East and Southeast Asia, its international isolation resulting in its growing relationship with the Axis countries, and with the strengthening of a totalitarian regime in the sphere of international politics. As we shall discuss in more detail later, these Japanese geopolitical movements could not form a coherent or consistent discipline; the problem here is that these different trends and movements all assumed the name *geoporitiku*, a word apparently corresponding to the German term *Geopolitik*. There is, on the one hand, the problem concerning the international diffusion of ideas or concepts, *geoporitiku* having developed in quite different directions from those of its original counterpart. In other words, the question is under what circumstances and for what reasons these differences developed, in spite of the common social background of both countries, namely, the emergence of a crisis consciousness among either middle classes or peasantry of the late-joining imperialist countries. We have to consider who were the "gate-keepers" in the diffusion of geopoliticians' ideas, and who were the "managers" of the schools of Japanese geopoliticians. On the other hand, there is the question of what kind of Japanese elements which, while being extraneous to the German *Geopolitik*, converged upon and became part of these geopolitical movements. Naturally, some of these elements were the products of the circumstances of the Japanese society of that period.

We have today, however, a revival of a pretentious geopolitical<sup>1</sup> arguments in Japan and if geopolitics is a phenomenon chiefly explained by its social basis we must, perforce, conclude that the same social elements as those found in "tennoist" Japan have persisted or been resurrected in the social structure of present-day Japan. This being so, the question of our praxis should be simple, for we are able to adopt two types of strategies with which to oppose

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<sup>1</sup> I refer especially, to the Japanese writings of Kuramae, M., *Aku no ronri* Nihon Kogyo Shinbun-sha, 1977, p. 292. *Shin aku no ronri*; *Nihon no geopolitiku wa koreda* Nihon Kogyo Shinbun-sha, 1980, p.386.

the nationalist and expansionist exaltation of the new geopolitics: social action for the purposes of eliminating the social elements supporting and manipulating geopolitical arguments on the one hand and ideological battle with the aim of criticising the geopolitical stand and creating a counter-geopolitics or an anti-establishment geopolitics<sup>2</sup> on the other. But there are also fundamental difficulties regarding the implementation of these strategies; geopolitics in the past and at present has always had appeal among the public because of its novel explanations of political reality, an appeal which is lacking in the conventional explanations of this reality but which very often obtains at the sacrifice of the scientific nature of the discipline of geography for demagogical purposes. On the other hand, intellectual efforts to criticise the ideology of geopolitics and to propose a counter-geopolitics should not fall to the same demagogical level of that which it criticises.

*Geopolitik* showed indeed that geography has the character of a science for *états-majors*, or the instruments of domination. In the course of a historical examination of geopolitics, we should not confuse the nature of this domination on the one hand and the nature of geography on the other. The acceptance, development and subsequent collapse of Japanese geopolitics present interesting problems in the diffusion of geographical ideas, especially because from the beginning, geopolitics confused two aspects, i.e., theoretical content and political or ideological commitment. As for the latter aspect, the fact that remains to be constantly kept in mind is that the wars of invasion waged by imperialist Japan, wars which the various trends in Japanese geopolitics commonly supported, demanded not only the sacrifice of several millions of Japanese lives, but also a wealth of material and human resources of the Asian peoples.

Under the term "geopolitics" are grouped various theories concerning the relations between the state and its geographical conditions; and the attitudes on the part of researchers which, while they varied, supported the politics of the state may also be understood by this term. The original geopolitics of Rudolf Kjellén constituted theories on the state based on an organic view of the state or an analogical view of the state-as-an-organism. The initial stage of the geopolitics of the Munich school was characterised to a certain extent by the application of geography to politics or policy-making<sup>3</sup>; hence it ascribed importance to praxis or technics (*Kunst*).<sup>4</sup> But, as Carl Troll stated in his retrospective article on German geography up to World War II<sup>5</sup>, there existed a rather different view of the nature of geopolitics among German geopoliticians in the 1920's, i.e., before the establishment of the Nazi regime. Moreover, there was certainly a theoretical basis comprised of the close relation of geopolitical doctrine with the politics of the Third Reich; the state-as-an-organism theory constituting this doctrine justified the expansionist strategy under slogans promoting the struggle for space and power and the territorial planning (*Raumordnung*) of the Reich. There also existed, however, personal elements in this adoption of the geopolitical doctrine by Nazi leaders, especially through Rudolf Hess who was a student of Karl Haushofer. The retrospective evaluation of geopolitics as "the tragedy of a doctrine and of the Haushofer

<sup>2</sup> This is the position of Y. Lacoste in his very controversial pamphlet, *La géographie, ça sert, d'abord, à faire la guerre* Maspero, 1976.

