

Foreword

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Foreword

This collection of essays is one of the products of a three-year collaborative research project. During the academic and fiscal years 2003, 2004, and 2005, faculty members of the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken) in Kyoto joined with scholars from universities in Australia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam, and a few other Japanese institutions to examine the theme “Globalization, Localization, and Japanese Studies in the Asia-Pacific Region: Past, Present, Future” in three symposia. Altogether more than a hundred scholars made presentations or acted as discussants over the course of the project. The present volume contains some of the work originally presented in the first year.

Earlier versions of the essays in this volume were presented and discussed at an international symposium from 10 November through 13 November 2003. Co-organized by the International Research Center for Japanese Studies and the School of European, Asian and Middle Eastern Languages and Studies of the University of Sydney, the event took place at the Union Conference Centre, University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia. Professor Hugh Clarke of the University of Sydney, the late Professor Sonoda Hidehiro of Nichibunken, Associate Professor Timothy Kern of Nichibunken, and I were the principals in the early stages of planning for the symposium.

It was Nichibunken Professor Suzuki Sadami who took the initiative and authored the original proposal for this project, during his tenure as Director of the Office of Research Exchange at this Center in the academic years 2000 through 2002. Subsequently I served for one year and Sonoda Hidehiro served for two as chairman of the Nichibunken committee that was responsible for planning and executing this Center’s activities in the series of symposia.

Professor Komatsu Kazuhiko, as Director of the Office of Research Exchange in academic year 2003, provided good counsel and support for Nichibunken faculty and staff who were involved in the Sydney symposium; in addition he delivered an interesting presentation, a revised version of which is included in this volume. Nakanishi Takeshi also deserves special thanks. He worked many long hours as the member of the staff of the Research Cooperation Division at Nichibunken who was assigned the task of managing the myriad administrative matters that have to be taken care of in order to move scholars from several nations to a conference location, to arrange for their lodging, and to see to copying and other details of preparation for the academic presentations that now appear in another version in these pages.

Hugh Clarke was readily responsive to a proposal put to him by Sonoda Hidehiro early in 2002 that we explore the possibility of collaborating to put together an international conference at his university. He proved himself an ideal partner, winning the backing of his university and seeing to the local administrative details. His congenial, cooperative attitude made it a great pleasure to work with him, and I am happy to be able to express here, once again, Nichibunken’s gratitude.

Sincere thanks also are due to the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, which supported this three-year project with a Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research. This

volume offers to readers some of the results made possible by this funding. The researchers who took part in the Sydney symposium continue to carry with them today the intellectual and personal benefits of the JSPS support.

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¹ The affiliation shown below the author's name on the first page of each essay is as of the time of the symposium. For updated information, please see the Notes on Contributors at the end of this volume.