

FOREWORD

The International Research Center for Japanese Studies is very pleased to present here the latest addition to our academic publications, the *Nichibunken Monograph Series*.

The International Research Center for Japanese Studies was established in 1987 as an Inter-University Research Institute and has played a leading role in promoting interdisciplinary and comparative investigations into Japanese culture. The insistence on the word “International” in the name of our Center refers both to the importance of our extensive academic cooperation with scholars abroad, and to the Center’s emphasis on research from a global perspective.

The Center publishes two journals, *Nihon kenkyū* (in Japanese) and *Japan Review* (in English), and a monograph series *Nichibunken sōsho* for more extended investigations. Unfortunately, the works in the *Nichibunken sōsho* are all in Japanese, and thus accessible only to foreign scholars with sufficient mastery of the language.

The *Nichibunken Monograph Series* was conceived with the aim of overcoming this language barrier, and making the fruits of the research conducted here more widely available to scholars abroad. The works in this series represent monographs written specifically for the series by permanent faculty members of the Center, and have been refereed and selected by the Editorial Board.