<sup>3</sup> Haushofer, K. U. A. *Baustein zur Geopolitik* Kurt Vowingsbell Verlag, 1928 S. 65f.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. S. 46f.

<sup>5</sup> Troll, C. 'Die geographische Wissenschaft in Deutschland in der Jahren 1933 bis 1945. Eine Kritik und Rechtfertigung' *Erdkunde* I., 1946 SS. 3-48.

family”<sup>6</sup> appropriately assesses two aspects of geopolitics, that is, geopolitics as a doctrine and as a social phenomenon, but also leads to an ambivalent understanding of the nature of geopolitics. If geopolitics is a doctrine characterized by a mechanistic explanation of space organisation based on an organic view of the state, it must be examined and criticised independently of the political and military failure of the Third Reich without attributing to it all the negative elements of imperialism such as, for example, the Malthusian theory and racism.<sup>7</sup> In this respect, we have to recognise the theoretical inconsistency inherent in the German geopolitical doctrine which allowed opportunists to integrate the propaganda and the slogans of the Third Reich in its doctrinal body in the 1930's. Apropos of this theoretical weakness, already in the 1930's many scholars of geography and the political sciences outside Germany and especially in France, condemned geopolitics for its political and ideological involvement.<sup>8</sup> If we understand geopolitics as geographical theory, the “geopolitical” explanation of territorial organisation could and did exist also in other countries. And if geopolitics is characterised by the attitudes of the scientists involved, i.e., a commitment to politics even in non-fascist and non-totalitarian countries, some geographers and political scientists did, indeed, commit themselves in one degree or another to real political or administrative affairs. Perhaps, though, they were not very strongly or directly involved in political affairs and, hence, in their value commitments thanks to the more democratic political systems of their countries or to the traditional scholastic leaning towards the ivory tower. The sole advantage they were able to reap was that they worked in countries which had already secured vast colonial territories; hence they were able to collaborate quietly with the colonial administration, defending the already established colonial system.

Even among the Axis countries alone, the situations were rather different from that in Germany. In Italy, where a totalitarian regime was established much earlier than in Germany, the collaboration of geographers with the fascist government began in the latter half of the 1920's, in areas such as local land improvement schemes and the settlement plan in Libya, as pointed out in Lucio Gambi's denunciatory essay.<sup>9</sup> The usage of the term *geopolitica* was, however, rather limited in the 1920's and 30's. Even after the establishment of the journal *Geopolitica*, Italian “geopoliticians” generally considered this discipline to be part of political geography or even identified it with political geography.<sup>10</sup> Where the research activities of geographers in the country and in the occupied areas of North Africa and in the eastern Mediterranean were concerned, they had no clear consciousness of the application of mechanistic theories to space organisation, something which characterised the German geopolitical praxis. In Italy, thus, geopolitics never constituted a cultural and ideological movement; the relationship of the geopolitical organisation with the government was not a strong one. This difference in the situation of Italian geopolitics perhaps derived from the different attitude of academicians towards social issues and also from the

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. S. 17.

<sup>7</sup> This kind of easy, conditioned reflex type of dogmatic criticism representing the worst aspects of the sociology of the science is still frequently found in the literature of the Marxist orthodoxy. In this respect, Schöller's criticism of the conventional understanding of geopolitics is very suggestive. See Schöller, P. ‘Die Geographie im Weltbild des historischen Materialismus’ *Erdkunde* 13 1959 SS. 88–98.

<sup>8</sup> Demangeon, A. ‘Geographie politique’ *Annales de Géographie* 41, 1932, pp. 22–31.

<sup>9</sup> Gambi, L. *Una geografia per la storia* Torino 1973 pp. 26–31.

<sup>10</sup> Roletto, G., Massi, E. ‘Per una geopolitica italiana’ *Geopolitica*, I-1, 1939, pp. 5–11.

difficulties in justifying the expansionist policy of the fascist government by means of the *Lebensraum* theory. The Italian case shows yet another relationship between geography for *états-majors* and the concept of geopolitics.

The confusion regarding the nature of geopolitics which already existed in the period of prosperity of *Geopolitik* continued to be evident in an even more marked way, in retrospective examinations after the defeat of the Axis. In intellectual circles, all elements connected with totalitarianism or fascism were taboo,<sup>11</sup> and the social effects of political purges have hindered or made redundant scientific examination. This has also held true in Japan, which was allied with the Third Reich and where the situation greatly differed from that in Western countries.

