

# Preface

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For the fourth collection in the Florientalia Asian Studies Series we chose the title *Tracing Pathways* 雲路 to celebrate how scholars can always trace new routes, paths and directions with their research, even when it seems that everything on a specific topic or issue has already been said and written. Pathways may have different forms, depicting either a straight way or a winding one, but they have the same function, that is to trace a route from a starting point to a goal. So does the research work, and we believe that the contributions of the scholars hosted in this volume could really enrich the field of Chinese and Japanese Studies through the pathways they chose to trace with their research studies.

This volume collects articles by eight contributors interested in different research areas within the field of East Asian Studies. The articles, which are organized in a Japanese section and a Chinese section, use different approaches across disciplines belonging to humanities in order to explore topics ranging from classical and contemporary East Asian literature to contact linguistics, sociology and anthropology.

The Japanese section contains four essays dealing with modern and contemporary literature and cinema. The opening contribution by Giacomo Calorio concerns contemporary Japanese cinema starting from a statement of the Japanese film scholar Yomota Inuhiko, which is *What is Japanese Cinema?*. In his article, Calorio discusses about ideas of contemporaneity and national cinema in the contemporary Japanese film production. The second contribution, by Diego Cucinelli, analyses the literary motif known as *kame naku*, 'crying turtle', and traces its path through Japanese literature from its origin to the contemporary

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age. In particular, by using *kame naku* as keyword Cucinelli analyzes the attitudes and sensations of modern and contemporary poets and novelists toward the motif. The third contribution is by Marta Fanasca, who deals with *yuri* manga, i.e. manga focused on the representation of sentimental relations between girls. In particular, Fanasca analyzes the manga re-elaboration of Yoshiya Nobuko's *Hana monogatari* (1916), a collection of short stories on "passionate friendships" between students, or a student and a young teacher. The fourth contribution, by Tsuboi Hideto, deals with *tenkō bungaku*, the «literature of conversion»: focusing on some writings by Kobayashi Morito, in his paper Tsuboi analyzes the stories of conversion experiences of various converted people (*tenkōsha*), reexamining how they accepted conversion, and at the same time focuses on the contradictions and conflicts that occurred there.

The contributions included in the Chinese section concern two main macro-topics: on the one side, they bring into light issues related to cultural contacts between Italy and China from different perspectives; on the other, they deal with Chinese migration to Italy, by highlighting socio-historical aspects as well as cultural production. The first contribution, by Andrea Scibetta, focuses on the case study of the graphic novels *Primavera e Autunni* and *Chinamen*, both produced by Matteo Demonte and Ciaj Rocchi, as high-value cultural products both in terms of historical reconstruction of Chinese migration to Italy and of symbolic representations of Chinese migrants beyond stereotypical and simplistic views. The second essay, by Yang Lin, focuses on the image of China in the travel writings of two twentieth-century scholars, i.e. Alberto Arbasino and Luigi Malerba: the main issue which this essay draws its attention to is the role played by China as a literary space between imagination and reality in the writings of both authors. The third and the fourth essays are mainly related to Chinese migration to Italy, which is seen from two different perspectives: a socio-anthropological one, dealing with social integration of Chinese youth in the Marche region in Italy in the contribution by Meri Perna; one blending the aspect of cultural production with a historical dimension in the contribution by Yan Xiaopeng and Zhao Yinyin. The contribution by Meri Perna concerns issues of identity and social integration of Chinese youth in the Marche region, taking into account the results of a questionnaire administered to 198 young people and 21 teachers. Finally, the essay written by Yan Xiaopeng and Zhao Yinyin investigates migrant cultural productions in the town of Guifeng (Rui'An area) in its main historical developments, and then analyses the influences played by such a production on the broader cultural production of migrants belonging to the district of Wenzhou.

We are grateful to all the contributors and the referees who participated in the volume and helped us with ideas and suggestions, thus creating a fruitful climate of academic collaboration and exchange, and we hope to contribute, explore and trace new trajectories within the field of East Asian Studies.