

## **New Steps in Japanese Studies**

Kobe University Joint Research

edited by Kazashi Nobuo and Marcella Mariotti

## **Foreword**

Bonaventura Ruperti

It is a great joy for me to present the publication of this book.

As Prof. Masumoto wrote, this book is the result of a long-lasting joint-research project, the programme *Innovative Japanese Studies through International Cooperation: The Fostering of Young Researchers by Cooperation with Overseas Institutes of Japanese Studies* by the Graduate School of Humanities, Kobe University, Japan, implemented from October 2013 to March 2016.

Ca' Foscari University of Venice, University of Oxford and University of Hamburg were the partners of this programme; European young researchers went to study to these three universities for a year. Between difficulties and fruitful experiences, they grew up improving their knowledges and their consciousness as researchers in an international dimension. Their papers show a deep insight into this multifaceted issue, combining several disciplines under a multidisciplinary and comparative approach.

Contemporaneously, as representative of our Department, we too had the pleasure to participate in workshops and symposia at Kobe University and at its Brussels European Centre and, as associated researchers, to animate joint-research projects with Kobe University young people and professors. Thanks to this programme, we were profoundly enriched and stimulated as for knowledge and harmony, and above all we had the opportunity to cement our friendship with Kobe University and its partner institutions.

First of all, as a representative of Ca' Foscari University and of my colleagues, I would like to express my most sincere acknowledgments and appreciation to the colleagues and friends in Kobe, Prof. Yui Kiyomitsu, Prof. Masumoto Hiroko, Prof. Fukunaga Susumu, Prof. Kazashi Nobuo and others, for this wonderful opportunity of mutual improvement and express my sincere admiration for their efforts to made their Faculty and Human Studies Research in Kobe University and in Europe more and more beautiful, creative and stimulating.

I am very grateful to my colleagues Marcella Mariotti, Toshio Miyake and Aldo Tollini for their earnest and passionate participation in all the activities, workshops, symposia and so on, and for their efforts (Marcella in primis) to develop and realise this anthology.

We are grateful also to the publisher, Edizioni Ca' Foscari, for making the publication of this book possible.

We would like to thank Kobe University very much for their particular attention to the Japanese Studies Section of our Department. We deeply appreciate their consideration for us.

I would like to extend my acknowledgments to Prof. Bjarke Frellesvig and Prof. Linda Flores from Oxford University and Prof. Jörg B. Quenzer and Lecturer Sugihara Saki from Hamburg University, for their warm participation in the project. And finally to the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) for the financial support.

I am sure that students and scholars will enjoy the studies and papers presented here by our contributors.

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