## II

The introduction to Japan of the original *Geopolitik* of Kjellén was rather early; in 1925, in the "Journal of International Law and Diplomacy", the original Swedish edition of *Staten som Livsform* (Stockholm 1916) was reviewed.<sup>12</sup> By that period, the geopolitical movement in Germany had already begun, but the book reviewer, Mitsuo Fujisawa, knowing nothing of the German movement, made a positive appraisal of this Swedish political doctrine, and commented, "It takes into consideration the reality of international politics rather than conventional political doctrines." In view of the new nature of international relations in the imperialist era after the second half of the nineteenth century, this is a very accurate appraisal of the character of Kjellén's geopolitics. The interest of newly emerging academic geographers<sup>13</sup> in geopolitics arose at almost the same time. In the latter half of the 1920's, they reviewed some publications of German geopoliticians, but they generally regarded geopolitics as a branch of the political sciences and opposed the German geopoliticians who considered geopolitics either a development of political geography or a new geography. Geographers such as N. Iimoto, G. Ishibashi and T. Ogawa criticised the scientific nature of geopolitics on the basis of the fact that the object of study was not precisely defined.<sup>14</sup> But the same Iimoto recognised the utility of geopolitical studies in the perspective of policy-making.<sup>15</sup> After the Japanese invasion of Northeast China (Manchuria), German geopoliti-

<sup>11</sup> Perhaps the only exception was in Spain, where there remained a fascist regime even after World War II. In 1950, J. Vincent Vives made a positive estimation of the validity of geopolitics in his explanation of international relations and regarded the temporary stagnation of geopolitical studies as a result of the accidental defeat of Germany brought about by the errors of the Nazi political leaders. See Vicens Vives, J. *Tratado general de geopolítica, el factor geografico y el proceso historico* Editorial Vicens-Vives, tercera edición, 1972, pp. 6-8.

<sup>12</sup> Fujisawa, M. 'Rudolf Kjellén no kokka ni kansuru gakusetsu' *Kokusaiho Gaiko Zasshi* 24, 1925, pp. 155-175.

<sup>13</sup> The first chairs of geography in the imperial universities were established in 1907 in Kyoto and in 1919 in Tokyo; and in 1925 the Association of Japanese Geographers, which was the first nation-wide organisation of Japanese geographers in Japan, was founded.

<sup>14</sup> Ishibashi, G. 'Seijichirigaku to chiseigaku' *Chigaku Zasshi* 590, 1927, pp. 611-614.

Iimoto, N. 'Iwayuru chiseigaku no gainen' *Chirigaku Hyoron* 4, 1928, pp. 76-99.

Ogawa, T. 'Jimmonchirigaku no ikka to shite no seijichirigaku' *Chikyu* 9, 1933, pp. 239-247.

<sup>15</sup> Iimoto, N. 'Jinshu soto no jijitsu to chiseigakuteki kosatsu' *Chirigaku Hyoron* 1 1925 pp. 852-873, 955-967 2, 1926, pp. 40-60.

tics was introduced as an up-to-date science to explain the new international order. But even those who presented the works of the Munich school noticed, almost to a man, that geopolitics was emerging in an as yet incomplete form; at the same time, they recognised its immense perspective as an applied science. They were not aware of any contradiction between their academic stand and a nationalist attitude based on their propensity for romantic irrationalism. All this constitutes a characteristic of certain Japanese geopoliticians; while being fully aware of the irrational or illogical nature of geopolitical argument, in spite of this or, in fact, for this very reason, many Japanese intellectuals accepted and supported geopolitics. In the intellectual history of contemporary Japan after the introduction of Western civilisation, it is possible to observe the repeated reversion to irrationalism as a sentimental reaction against Western civilisation, which manifested its supremacy in the forms of political and military predominance and cultural eurocentrism. In this respect, the social basis of the emergence of Japanese geopolitics in the 1930's was the fact that intellectual circumstances facilitating the rise of an anti-Western ideology and an emphasis on indigenous traditions were brought about by Japan's isolated position in the sphere of international politics rather than by the demand for the justification of the expansionist policies of imperialist Japan.

At the same time, toward 1935, there also appeared critiques on the scientific nature of German geopolitics. Most of these were based simply on the standpoint where geographers who had gained a footing in the academic world regarded a value-free attitude fostered in the security of an academic ivory tower as being "scientific".<sup>16</sup> But, at the same time, there existed criticism of geopolitics based on the analysis of the philosophy and social background of the German geopolitical movement. In 1933, S. Kawanishi,<sup>17</sup> citing Karl Wittfogel,<sup>18</sup> regarded geopolitics as "an explanation neglecting the intermediate mechanism of the connection between existing natural conditions and political patterns" and hence as "the theory prearranging the fascist-type dictatorship of the utilitarian and invasionist ambitions of an imperialist power of the Caucasian race." Also, in some other criticisms of the geopolitics of that period, we can observe the inverse racism of the Mongoloid. On the other hand, K. Ohara developed a more fundamental criticism on the theoretical bases of geopolitics at that time. In 1936, he wrote: "The fundamental method of a geopolitical approach still continues to be an explanation of the nature of the state and the process of its political development, not through the development of social productive forces and other socio-economic factors, such as the pursuit of profit or of capitalistic economies, but directly and one-sidedly through natural conditions. This masks the socio-economic factors existing behind the activities of the state and justified the claims and the acts of exploitation on the part of the state in regards to existing natural conditions . . . Geopolitics and present-day political geography are thus based on an organic view of the state and on the geographical

<sup>16</sup> For instance, T. Watsuji, rejected the German geopolitical explanations in his ethics based on environmental determinism because of the colonialist trends of German geopolitics. See Watsuji, T. *Fudo, ningen-gakuteki kosatsu* Iwanami-shoten, 1935, p. 239. These considerations were originally published in *Shiso* in 1934.

<sup>17</sup> Kawanishi, M. 'Fassho-chirigaku=geoporitiku hihan, Sono hembo oyobi hohoronjo no gigi' *Takushoku Daigaku Ronshu* 3-2, 1933, pp. 58-88.

<sup>18</sup> Wittfogel, K. A. 'Geopolitik, geographischen Materialismus und Marxismus' *Unter dem Banner des Marxismus* 3-4, 1929, SS. 26-64.

materialism of past times. Only the social and economic situations of present-day Germany have restored these conventional theories . . . Political geography expressed in present-day Germany is an ideological reflection of the recovery of German capitalism and its nationalistic development and serves as a scientific instrument for its development."<sup>19</sup> Ohara was purged from a teaching post at an institute of higher learning in 1937. One of the reasons for this was given as the publication of the book from which the above quotation was obtained. After Ohara, the criticism of geopolitics became more and more difficult because of the increasing restrictions on the freedom of speech under the imposed censorship. In fact, the criticisms of A. Watanabe<sup>20</sup> and K. Iizuka<sup>21</sup> had to be levelled in a veiled manner, couched in slavish terms that seemingly catered to the political dicta of the times. Iizuka published critiques on geopolitics after World War II having the same theoretical basis as his works written during the war<sup>22</sup> had, but having, also, certain shortcomings, which we shall examine later. This indicates, therefore, that the incompleteness of his criticism of geopolitics was not simply due to the pressure of censorship.

The policy commitment and orientation towards the praxis of German geopolitics influenced in various ways the Japanese geographers and those who introduced German geopolitics in Japan. But the development of geopolitics as a social or cultural movement took various forms mainly because of the vagueness of geopolitics as a doctrine. We can distinguish three currents in geopolitical movements.

The first trend was characterised by the search for a geopolitics appropriate for the Japanese Empire, developed by the geographers and graduates in geography at the Imperial University of Kyoto. The Department of Geography of the Imperial University of Kyoto had been characterised by its orientation towards historical and settlement geography since its establishment. In contrast to the Department of Geography of the Imperial University of Tokyo which was characterised by physical geography and by the direct importation of Western geography, the Kyoto school of geography emphasised an interest in human and social issues, and in human and social geography; and, hence, also in indigenous source materials. These characteristics of the Kyoto school cannot completely explain the reason for the rise of the geopoliticians' school in Kyoto, but they constitute at least a partial explanation. In 1938, S. Komaki, who was the head of the geography department of the Imperial University of Kyoto, began to advocate geopolitics<sup>23</sup> and, in 1940, published the "Manifesto of Japanese Geopolitics."<sup>24</sup> Here we read: "Now it is true that our national policies find one of their bases in geography. This necessitates a new Japanese geopolitics which must develop upon the basis of a geographical study of Japan, and must constitute the basis of Japanese policies enhanced by the Japanese spiritual tradition." Behind all this, there certainly existed a recognition or an expectation of the decline of Western civilisation

<sup>19</sup> Ohara, K. *Shakaichirigaku no kisomondai* Kokon-shoin, 1936, pp. 311-314.

<sup>20</sup> Watanabe, A. 'Iwayuru chiseigaku no naiyo to shoraisei' *Chisei*, 1942-9 pp. 44-50.  
do. 'Chiseigaku no naiyonitsuite' *Chirigaku Kenkyu* 1, 1942, pp. 267-280.

<sup>21</sup> Iizuka, K. 'Geoporitiku no kihonteki seikaku' (1) (2) (3) *Keizaigaku Ronso* 12 1942, pp. 816-844, 13 1943, pp. 288-314, 486-496.

<sup>22</sup> The three papers mentioned in footnote 21 came to be included, after substantial revision, in Iizuka, K. *Jimmonchiri gakusetsushi Nihon-hyoron-sha*, 1949, p. 223.

<sup>23</sup> Komaki, S. 'Chirigaku o kokorozasu hito e' *Kyoto Teikokudaigaku Shimbun* November 5, 1938.

<sup>24</sup> do. *Nihon chiseigaku sengen* Kobundo 1940, p. 211.

and a reaction to evolutionism in Western cultural tradition. The development of the geopolitics of the Kyoto school under the leadership of Komaki had three aspects: 1) To pinpoint the geopolitical tradition in Japanese culture, especially in the culture of the Tokugawa period. The writings of S. Yoshida and other thinkers and politicians of the Tokugawa period, who gave expression to their political and economic observations in the face of the increasing menace of the Western powers and the increasing development of a monetary economy, were the favourite topics of the Kyoto geopoliticians' school. 2) The exaltation of a peculiarly Japanese spiritual tradition. This was brought about through the emphasis on the tennoist ideology, according to which Japan is unique and the only state in the world ruled by a unilineal *tenno* family for more than two thousand years. In this context, the shamanist Shinto ideology was mobilised in order to identify the people's geopietal sentiments with *tenno* worship.<sup>25</sup> Komaki wrote, "In this way Japanese geopolitics is different from the many world geopolitical currents imitating German geopolitics, from the colonialist in the British style and also from the old-fashioned type of Chinese geopolitics; it is a distinctively Japanese type which has existed since the beginnings of the imperial family and will develop in line with the prosperity of the imperial family as a truly creative science of Japan."<sup>26</sup> At first glance, these writings seem illogical and fanatic, but if we examine them in more detail, the writings of the leaders of the Kyoto school such as S. Komaki and N. Muroga show clearly that their authors have read profoundly in German geopolitics and sought to overcome the environmental determinism of German geopolitics by way of this ideological formulae.<sup>27</sup> 3) Thirdly, they endeavoured to clarify the history of the imperialist invasions of the Western powers in East Asia. They developed these studies as a praxis of geopolitics and contributed to a certain extent to the development of the regional studies of the Kyoto school. But their studies appeared on the basis of bibliographical surveys without field surveys in the "Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere"; they had no direct connection with political and administrative authorities and their movement remained restricted to a rather moral or intellectual sphere. Their remarks on the difficulties in the Japanese economy caused by the dominance of the Western powers in the East Asian market and on the discriminative treatment of Japan and the Japanese in the international sphere deriving from the racial prejudice of Westerners, including perhaps first of all, Nazi Germany, were instrumental in bringing a large segment of the public over to their way of thinking. At the same time, they were aware, at least on a subconscious level, that the mere exposure of the reality of Western imperialism was not enough to legitimise similar imperialist policies on the part of Japan. As an alternative ideology, they had to construct "Asianism," the idea of a communalistic type of unity binding Asian people together. This is an extension of the idea of the communal state centered on the *tenno* family, applied to the "Asian community" as a whole. To exalt this communalism, they mobilised an indigenous ideology which underlined familial and pseudo-familial ties as the bases of social organization. This is an ideology originally formed in feudal Japan, but we are compelled to note that the geopoliticians

<sup>25</sup> Takeuchi, K. 'Some Remarks on the History of Regional Description and the Tradition of Regionalism in Modern Japan' *Progress in Human Geography* 4 1980, pp. 238-248.

<sup>26</sup> Komaki, S. 'Nihonchiseigaku no shucho' *Chiri Ronso* 11 1940 pp. 3-6.

<sup>27</sup> Muroga, N. was fully conscious that geopolitics inherited from Ratzel his romantic view of the world rather than his environmentalism. See, Muroga, N. 'Chirigaku no doko' *Rekishi chiri* 80-4, 1942, pp. 466-472.

of the Kyoto school applied it in the situation of the competition among nation-states of the twentieth century. In a certain sense, therefore, this constituted a revival of traditional indigenous ideology; but it was not mere reactionism to modernity because the Kyoto geopoliticians deliberately adopted the old ideology in order to utilise it in support of the national policies, at the height of the imperialist era.<sup>28</sup>

The second trend was represented by the scholars of geography and the political sciences who introduced the German geopolitical theories upon which they consistently relied. They based their arguments on the recognition that Germany was fundamentally in a similar position, internationally, to that of Japan, hence the theories of German geopolitics, especially that of *Lebensraum* were valid for Japan. They also intended to apply the concept of spatial planning, *Raumordnung*, to interior Japan and especially to the Japanese colonies of Manchuria, Korea and Formosa. Starting in 1939, many translations and interpretations of German geopolitics<sup>29</sup> were published. The special interest of Haushofer in East Asia<sup>30</sup> stimulated the adoption of German geopolitics in Japan. These geographers and political scientists saw the consistent development of Kjellén's state-as-an-organism theory in German geopolitics and recognised it as being the most appropriate for the purpose of explaining the political reality of the imperialist era. They followed a Japanese intellectual tradition after the Meiji Restoration which gave priority to an uncritical study of Western sciences. Their organic state concept was based exclusively on a biological analogy, and the spatial organisation of the state was interpreted by the mechanistic interaction of various socio-economic forces.<sup>31</sup> For them it was not necessary to put together a traditional Japanese ideology nor to emphasise the attractiveness of taking irrational leaps in the argument in order to legitimatise national policies. For instance, J. Ezawa who was a specialist in economic geography, defining the geopolitical movement as an intellectual one based on "the romantic thought that overcomes a debatable universalism," recognised "the necessity of understanding the concept of economic space which differs from physical space."<sup>32</sup> For him, geopolitics offered theories applicable to the analyses of the dynamics of *Lebensraum* and in the policy-making of *Raumordnung*. Again, where J. Ezawa was concerned, another aspect of geopolitics, its resemblance to "artistic handiwork",<sup>33</sup> was considered a shortcoming

<sup>28</sup> In a recent study on Japanese geopolitics as an aspect of the intellectual history of Japan in the 1930's, S. Hatano, clearly point out the logical connection between this ideological emphasis on indigenism and the advocacy of the Asian "chauvinism." See, Hatano, S. "Toashinchitsujo" to chiseigaku' Miura, K. ed. *Nihon no 1930-nendai Saikoshu*, 1980, pp. 13-47.

<sup>29</sup> Between 1939 and 1948 were published two Japanese versions of Haushofer and others, *Bausteine zur Geopolitik* (1928) and three Japanese versions of Haushofer's *Geopolitik des pazifischen Ozeans, Studien über die Wechselbeziehungen zwischen Geographie und Geschichte* (1925). Also Haushofer's *Weltmeer und Weltmacht* (1937) and *Geopolitische Grundlagentheorie* (1939) were translated respectively in 1943 and in 1940.

<sup>30</sup> Owing also to his experience in Japan as military *attaché* he wrote six books on Japan alone between 1913 and 1938. Recently Abdel-Malek has noted that the geographical position of Japan makes her an ideal land for geopolitics. See, Abdel-Malek, A. 'Geopolitics and National Movements: An Essay on the Dialectics of Imperialism' *Antipode* 9-1, 1977, pp. 28-36.

<sup>31</sup> It is not strange that some representative figures such as Ezawa have played important roles in the development of regional science in Japan since the end of World War II. They were consistent in their manner of treating the spatial systems.

<sup>32</sup> Ezawa, J. 'Keizachirigaku ni okeru kukan-gainen' *Hitotsubashi Ronso* 3, 1939, pp. 211-219.

<sup>33</sup> Haushofer, K. *Geopolitik des pazifischen Ozeans, Studien über die Wechselbeziehung zwischen Geographie und Geschichte* III ergänzte Auflage, Kurt Vowinkel Verlag, 1938, S. 13.



of geopolitics.<sup>34</sup>

This kind of approach to geopolitics was certainly easier and more acceptable to academicians; but in the field of geography those who advocated it constituted a minority. One reason for this was, perhaps, that the above type of geopolitician became too popular in the journalistic circles of Tokyo because of his arguments supporting the national policies, whereas many of the university geographers instinctively avoided involvement in social issues. In fact, many academic geographers never developed a fundamental criticism of either the geopolitics of the Kyoto school or German-type geopolitics either before or after the establishment of the Japanese Society for Geopolitics in 1941. On the other hand, those academic geographers who advocated the geopolitics of the Munich school were fundamentally eurocentric and were far from being able to take a critical stand against colonialism as well as against the racial discrimination of militarist Japan against other Asian peoples. They were, indeed, rather indifferent to problems such as these and did not even properly consider the limitations to the validity of applying the research methods of Western geography in the analyses of the reality of their own non-Western field. In this way, the trends of both Kyoto and Tokyo failed to demonstrate the validity of their theories in relation to the realities of East Asia, indicating their breakdown both in the scientific and the ethical sense.

The establishment of the Japanese Society for Geopolitics in November, 1941, immediately before the outbreak of the Pacific War was the result of the culmination of nationalist sentiment and the increasing necessity for the mobilisation of scientists to implement national policies and signified the formation of the third trend in geopolitics. The 160 members of this society consisted of military persons, journalists, politicians, geographers and scholars in the social sciences. The society statutes declared that: "The purpose of this society consists of the study of geopolitics, geopolitical surveys of the terrestrial and marine spaces of Japan and her *Lebensraum*, and in the contribution to the national policy to construct and defend a highly-developed state." Almost all the scholars who had advocated a German-type geopolitics joined this society together with other geographers who had heretofore shown reluctance towards accepting the geopolitical stand. The latter included university geographers who had criticised geopolitics for the reason that it did not form a coherent discipline, or who had refuted the scientific nature of geopolitics.<sup>35</sup> It must be noted that no geopoliticians of the Kyoto school attempted to join this society, indicating its general orientation. The main activities of the society included the publication of an organ having the aim of popularising a geographical knowledge of Asia and the Pacific areas strategically important in the context of the Pacific War, and popularising also the various doctrines of German geopolitics, and the promotion of geographical surveys of the newly occupied areas of South-east Asia. But, as can be imagined from the composition of its membership, this society never expressed a unified understanding of the nature of geopolitics. All arguments con-

<sup>34</sup> Ezawa, J. *Chiseigaku gairon* Nihon-hyoron-sha, 1943, pp. 140–141.

<sup>35</sup> N. Iimoto, a geographer who became the secretary-general of this society, never agreed that geopolitics could constitute a coherent science (Iimoto, N. op. cit. 1928). Also in 1939, H. Sato, who wrote numerous papers for the organs of this society severely criticised the arbitrariness in geopolitical reasoning and the unsystematic nature of geopolitics (Sato, H. *Seijichirigaku-gairon* Kajitani-shoin, 1939, pp. 324–328.) A. Watanabe who joined the society as professor of geography at the military academy, always maintained his critical stand toward geopolitical arguments which seemed to him "intuitive rather than analytical" (Watanabe, A. op. cit., 1942).

cerning the spatial aspects of Pacific War strategies and of the administrative measures of that period were understood under the term "geopolitics." Before the establishment of this society, Ezawa and some other geopoliticians had clearly refuted geographical determinism as an explanation of space organisation but, in the society's journal *Chiseigaku*, we can frequently observe an easy application of geographical determinism in geographical descriptions of occupied areas and in the interpretation of military strategies.

The Japanese Society for Geopolitics certainly advocated the necessity of surveys for *Raumordnung*, and many social scientists who have played leading roles in the various disciplines of social science in postwar Japan had their first field experiences in the surveys promoted by the society. There also existed a certain confusion regarding the theoretical bases of this Japanese *Raumordnung* or *kokudo-keikaku*. On the one hand, the necessity was asserted for planning on a large regional scale, on the basis of the principle of economic efficiency, in the East Asian autarkical sphere<sup>36</sup> and, on the other hand, "the battle against urbanism in modern capitalist civilization" was emphasized as opposed to an economic rationalism.<sup>37</sup> We can consider that this very ruralist orientation, a sort of physiocracy in itself, was an amalgamation of the expression of traditionalism or communalistic sentiment and of the necessity of carrying out the evacuation policy pertaining to urban and industrial areas menaced by air raids.

The geopoliticians' arguments exerted a certain degree of influence on the bureaucrats and the administrative bodies which put into effect the war-time policies.<sup>38</sup> But it should be noted that the Society for Geopolitics was not itself able to finance the field surveys; hence the scientists in the field did not have the consciousness that their academic work had the moral support of the society which advocated a pro-imperialist application of science.

### III

Since World War II, very few studies on geopolitics, both as movement and as theory have been carried out in Japan. Most of the criticism on geopolitics in Japan was made on the basis of the fact that geopolitics has been involved in and supported militarist or fascist regimes.<sup>39</sup> It is clear that this kind of criticism did not constitute criticism on a scientific level. The principal advocates of the Kyoto school of geopolitics and the social scientists who had played important roles in the Japanese Society for Geopolitics were purged from public posts at the order of the Allied Forces, until the end of the occupation in 1952, which gave the impression in the intellectual world that geopolitical affairs were finished with. The purge was naturally an administrative measure, influenced by the social and political circumstances in universities and academic circles, and little related to a scientific examina-

<sup>36</sup> Ezawa, J. *Chiseigaku Kenkyu* Nihon-hyoron-sha, 1942, pp. 277-283.

<sup>37</sup> Iwata, K. *Chiseigaku* Asahi Shimbun-sha, 1942, p. 123. Also Ezawa expressed his anti-urbanist opinion in his *Kokudo-keikaku no kisoriron* Sogensha, 1942, p. 25. But in his case, he discussed, on a theoretical basis, the economic loss brought about by urban and industrial overconcentration.

<sup>38</sup> We can ascertain this fact from various government documents. For instance, see, Kikakuin Kenkyukai, *Daitoa kokudo-keikaku* Domeitsushin-sha, 1943, pp. 37-38, 83-84.

<sup>39</sup> Moritaki, K. 'Gendai chiikikagaku hihan josetsu' *Keizaichirigaku Nempo* 17-1, 1971, pp. 1-18. Mizuoka, F. 'Gendai chirigaku ni okeru "chiseigaku" no fukkatsu' *Keizai* 119, 1974, pp. 175-196.

tion of geopolitics. A scientific examination of geopolitics was hindered for many years also because many persons involved in geopolitical affairs were still alive and exercised a certain influence in academic circles. No summarising critical appraisal of Japanese geopolitics, as made in Germany on German geopolitics by Troll,<sup>40</sup> has ever been made in Japan.

A comprehensive critique on geopolitics by Ohara written in 1936 was republished after the war;<sup>41</sup> it was very fundamental in that it treated the social and ideological basis of German geopolitics but naturally, as will be gathered from the date of its original publication, it did not discuss the development of geopolitical argument in Japan. Iizuka's critique in a revised edition of his papers written during the war have come to be considered a fundamental frame of reference in regards to the criticism of geopolitics in Japan.<sup>42</sup> They consist mainly of criticism regarding the two theoretical bases of geopolitics, i.e., of the state-as-an-organism theory and of the observation of the author as an academician that geopolitical assertions had never been supported by "authentic" academicians in geography and the political sciences. In other words, he condemned geopolitics anew as being the fruit of amateurism. As T. Yuasa pointed out in his recent essay on the criticism of actual geopolitics,<sup>43</sup> however, we cannot deny the communalistic character of the modern state and also the environmental influences on the well-being of the people; and properly, on these bases, geopolitical arguments have been and still are accepted by the people.

All the critiques have so far failed to point out what prompted geographers, when committing themselves to relevant issues, to claim to a support of geopolitics in the instance of Japan. They have failed to point out, too, that their championing of geopolitics only resulted in their playing a role that practically justified the closing of their eyes to social contradictions in Japan, and to Japan's attitude toward other Asian peoples as an imperialist power similar to the great Western powers. From this viewpoint, not only have Japanese geographical circles failed to clarify the situation before 1945, but they have also not yet made an examination of past Japanese geopolitics as a sociological phenomena in the scientific community.

We must recognise that herein lie the difficulties in developing an anti-geopolitical ideology or an alternative geopolitics. The acceptance of German geopolitics in Japan and the presentation of an indigenous ideology in order to recast the geopolitical arguments of the tennōist period can be interpreted in the context of the intellectual and social history of modern Japan. But we have not yet been able to establish a critical stand against a possible geopolitical argument in present-day Japan, an argument which could distort the scientific nature of the discipline of geography.

<sup>40</sup> Troll, C. op. cit., 1947.

<sup>41</sup> Ohara's *Shakaichirigaku no kisoriron* was republished in 1950 in the form of slightly modified version of the original edition in 1936.

<sup>42</sup> Iizuka, K. op. cit., 1949.

<sup>43</sup> Yuasa, T. 'Gendai geoporitiku hihan' *Gendai no Me*, 1980-9, pp. 6'-71.